

Lu Do,
applicant of the department of music
theory and composition,
Odessa National A. V. Nezhdanova
Academy of music.
odma_n@ukr.net

LEITMOTIVISM OF THE CYCLE «INTERMEZZO» OP. 4 BY ROBERT SCHUMANN

Article purpose is analyses the Schuman's genre Intermezzo for piano from the point of view of leitmotiv system. **Methodology** of the article is textual, analytical, and comparative approaches. **Scientific novelty:** in article lines of a leitmotivizm in piano R. Schuman's Intermezzos op.4 are considered, the role of leitmotiv system is shown in the Intermezzo by R. Schuman, various most difficult interrelations between the Intermezzo come to light and their unity, recurrence, a "suitnost" is proved. **Conclusions.** Having considered plays of a suite cycle of the Intermezzo of Robert Schuman, we have come to a conclusion that all plays of this suite cycle are in a certain alternative and variation ratio and are interconnected among themselves by leit-intonation, keynotes, a leit-harmony, leit-rhythm, leit-themes, leit-images. Thus, studying of the piano cycle "Intermezzo" of Robert Schuman becomes a current problem of musicology and performance.

Keywords: Robert Schumann, Intermezzo, leitmotiv system, genre, variant-variation correlation, leit-intonation, leitmotiv, leit-harmony, leit-rhythm, leit-theme, leit-image.

Лу До, здобувач кафедри теорії музики та композиції Одеської національної музичної академії імені А.В. Нежданової.

Лейтмотивізм циклу «Інтермеццо» оп.4 Роберта Шуманаю

Мета статті - проаналізувати жанр Інтермеццо для фортепіано в творчості Р. Шумана з точки зору лейтмотивної системи. **Методологія:** в статті застосовані текстологічний, аналітичний, і компаративний підходи. **Наукова новизна:** в статті розглянуті риси лейтмотивізму в фортепіанних Інтермеццо оп. 4 Р. Шумана, показана роль лейтмотивної системи в Інтермеццо Р. Шумана, виявляються різні складні взаємозв'язки між Інтермеццо і доводиться їх єдність, циклічність, сюїтність. **Висновки:** розглянувши п'єси сюїтного циклу Інтермеццо Роберта Шумана, приходимо до висновку, що всі п'єси даного сюїтного циклу знаходяться в певному варіантно-варіаційному співвідношенні і взаємопов'язані між собою лейтінтонаціями, лейтмотивами, лейтгармонією, лейтритмом, лейттемами, лейтобразами. Таким чином, вивчення фортепіанного циклу «Інтермеццо» Роберта Шумана стає актуальною проблемою музикознавства та виконавства.

Ключові слова: Роберт Шуман, Інтермеццо, лейтмотивна система, жанр, варіантно-варіаційне співвідношення, лейтінтонація, лейтмотиви, лейтгармонія, лейтритм, лейттема, лейтобраз.

Лу До, соискатель кафедры теории музыки и композиции Одесской национальной музыкальной академии имени А.В. Неждановой.

Лейтмотивізм циклу «інтермеццо» оп. 4 Роберта Шумана

Цель статьи – проанализировать жанр Интермеццо для фортепиано в творчестве Р. Шумана с точки зрения лейтмотивной системы. **Методология:** в статье применены текстологический, аналитический, и компаративный подходы. **Научная новизна:** в статье рассмотрены черты лейтмотивизма в фортепианных Интермеццо оп. 4 Р. Шумана, показана роль лейтмотивной системы в Интермеццо Р. Шумана, выявляются различные сложнейшие взаимосвязи между Интермеццо и доказывается их единство, цикличность, сюитность. **Выводы:** рассмотрев пьесы сюитного цикла Интермеццо Роберта Шумана, приходим к выводу, что все пьесы данного сюитного цикла находятся в определенном вариантно-вариационном соотношении и взаимосвязаны между собой лейтінтонаціями, лейтмотивами, лейтгармонией, лейтритмом, лейттемами, лейтобразами. Таким образом, изучение фортепианного цикла «Інтермеццо» Роберта Шумана становится актуальной проблемой музыковедения и исполнительства.

Ключевые слова: Роберт Шуман, Интермеццо, лейтмотивная система, жанр, вариантно-вариационное соотношение, лейтінтонація, лейтмотив, лейтгармонія, лейтритм, лейттема, лейтобраз.

