

## **THE FIFTH PIANO CONCERTO BY PROKOFIEV: COMPOSITINAL AND PERFORMING INNOVATIONS**

*The article is dedicated to considering compositional and performing innovations in the piano works of S. Prokofiev on the example of the fifth piano concerto. The phenomenon of the "new piano" in the context of piano instrumentalism, technique and technology of composition. It identifies the aspects of rethinking the romantic interpretation of the piano in favor of the natural-percussive.*

*Keywords: piano concerto, instrumentalism, percussive nature of the piano, performing style.*

Prokofiev is one of the most outstanding composers-pianists of the XX century who boldly "exploded" both the canons of the composer's and pianistic mastery of his time but managed to create his own coherent system of expressive means in both these areas of music. The five piano concertos by Prokofiev (created at the beginning and the middle of his career – 1912-1932) clearly reflect the most recognizable and the key for the composer's creativity artistic features of the author's personality. Having dissociated himself in the strongest terms from the romantic tradition of the concert genre, Prokofiev created his new style – in terms of piano instrumentalism, technique and technology composition. All the five piano concertos "fit" just in the 20 years of Prokofiev's life (after 1932 the composer did not write pianos, not counting begun in 1952 and unfinished double concert with the alleged dedication to S. Richter and A. Vedernikov). The first concert (1911-1912) – the most compact, light, known as "football" for expressed clarity of rhythm and percussion of the piano sound. The second one (1912-1913) – "favorite" for the composer-performer himself, referred by V. Karatygin to "the most important creations of modern Russian music" and admired by B. Asafiev due to its "sincerity, spontaneity, originality of expression and richness of content" [quoted by 3]. Both at once divided the public and critics into enthusiastic fans and outraged opponents, but never left indifferent. The third concert, initiated by Prokofiev in 1913, was completed only 1921 – according to many researchers, one of the best works of Prokofiev, in which "the lyrical spirit is organically connected to the dynamic development" [3], is perhaps the most popular to the present days (including, among Chinese pianists). The fourth concerto for the left hand, written for pianist P. Wittgenstein, who had lost his right arm in the war, was completed in 1931, but executed after Prokofiev's leaving. And finally, the fifth – five-part – concerto (1932) was also evaluated and understood not immediately, its

recognition was largely due to the performance of Sviatoslav Richter in 1941. It is this last "lately" accepted and understood one that drew our research attention by the ability to analyze in the work of the brilliant composer-pianist the organic combination of piano-concert revolutionism of means, "optimistic piano" with the classical (neoclassical) clarity of thought (and spirit) – as "gravitation toward certainty, clarity, order" (S. Tarakanov [7, p. 420]), but in the format of his time, his era.

"The world picture" of each of the five piano concertos by S. Prokofiev is a unique embodiment of concert genre, piano and performing poetics. Its amplitude extends from the motor toccato, brilliant technology of scales and passages – to subtly fragile lyrics valued by listeners and critics only with time; from grotesque harsh contrasts, plenty of ingenious inventions – to the life-affirming solar pathos, natural, genuine optimism; from the principle of clear, crystal clearness of shape and texture (like the media of techniques of high music of the harpsichord epoch) – to the unexpected and unusual musical-dramaturgic turns.

"Le Pas d'Acier" of Prokofiev's rhythmic is filled with the energy of the spirit, which is in harmony with his own and the outlook of the epoch. A. Schnittke spoke of the special, "natural", "not ideologically suggested, but the very true" optimism of Prokofiev solidarized with "epoch and its attributes – fast trains, cars, airplanes, telegraph, radio, and so on – which gave a sobering-ecstatic, achieved once and for all, the precise organization of time, reflected in the everyday habits of Prokofiev" [8]. Perhaps this is why the most severe in the history of humanity tests, the tragic events of the XX century, were long time perceived by contemporaries (including Prokofiev) as an accident, the lack of "fair" logic, a tragic misunderstanding. Accordingly, optimism, which became the starting point of life, the principle of thinking at the beginning of the century (chronologically coincided with the development of personal musician's qualities of Prokofiev), continued in the future, even with the inevitable adjustment. This philosophy (ideology) of creative and life (even mundane) thinking, justified by the expectations of the beginning of the XX century for the "awaited reliability of the historical route" for the imminent collapse of all barriers, of course, affected the sound realities of Prokofiev's piano, the composition, texture, and other principles of music on a kind of "retirement" from the ugly, "harmful" realities – to the neoclassical clarity and purity of form and texture, but also to the efficient energy and rhythmical assertiveness. Hence, as noted by A.

