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EXPRESSIVE ASPECTS OF FRANCK'S WORKS (USING THE CYCLE "PRELUDE, CHORAL, FUGUE" AS A CASE STUDY)

The article is dedicated to the analysis of the phenomenon "expression", widely sought after in psychology, linguistics and art history. This concept stands out in musical art, traditionally correlated with "sensory language". Genre-stylistic and performing characteristics of musical expression are studied using Franck's piano cycle "Prelude, Choral, Fugue" as an example, in which genre and musical-rhetorical aspects of the culture of the Baroque epoch and spiritual-stylistic seeking of Western-European romanticism are organically synthesized.

Keywords: expression, musical expression, C.Franck's works, piano cycle.

Albert Camus once said, that "expression begins where cogitation ends" [12]. In this particular opposition of emotional and rational traits of human personality, it is self evident that, primarily, the author's aspiration for accentuation in the phenomenon of expression and related to it striking manifestation of a wide range of senses, moods, is consistent with the etymology of the term [see: 14]. "Among friends of expression one won't find caution, prudence, equanimity and discretion. Emotionality, impulsiveness, enthusiasm and exaltation are its company." [12].

This concept, as well as the related ones, has become a case study in psychology, linguistics as well as in art history, since "there are indications of the connection between this phenomenon and the spiritual and emotional world of a person in the existing definitions of expression and expressiveness" [7], to the study, perception, creative realization of which all the above mentioned fields of scientifically-creative and humanitarian work are directed. Expression plays a special part in musical art, traditionally correlated with "sensory language".

Studying the phenomenon of "expression" in correlation with "expressiveness" as its translational analogy, E.N.Bondar emphasizes, that in the first case "...the power of expression is implied, in the second one - the external characteristic of the internal feeling. The analysis of the works of M.Bakhtin, O.Sokol, M.Severynova bears out the idea, that expression of musical utterance is always consistent with the quality and power of the internal feeling to a greater or lesser extent, directly linked to the nature of artistic embodiment of "personal sense", has a quality artistic impact on the audience and is expressed in the perception" [3, p.5]. It is significant, that the researcher studies the phenomenon of expression using the choral music of the middle and the second half of the

20th century as a case study. The significance of this expressive factor in composer-performer work of this period is also borne out by B.N.Holopova's introduction of the term "characteristic of expression" to the exploratory musical-theoretical usage, correlated with the creative work of K.Penderetsky, S.Gabaidulina, A.Pyart, E.Denisov and others. In the author's opinion "this characteristic is especially close to sound expression, thus its name. Articulation stands out as a leading element, with a smooth, melodious, - and staccato, "quivery" etc sound as a contrast. Articulation is supplemented by the specified means of texture, continuing in opposition, uninterrupted (continual) musical texture - and broken by the pauses, discontinues (discrete)...The above mentioned oppositions of sound in articulation, texture, melody, rhyme are classified into two general opposite functions "characteristics of expression": "consonance" and "dissonance" of expression..." [11, p.451]

It should be emphasized, that expression forms an important quality not only of its own musical language, but also of the performer's art, which D.S.Nadyrov suggests to study as a "special, vastly altered, modified (according to the specific features of an instrument) form of demonstration of a general system of expressive movements peculiar to humans, which to a larger degree, stimulates the natural and harmonious expression of the emotional sense of music, the recreation of the brilliant artistic feeling in the play" [8, p.268].

Such an approach to this particular type of art, representing the specific "musicalized form of human expression", is of the most important research perspectives of modern musicology at the moment, which determines the topicality of this article. The subject matter is focused on the peculiarities of the phenomenon's manifestation in C.Franck's work, particularly, in poetical and intonation originality of his piano cycle "Prelude, Choral, Fugue".

"There is no purer name than the name of this great ingenious soul" [9, p.7] These words by R.Rolland, we think, fully comply with the spiritual appearance and the works of César Franck, which always directs the audience towards the ideas of sincerity, pureness of conscious, honesty, clarity of mind, aspiration for gentrifice etc. This spiritual tone defines in many respects the semantic subtext of symphonic, as well as, piano compositions of the author, among which the cycle "Prelude, Choral and Fugue" is the most famous one.