Intermezzo – is an original genre which appeared late enough – in the thirties of XIX century in the piano West European music. Its founder is a great composer, representative of the Romantic epoch whose works are characterized by many genre and stylistic findings and

discoveries – Robert Schumann. He was the man who created works of a new genre – Intermezzo for piano (op. 4) in 1832.

Object of the article – piano works of Robert Schumann in the context of romantic tendencies of the XIX century.

Subject of the article: a leitmotiv system in Intermezzo for piano by R. Schumann.

Goal of the article is to analyze genre Intermezzo for piano of Schumann from the point of view a leitmotiv system.

Objectives of the article are:

1. To distinguish features of leitmotivism in the piano Intermezzo op. 4 by R. Schumann.

2. To show the role of a leitmotiv system in Intermezzo by R. Schumann.

Data of studies. The piano works of Schumann and his 6 Intermezzo op. 4 are in the focus of attention.

Literature on this topic is not very comprehensive because this genre and its peculiarities have not been paid due attention in musicology. At the same time there is a lot of literature about life and works of Schumann. The piano works of Robert Schumann are considered in a series of monographs – D.Zhytomirskiy [5], A.Merkulov [15] and others. D. Zhytomirskiy in his monographs about Schumann does not consider peculiarities of form making in «Intermezzo», making notes about this cycle in chapter «Suites, collections, plays» and not in the chapter «Variations and suites of a "through" mood»; and it indirectly defines the author's position [5]. A. Lahuty studying «suites of a uniform structure» of a composer does not include «Intermezzo» by Schumann in this circle at all and that is why he does not refer to this work [13]. However, Intermezzo includes features which are mostly peculiar to Schumann's free variations and suites of a "through" structure which are penetrated with leitmotivism. We have also used an article by G. Demchenko about piano music of Schumann [4].

Relevance of the article is that Robert Schumann became the first composer who created an independent genre – intermezzo (and not only as independent works) and it is very important both to performers and to teachers to look into leitmotiv peculiarities of this genre. Especially, if to take into account that these works are popular among pianists including students of higher educational establishments of Ukraine and China.

Practical importance of the article is the possibility of its application in such courses as: Music literature in Western European countries and the History of foreign music; an Analysis of music works; the History of piano music and the History of piano performance; as well as in case of the theory of genres and while learning, performing and interpretation of this cycle – of six *Intermezzo* by R. Schumann.

We shall dwell on *Intermezzo* as an independent genre in the works of Robert Schumann. Six plays under a common name *Intermezzo* (op. 4, 1832) – is one of the most talented compositions of young Schumann.

In comparison with «*Butterflies*» («*Papillons*»), completed the year before, theme material has become more original, peculiar, and vividly figurative. As well as in all earlier cycles, themes of *Intermezzo* are laconic, they are more often compared between each other; they are as if «threaded» on the drama and they are not developing. This is one of the first works where the composer uses a composition technique used in «*Davidsbündlertänze*».

If to take into account a great independence of the plays *Intermezzo* the uniting function of the intonation leit-complex is becoming especially substantial. Other features peculiar to a style of piano cycles of Schumann begin to shape: hidden plot program which can be judged not only by the character of music, but also by expressions of the composer himself; original framing (for example, likeness of main themes №2 and №6), tendency to succession of parts without any break (*attacca*).

Texture of Schumann's works is individual. Polyphonic thinking is of great importance in his works and cycle *Intermezzo* is literally threaded with polyphonic texture, imitations, canons and so on.

Schumann assumed that in theory he was a «student», though in composition practice he had already had decent experience: *Abegg Variations*, «*Butterflies*» («*Papillons*»), The first notebook of etudes after Paganini Caprices, *Intermezzo*, *Impromptus* on a theme by Clara Wieck, symphony g-moll, three variation cycles – on the *Allegretto* from Beethoven's 7th symphony, on a theme of R. Schubert and a nocturne of F. Chopin. Later Schumann would captiously criticize his early works and he had to «finish» many of them. None the less, «*Butterflies*», *Intermezzo* op. 4, *Impromptu* op. 5 – these all are, undoubtedly, «the beginning of real Schumann, works of a brilliant and the most original master» [5, p. 138]. We would even say that these are the works of true Schumann.