Schnittke, comes "cold, athletic life setting on the most useful as well as spirituality, in the fate of young people (the early XX century. – A), including Prokofiev" [8].

Specified by A. Schnittke "accurate time management" is reflected in Arkadev's laws of interaction of "sounding" and "non-sounding" nonacoustic bases. After all, every era has its "own specific form of actually "non-sounding" pulsatile continuum (time, energy) and the form of their interaction. It seems likely that this assumption is true in regard to an individual manner of the composer "[2, p. 183]. The statement that the existing basic laws of being common and essential to all its components, also appear in the author's energy continuum, Prokofiev's creativity confirms with lively and persuasive force. That "sphere of voluntary deployment ... throbbing environment within which unfold their energy elements of the sound tissues ... energy field is as if hidden vital essence of the work" in the music of Prokofiev turn into the predominance of different forms of motor skills, the definition and the importance of the metro-rhythmic formulas, clarity (of performing and composing) articulating, both in general and in detail, square constructions dissection of form and completeness of its individual parts. For Prokofiev the subordination of "non-sounding" temporal flow in Bach's way (Prokofiev conceived not without reason that in the last year of life double piano concerto had its ideological prototype of the Double Concerto by J.S. Bach) involves performing the introduction into it of the "organizing pulse" of the live axle which keeps the whole fabric of corresponding energy directed naturally-percussive (for piano) the type of carcass, the method of sound production. This continuity of the pulse (in sounding tones and pauses) helps the performer (and composer), master irreversible element of "live time". A "Prokofiev's music, even in the most abstract moments it is always associated with the real processes, with the action, or even just a movement" (E. Denisov [4]). Not without reason in the Fifth Piano Concerto connections with ballet deepened and expanded. Thus, in the first part (Allegro con brio) Prokofiev immediately immerses the listener in the atmosphere of joyful and energetic dance with a stage-carnival (ballet) change of masks, dance-pantomime. It is very important to the interaction with the ripple articulated motivic fabric.

The fifth five-part concert is unusual in terms of form. Let us note that in the history of piano concerto the five-part cycle occurred after all. So, in 1906 Busoni wrote a concerto for piano and orchestra in five parts for a total of about seventy minutes, with the choral finale; five parts have "Motions" for Piano and Orchestra by

Stravinsky (1959), Piano Concerto by B. Tchaikovsky (1971) and G. Ligeti (1988), Triple Concerto by E. Podgaitis for Piano, Violin, Cello (1988). In comparison, the Fifth Piano Concerto by Prokofiev (1932) is very compact, it is "a kind of quasi-concert, lasting about 25 minutes" [5, p. 79].

Thus, a unique Prokofiev's "formula of time-energy" (M. Arcadie) in micro- and macro-structures, general Prokofiev's compositional principles are "based on clarifying the logic of the internal structure, rather than the complexity and variation of it. Seeming simplicity of Prokofiev's form or in any way related to the facilitation of formation or with the restoration and neoclassical aspirations – rather the "simplicity" is derived from the highly developed constructive thinking, helping the composer found in each individual case as much as possible a clear solution to the compositional problems" [4]. Prokofiev himself writes about this in the "Autobiography": "If you select a one-handed [Fourth](#), since the creation of the [Third](#) has been more than ten years, were created new concepts of how to deal with this form, some tricks occurred to me (passage across the keyboard, during which the left hand surpasses the right; the chords at the piano and orchestra, interrupting each other, etc.), finally, the notebook has accumulated a pack of bouncy major themes. I did not want to make the concert difficult at first and even suggested to call it "music for piano and orchestra" [quoted by 3]. However, Prokofiev never managed to create "light" music from (as well as in a number of opuses of that period), the concert turned out to be challenging in all respects and for almost ten years spent "on the shelf". Prokofiev himself was trying to figure out the reasons for such complexity, self-critical thinking was to blame his perennial fear of "the beaten track", often destroying the sincere desire of the composer to the clarity and simplicity (remember his worldly organization of time). However, after performing the concert in 1941 by "clear" in nature S. Richter, the situation around the concert has somewhat changed.

It is known that Prokofiev himself was not happy with the "pianism" of the concert. According to the composer's own words, at the end of the orchestration, he "sat down at the cramming of his piano part all the time complaining about its "difficulty", especially initially, as already mentioned, he conceived "easily and effective thing" [ibid]. The concert was really different by some "abstract motorness" and "hard exaggeration archaic methods of Domenico Scarlatti Piano letters (he wrote for the harpsichord!)" (Delson [3]). But the famous (today) Prokofiev lyrics, progressive terms of compositional style – inspired, soft and light, "edging out" the

tough motoriness, in the fourth part; genre-expressive, fabulously charming in the fifth part – remarkably elevates the entire concert. In general, the piano part is written with masterful virtuosity, impressively and originally. There is no traditional for the XIX century cadences, no identified sonata to deploy forms, but is expressed in a healthy, genuine optimism, cheerful sparkling humor and poetic pages of poetry, indicated the path of psychological complications (swelling of the main thematic core polyfonization of structure in the middle section of the fourth part; a kind of long-term holding poly-mode complex effects braking "action stage" in the fifth part).