César Franck is one of the most unique figures in French musical culture of the middle and the second half of the 19th century. Serious and profound musician, he never sought

fame and popularity, living a life of simplicity and seclusion. He preferred to work as a humble church organist and a teacher to a brilliant career of a virtuoso pianist. This leads to an interesting parallel between his work and the creative figure of S.I.Toneev. If the latter was called “a musical conscious of Moscow” by his contemporaries even during his lifetime, C.Franck, being a sincere, frank, candid, honest and humble person, could be called “a musical conscious of Paris” in the 70-80-ies of the 19th century.

The above mentioned character traits of Franck’s nature are significantly complimented by his, without doubt, serious attitude towards the questions of faith and religion which has become a hotly debated topic among the researchers of the composer’s work at various times. C.Franck’s personality, though being far from pronounced romantic individualism, however, appears to be kindred figures with many composers of Romantic-era, concerning the question of attitude towards Christianity, who saw a commonality of religion and art (including music) and declared the reality of their own path towards God and their individually-creative perception of the great spiritual Truths through their art in its various occurrences.

The important part of the Christian spiritual factor in C.Franck’s life had various “outs”. It effected his many years of work as a church organist, as well as, his unique love for an organ, directly consistent with the musical and liturgical tradition, and, in conclusion, his pedagogical work, the basic principal of which, first of all, was the love for his pupils and Art, which helped C.Franck to become not only a Teacher, a Mentor for his charges, but also a Father, genially close person – “Father Franck”. It is interesting, that the majority of “Franck’s school” representatives expressed themselves not only creatively, but also practically – through the renascence of the best spiritual and musical traditions of Western-European culture, beginning from the Middle Ages.

C.Franck’s works also reflected utmost diversity, peculiarity and, at the same time, integrity of the composer’s nature. It includes almost all the genres known in his time – piano, organ, chamber-instrumental, chamber-vocal, opera, and oratorio.

All Franck’s legacy, for one thing, is genre-stylistically connected with the late Beethoven’s sonatas, quartets, and the vocal works of F.Shubert, frantic romanticism of H. Berlioz, and the innovations of R.Wagner, F.Liszt (harmonic, textural, compositional language and thematic structure of his mature compositions) and, finally, with the works of

J.Brahms, aspiring to combine the progress of romanticism and classicism in his works, to closely study the legacy of ancient music.

For another thing, the evident genre diversity of Franck's works, variety of his stylistic origins, the fact of the dominance of organ and oratorio compositions in his legacy is undeniable, directly or indirectly connected with the Biblical theme, or with the genre field of musical-liturgical tradition in its instrumental-vocal manifestation. The latter is in fact is "a word, emotionally coloured by a musical sound", demonstrating "expressive function of spiritual music", connected with a wide range of emotional states – from "exalted contemplation" to "religious exultation" [4, p.30].

We can also find a deep spiritual-ethical subtext incorporated in those compositions by C.Franck, which is not directly correlated with the church's practice, but connected with it through the genre and musical-rhetorical symbolism. The above mentioned is primarily applied to the famous piano cycle "Prelude, Choral and Fugue".

The originality of the composer's cycle prompts some Ukrainian researchers, particularly, N.Rogozhin, to study this composition and related cycle "Prelude, Aria and Finale" as the examples of romantic renewal of a traditional sonata cycle. The "starting point" of this transformation is, as viewed by the researcher, first of all, Beethoven's fantasy sonata op.27, № 2 ("Moonlight"). Franck's composition if approached this way, taking into consideration intonation unity and uninterrupted performance of all its parts, acquires the sense of a piano poem of the Liszt type (by analogy with Sonata in C minor).

However, genre and intonation nature of this composition, the peculiarities of its structure and theme, attest to some other genetic origins, including its connection with genre peculiarity of, primarily, church sonata. It becomes apparent, first of all, in the peculiarity of the cycle build up, in which a significant part is dedicated to the slow sections, aimed to recreate spiritually exalted, grand, and, at the same time, austere and restrained mood, correlated with the semantics and spiritual-expressive qualities of a church sonata. This is also evident in the special significance of polyphonic techniques, in culmination extraction of the final fugue, which becomes the semantic outcome of the composition.