Intermezzi of Schumann are dedicated to I. Kallivoda – a Czech composer, violinist and conductor. Piano cycle of «Intermezzo» of Robert Schumann consists of 6 plays:

1. Allegro quasi maestoso – **A-dur**;
2. Presto a capriccio – *e-moll*;
3. Allegro marcato – *a-moll*;
4. Allegro semplice – *C-dur*;
5. Allegro moderato – **d-moll**;
6. Allegro – **h-moll**.

At the basis of all Intermezzo there is a vivid tempo (that is suite principle slow-fast is not used) and they are created in different keys: **A-dur** – *e-moll* – *a-moll* – *C-dur* – **d-moll** – **h-moll**.

There are two keynotes in the cycle: A (№№1, 5, 6) and C-dur (№№2, 3, 4). Each of them is connected with three plays by the first degree of tonal relationship. The first tonic triad (plagale) is connected by the main key **A-dur** – this is a primary one (№1) and two final (№№5 и 6) cycle plays: **A-dur** – **d-moll** – **h-moll** (T – s – II). The second key group is a middle one (№№2–4) – is connected with a low-tertian key **C-dur** and all plays (also of a tertian character) are directed to it as to a time key-note and comprise a tertian function **e-moll** – **a-moll** – **C-dur** (III – VI – T).

There is also one more tonal tendency in plays of the cycle – division into two parts whereas each of them includes three Intermezzo: major-minor-minor and major-minor-minor; and each part starts from the key-note followed by tonality of another level.

All plays of the cycle are performed fast (Allegro) and they differ only in non-repeating clarifications of peculiarities of this tempo: quasi maestoso (as if solemnly), a capriccio, marcato, moderato (only the last one does not add much richness to a tempo – not fast). As we can see, there are remarks of three types: solely tempo (moderato), character (quasi maestoso, marcato), character-genre (a capriccio, as supplementing Intermezzo №2 with genre capriccio).

As well as in all early cycles, themes Intermezzo are laconic; there are always a lot of them; themes are often compared with each other, and they do not develop internally, though this type of development of music thought can also be met.

Features of variation are also important, especially those which are shown in different piano plays of Schumann: «Intermezzo», «Kreisleriana», «Humoreske», «Carnaval». They

make up, so called, suite cycles. Independence of thematic invention of plays «Intermezzo», uniting function of the intonation leit-complex is especially significant. Other features peculiar to a style of Schumann's piano cycles are also quite evident: plot program, original framing – related main themes of Intermezzo № 2 and №6. They are related in respects of passage movement, lyric anxiety and confusion which are associated (especially in the last one) with Scherzo b-moll of F. Chopin, as well as with tendency to succession of parts without any break.

F. May noted «lack of connections in structure and some vagueness of melodism» in Intermezzo, though she indicated that «this work occupies much higher place than «Butterflies»; it contains typical for Schumann images, for example, peculiar to Schumann «tense burst», signifies use of a new method of expression and predicts good creative perspectives» [31, p. 84]. German music expert R. Hoenemzer calls «Intermezzo» a collection and indicates: «Perhaps the most problematic issue concerning the unity is the collection «Intermezzo», op. 4» [29, c. 39]. However plays Intermezzo are exceptionally unified and they are literally welded together.

Schumann's Intermezzo can be called a suite cycle. It has an original intonation basis which is exposed at the beginning №1 and being repeated twice in almost unchanged form and twice in a changed form in this Intermezzo, it also appears in different variants in all other plays of a cycle uniting them.

Intonation basis of the cycle (first three bars) represents two descending second intonations (we will compare them with two primary intonations of «Kreislariana»), directed from IV to III mode degree – in the first cell and from I to VII – in the second one. In bass they have an opposition of movement of rising seconds. There is a formation of two six-five chords with a resolution (D-T; DD-D). Voice-leading is also connected with the harmony: descending movement by parallel thirds of the upper voices and the oppositional bass movement. The above mentioned peculiarities of the intonation basis as well as of the harmonic content are saved when the initial leit-basis of the cycle appears next time.

The intonation basis of Schumann's piano cycle «Intermezzo» – leit-complex –is repeating succession of degrees in different rhythmic variations IV – III – I – VII (at the beginning), IV – III – IV – III – I – VII (reprise); IV – III – I – IV – III – I (from №2); III – VII – V9 – I (from №3); IV – III – IV – III – IV (from №5); I – VII (from №6 – completion of the first period; the end of the program) and other.