This work can also reveal contradictory to the aspirations of Prokofiev monumental symphonic and chamber-instrumental areas, variously manifested in the creative way the composer. This "mounting" is manifested above all in form-making. All the five parts of the concert are relatively small, but tend to the integrity of the entire form. In the introduction to the author's transcriptions of concertos for two pianos B. Block speculated about "a certain degree ... of rondo-likeness" of the compositional form of the concert, in which the "first, third and fifth parts are built on the same or similar materials and are a kind of rondo refrains, and the second and fourth part – its episodes. This feature is reminiscent of the works of "Capriccio Espagnol" by Rimsky-Korsakov, where there is also rondo-likeness cycle (with significant changes in the last refrain of the works)" [quoted by 3]. At the same time in the structure of the concert cycle outlined features divertissement (A. Alekseev writes about it [1, p. 84]) "with distinct elements of plastic start pantomime" [ibid]. Characteristically, while Prokofiev does not break with the traditions of the genre of the concert, but in his own way creatively converts them. Thus, despite the significant transformation of the latter, it retained the traditional combination of fast (allegro sonata or rondo-sonata) and slow lyrical parts. Instead of the usual for the divertissement-suita cycle of weakening ties between the parts felt symphonic integrity of form and use of the structural symmetry principle. It should be noted here that in each of his concerts, Prokofiev found the original techniques of interpretation of the concert genre and composer techniques. Perhaps choreographic divertissement of the Fifth concert specially shaded through a line of thematic development, as evidenced by the presence of an unusual third part, in which we hear the main theme of the first part (Allegro) in a new genre – toccato "clothing" and emphasized the unusual finale – a kind of arches to the first part, to continue and gradually extinguishing toccato start in theatrical braking "action". Mentioned above in

connection with performing the subordination of "non-sounding" temporal flow, some features of the "Bachianism" Prokofiev's Fifth concert are also found in the quest for revival of Bach's principles of relation of the piano and orchestra parties: no cadenzas for piano and deployed orchestral tutti; the presence of a kind of symphony orchestra and piano ensemble in larger thematic load of the latter.

Impressive, but completely relevant to the content of the work piano party also combines the "techniques o sonatina in the previous to the Fifth concert works ([Two Sonatinas, Op. 54](#))" and "cumbersome techniques of monumental pianism, not always harmoniously combined with the features of chamberness" [3] (remember that Prokofiev originally wanted to call the Fifth concert "Music for Piano and Orchestra"). The piano party differs with the freshness of the piano textural techniques, "the passage across the keyboard, during which the left hand surpasses the right; chords at the piano and orchestra, interrupting each other, etc." [6, p. 189]; glissando on the white keys on the right – and fast positional movement for black (Part One) or more complex figuration (second part) on the left; fast passages, built on the performance of alternating different hands of five-finger and other shapes or sounds; using the first finger to capture the first two keys at the same time; Game accents in the bass on the black keys col pugno («handful» of fingers); A rich and varied sonorities use uppercuse. Numerous, varied, often unusual – loved and wonderfully receive from Prokofiev himself, jumps in the piano part. Perhaps, in the Fifth concert framed most colorful, elegant, sophisticated and spectacular performance for the texture of the piano works of the composer (he went further in this respect on the way-out of the lush decorative pianistic means of expression for the benefit of mentalizing, concise instrumental expressions).

*First part (Allegro con brio)* is a rondo-sonata form. The exposition is quite brief: active, grotesquely pointed GP (where the piano clearly "leads"); lyrical dolce the strings in SP; joyously energetic, brilliant, mate to the main PP (with colorful fanfare pipes); marche-like ZP (wind and triplet piano passages – after repeating the GP in the same key). The apparent contrast between the main themes (dance eccentric) "compensated" their joint contrast to the background themes, interludes (ballroom-dance). Working with the alternation of two main themes as laconic (referred to the remarks «col pugno piano in the party). The central episode – Meno mosso – himself a three-part, demonstrates a new topic with its own variation of traits and dreamy danceable. After reprise GP original method used a kind of rivalry "run

against" each other power chords Piano and Orchestra (con precisione). Thus, all is not devoid of a certain part of the mosaic; both described composition techniques to create a solid structure such as a symphonic concert in which Alekseev sees a quasi-choreographic action [1, p. 81].

*The second part – Moderato ben accentuato* – variations on a theme developed by two alternately (with the features of a double variation of a three-part synthetic coda). Guess quaint Prokofiev march-procession – metrically elastic, ironic and sarcastic, scherzo (glissando, jumps, flashing passages, "glass" staccato, sharp accents of the piano, pizzicato strings and sharpness of copper – accentuated dryness statements, comparison of the eponymous major and minor) but contains also some lyrical mannerisms of old dances.

*The third part – Allegro con fuoco* – very unusual (toccata, emphasizing the leading role in the effective beginning of the works of Prokofiev and in this cycle). New forms such efficiency (emotionally pumped up to the final concert) are (sometimes directly, as in the end part of) the musical material of GP and PP. There are a fireworks piano sonorities, fresh tricks of the game – the clusters of chords, passages in double notes, leaps across the keyboard, use Prokofiev glass tones. No less jerkiness while the orchestra is transparent. Return to the main themes (the orchestra) as the temporarily holding back toccata aspiration without depleting it. It is extremely logical perceived contrast of the fourth.

"Magic-lyrical" *the fourth part – Larghetto* – a clear demonstration of the evolution of the composer's style in the direction of the famous Prokofiev today humanistic lyrics. Swaying rhythm of soft plastic lullaby refined muted strings contribute to the gradual singing the main theme of the nucleus in a wide breath (author remarks, "gentle", "calm", "subdued", "very quietly", "connected"). Undoubtedly, this is a lyrical climax in toccata "body" of the loop. In the middle section (Piu mosso) dramatized music, acquiring the features of a wide pathetically painted declamatory melody is polyfonized henchmen (many researchers here see a direct relationship with Russian songs). Reprise returns the listener to a tender mother, dissolves in silence after taking off the grand piano passage.

*The fifth part – Vivo* – inspired Toccata ("delayed" previous lyrical) in the form of a rondo-sonata. Particularly striking two themes seem to be: light, mobile-sharp (B flat minor), and joyful, pastoral genre. By the end of the development of the music acquires a characteristic of Prokofiev's fascinating, magical format (figure 100 – the

episode "fairy tale charm" with typical poly-modeness somewhat reminiscent of compositional techniques "fabulous" episodes Glinka), and there is scherzo-air, cheerful code with a new theme in the character of the march-procession (number 104).

Thus, the Fifth Piano Concerto saw a number of compositions and methods of innovation piano instrumentalism. It not only completes some (foreign) stage of the composer, but in many ways anticipates the next. So, V. Block said: "Topics ending his figurative content and genres, of course, close to the crowd scenes Prokofiev ballets ("Folk dance "in" Romeo and Juliet ", the scene of the fair in the " Tale of the Stone Flower")" [quoted by 3]. Not fitting in the role of "continuing the traditions" (albeit significant, individually preconsiderations), Prokofiev, no doubt – a bold and brash founder of new sonic realities (piano and genre). He boldly experimental tiruet with a series of concerts (except, perhaps – "classic" third), bringing a charge of optimism, energy efficient, rhythmical assertiveness. The performing implementation of "organizing the pulse" in the fabric of the music corresponds with the corresponding energetic directional natural percussive (piano), the type of carcass, the methods of sound production. Overcoming romantic interpretation of the piano shown on several lines: non-melodious sensory ("vocal") sound in favor of this natural percussive (dry, hard, "glass") to the frequent use of extreme registers; updating of specific accentuation, non legato, articulation; minimizing invoice, linearity, "uncluttered." All that inherits the tradition of Early Classical and classicist art clavier, and in the Russian tradition – Mussorgsky. However, despite the prevalence of these anti-romantic tradition, in Prokofiev's piano style is very important and the features of romantic pianism, which is especially true in his famous humanist cantilenas. Like many composers, pianists (Chopin, Liszt, Scriabin, Rachmaninoff) Prokofiev creates a "new piano" based "on" for his brilliant pianistic device and a new hearing of his era noosphere. The break with the romantic trend is revealed in the originality of opposition of the solo part and the orchestra as a single monolithic organism in favor of the idea of the game is competition, which leads to the enrichment of the principles symfonized concert genre theatrical and cinematic-assembly (already the XX century) dramaturgy. These processes, on the one hand, speaking a formal indication of the continuation of tradition, on the other – clearly demonstrate the pioneering role of Prokofiev, who made a considerable contribution



towards the establishment of a concert piano and the sound of the genre ("New Piano") in the modern era.

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