It often happens that leadthroughs of the first intonation cell follow in pairs (like two intonations at the beginning) in different keys. In № 4 rhythmic basis of the motives and iambic upbeat are built on the same stages of a mode as in the initial formation (I – VII – IV – III). The above mentioned stages, especially succession IV–III, are also evident in other lyric themes of the cycle: for example in № 5 (v. 28-32: IV – III), in the middle of № 2 (IV – III; IV – III; IV – III), in episodes Des-dur from №3. Thus, an episode Des-dur in №3, written under the same name a-moll in relation to a common introduction, is based on incomplete first part of introduction (there is only III degree) and almost invariable second one; we can also consider first 32^{nds} as an inversion of the initial motive – it is in a manner of Schumann's contrapuntal enthusiasm of that period (as we know, he studies books of Marpurg very hard, makes a careful study of fugue of I.S. Bach). Moreover this mode introduces a scherzo nuance (let's remember analogous in meaning inversion of the intonation interval in № 12 of «Davidsbündlertänze» by Schumann).

There are also more free variants of use of a leit-complex. It is significant that in the final bars of the whole cycle it is distinctively heard (see the end of №6). In two last chords we can hear original antithesis to the beginning – first unit of the initial formation: the melody is given in inversion, rhythmic expansion and in other harmonization saving sound-high rise level and dense texture of the accompaniment. Such perception can be predicted by pair chord units which have concentrated in the end of the parts of the last Intermezzo.

Composition core of the «Intermezzo» is to a lesser extent than in «Davidsbündlertänze» dissolved in the thematic invention of plays. Saving an initial image more, this core independent and autonomous, appears as a leitmotiv, «as some fixed idea which does not leave "a hero" of the composition through the whole cycle». More often this leitmotiv (theme element) appears in the moments of dramatic tension, finishing preculmination expansion. Such an expressive function of a leit-basis of the first intermezzo is already defined at the beginning of the composition.

May be Intermezzo of R. Schumann can be best described by words of G. Golovinskiy: «Schumann's method... can be more precisely defined as "**growing**" of the **initial leit-intonation to the theme**, every time a different one, but not as a variation on a theme (highlighted by us as – **L.D.**)» [3, c. 50]. However, more often these principles in the works of Schumann are so close that it is very hard to separate them from each other.

A certain role in combining all plays of the cycle *Intermezzo* is played by **intonation V – VI – V**, appearing at the very beginning of the main part **№1** (leap to a ninth, with a second, rhythmically acute, filling). It is a free variant of the **main leit-complex**: the leading position is taken by the same intonation d-cis which is also presented in the first cell “motto”; a little bit later in a scale-like movement there are also sounds a-gis of the second cell of introduction; from the initial impulse dotted rhythm is also borrowed. Nevertheless, this kind of **theme core** is quite original and independent – mainly due to appearance of a wider melodic line and alteration of the mode interpretation: fis-moll instead of A-dur.

This variant of a theme element which is intensively expanded and developed (its appearance in D-dur, for example, is remarkable) and quite often appearing in the last parts of the cycle, thus performs the role of one more uniting core of the composition.

Especially remarkable can be considered singing for at the beginning of the last *Intermezzo*. We shall pay attention to the copyright signs of the accent and «sf», highlighting sounds of the leit-intonation. It is also often sounded starting from VI degree. Such a little bit truncated variant can be also heard at the beginning of **№ 5**.

It is possible, that a creative impulse for creation of such works have become some common and very close internal stimulating motives that has stipulated their relation [Merk, p. 45]. Let's remember exalted dreams overcoming Schumann before writing of cycle *Intermezzo* (Let's pay attention to one of the entries of the diary of the composer, 1831: «I want to change, I swear to you – please give me just one person, the only one, whom I could give my heart – beloved, beloved, give me please a woman's heart – a woman's heart!» (cited: 15, p. 45]). We shall also remind that the work has been initially dedicated to a quite young Clara Wieck... We shall remark cycle *Intermezzo* where in the initial intonation VI – V a lyric expression of a play has been concentrated.

In big Schumann's cycles of non-variation type we can find, at first sight, unexpected, but not accidental, connections between different, sometimes quite remote in relation one to another, plays.

Thus, *Intermezzo* №1 contains all the components uniting plays of the suite and variant-variation cycle. Each part of *Intermezzo* is characterized by its own independent **introduction**, which performs an essential function in future in the drama development of the work: leitmotiv, as well as anticipation of the intonation, rhythmic, tonal, texture content of the play and of the whole cycle. In the middle part *Alternativo* there is its own

introduction, where there are signs of a leit-rhythm (waltz) and leit-intonation (chromatism, fourth and fifth).

In other Intermezzo introductions will also play an important role for formation of thematic invention, texture, informative drama of the work. In the Second Intermezzo introduction performs a function of the tonal support; in the Third one – that of the harmonic basis (D7, 6/5) – 2 bars; they will be the basis for the middle episode. In the small Intermezzo №4 – one introduction bar goes through the whole play. In Intermezzo № 5 and 6 there are no introductions.

Let's refer to **introduction principles** of «Intermezzo» which are dependent of leitmotivism, intonation repetitions. A performer tending to a comprehensive interpretation of the whole cycle, must elicit **intonation connections-arcs**. Schumann facilitates this task a little bit using different signs – short slurs, sf, signs of an acute accent and other – he thoroughly distinguishes the beginning of a leit-complex (this can be seen from the whole music material of the works). Moreover, sometimes intonation grain of the cycle is placed under such conditions (for example, on the top of the culmination dynamic basis), that it is simply impossible not to highlight it.

None the less, a performer-interpreter has still a lot of analytic work, as the texture of the work is dense, polyphonic, and demonstrations of a leit-basis are not always so simple. For example, in v. 24-27 Intermezzo № 1 variant of a theme element (introduction which is totally underestimated by performers in this play) is usually not completely heard and it "sinks" in diminuendo. Though Schumann indicates dramatic accents and crescendo interrupted by sudden piano. In № 2 (in v. 142 and 144)) intonation complex is twice unexpectedly (sf) found in quiet and clear (pp, leggiero) movement of the eighths. During performance sounding of these two different in functions elements, textures must not be the same in force and merge in a uniform rapid flow. Thus, in № 5 (v. 37-44 and 174-180), it is necessary to listen to intonations of the element so delicately interspersed into music texture.

But if a performer does not realize **leit-intonation of the cycle**, it influences on his perception of the whole. In such case plays of the cycle are excessively separated from each other, Schumann's indications *attacca* are ignored during transfer from one Intermezzo to the other, connecting threads between them are torn.

From the point of view of a composition structure of the cycle “Intermezzo”, performance of one or more plays is considered to be improper, it would be some odd to play separate items from «Carnaval», «Davidsbündlertänze» and «Kreisleriana» of Schumann.

Let's point out that very often the name of Schumann's cycle – «Intermezzo» – is improperly translated as «Six intermezzo» that creates an illusion of the existence of six plays in sort of «Intermezzo» by I. Brahms. In fact Intermezzo by R. Schumann – is a uniform suite cycle.

Having examined plays from the suite cycle Intermezzo by Robert Schumann, we have come to a conclusion that they all are in a certain variant-variation correlation and they are connected between each other by leit-intonations, leitmotifs, leit-harmony, leit-rhythm, leit-themes, leit-images.

Thus, study of the piano cycle «Intermezzo» by Robert Schumann is a relevant problem of musicology and artistic performance.

References:

1. Golovinskiy, G. (1990). Robert Schumann and Russian Music of the 19th Century. Soviet music (Vol. 3), (pp. 46–54). Moscow [in Russian].
2. Demchenko, G. (1997). Principles of cyclization of miniatures in the piano works of Schumann. G. I. Gamburg (Eds.). Robert Schumann and the crossroads of the ways of music and literature. Collection of scientific works, (pp. 89–100), Harkov : «RA» – «Karavella» [in Russian].
3. Zhitomirskiy, D. (1964). Robert Schumann. Essays on life and creativity. Moscow: Muzyika [in Russian].
4. Lakhuti, A. (1960). Suite cycles by Schumann . Works of Department of Music Theory of the Moscow State Conservatory (Vol. No. 1), (pp.280–337) . Moscow [in Russian].
5. Merkulov, A. (1991). Suite cycles by Schumann. Questions the integrity of the composition and interpretation. Moscow.: Muzyika, [in Russian].
6. Shapovalova, O. (2003). The musical encyclopedic dictionary Moscow: OOO «RIPOL Klassik» [in Russian].
7. Shuman, R. (1970). Letters (1817-1840) Translated from German by A. A. Steinberg. Editor by translation and translation of a part of letters by N. A. Temcina. Comp., introductory Article, comments by D. V. Zhitomirsky (Vol. 1). Moscow.: Muzyika [in Russian].

Date of submission: 22.06.2016