It should be stressed, that the textural peculiarities of the analyzed piano cycle, appealing not to the scale orchestral (the Liszt type), but the organ interpretation of the piano, that correlates not only with Franck's work as an organ performer, but with the basic role of an organ as basso continuo in a church sonata. The tendency towards organic

symbiosis of “the past” and “the present” in this cycle is demonstrated in the genre definitions of its components (prelude, choral, fugue), genetically ascending, similar to a church sonata, the Christian liturgical practice, and in wide usage of musical-rhetorical techniques, revealing, on the one hand, C.Franck’s connection to the best traditions of spiritual-musical culture of the past, on the other – their adaptation under the conditions of harmonic and intonation thinking of Western-European music of the second half of the 19th century.

At the same time, Franck’s cycle also demonstrates the creative leaning-reproduction of the experience of the German clerical and musical culture, generalized for the composers first of all in the artistic and performing work of J.S.Bach. The musical material of Franck’s Prelude is filled with a number of “signs” of not so much classical, but baroque music, which for the composer was again inseparably connected with the name of J.S.Bach. It is symbolic, that literally in the first bar of the composition the “counters” of the BACH motif (in this case – fis-e-g-fis) distinctly appear in the melodic line of hidden polyphony: this way the great French composer and organist C.Franck addresses the musical figure and symbol of the great German Master after one and a half century. Simultaneously, this kind of topic carried another musical-rhetorical and semantic content – as the “theme of the cross” and the symbol of a hard spiritual path of a man. Well-known in J.S. Bach’s various intonation and rhythmical versions, it became relevant for C.Franck too, whose works, as mentioned above, first of all, aspired to the depiction of exalted spiritual and ethical themes, strength and fortitude.

Hence, this tradition is manifested in recreation the version of “Bach’s sign” in the first bars of Prelude, musical rhetoric of his epoch, and in C.Franck’s masterly skills of polyphonic technique, which are especially prominent in the final fugue, and in the following “Prelude - Choral”, typical for the German protestant liturgical tradition, according to which, prelude quite often preceded the communal choral singing during the liturgy and, in conclusion, in the final extraction of the positive semantic significance of the choral theme as a bearer of spiritual Truth in its musical and creative interpretation.

The analyzed Prelude by C.Franck is build upon juxtaposition of the two types of material. The first one – improvising-figurative – was discussed before. The second one is based on the multiple repetition of the descending second intonations, representing a very popular in the 17th-18th century musical-rhetorical figure of a “sigh”, “complaint” as one of

the existing “signs” of musical-expressive utterance in the culture of this epoch. C.Franck’s “presentation” of this motif is notable for a textural range (octave-tertian doubles), requiring wide “spreading” of the pianist’s fingers at some times and approaching the method of performing organ compositions. The abundance of chromatic turnarounds in the theme, the peculiarities of rhythmic give an opportunity to study it as a thematic origin not only of Choral, but also of the following theme of Fugue, which also defines in many respects the intonation-dramatic integrity of the composition.

The structure of Prelude is rather peculiar. For all of its improvisation, the repetition of the themes in the tonic and dominant correlation resembles the composition of an old sonata, not devoid of the elements of development. C.Franck’s “face” as an author of the 19th century is “looking through” in the complex modulation passages and in the wide usage of a sequence of enharmonic modulations, creating quite an original tonal plan of Prelude’s culmination part – h – es – H – Dis – gis – h.

The appearance of Choral’s theme (vols. 11-12) in C.Franck’s works, is, essentially, preceded by the reserved, but filled with inner trepidation melody, “balanced” by the measured movement of the basses (*poco piulento*). This movement precesses the rhythm of its own choral theme, enlightened, conveying peaceful state of mind. There is no evidence of quoting in this melody theme of clerical life in well-known to Ukrainian musicology literature about C.Franck. Most likely, it represents the author’s stylization of musical material of this type. “It’s diatonic, mono-tonal, the chordal accompaniment is sonorous, but transparent. It is here, that the organistic texture, spread across the piano keyboard, with the very low basses and raised in “flute’s” register melodic voice (achieved by throwing the left hand over the right one) is the most prominent. A foot operated keyboard is implied here and “automatic” reduplication of the theme in the octave, possible only on an organ by switching on a specific register”, - says N.Rogozhina [9, c. 208]. It is typical, that V.Karatygin sees the direct intonation analogies with the bell motif from R.Wagner's "Parsifal" in the analyzed theme of Choral [5, p. 93]. In a similar parallel one can see not only C.Franck's passion for the opera performance of “Bayreuth genius”, but also the above mentioned interest of the composers-romanticists in Christian ideas and their spiritually-musical analogues.

Fugue, as already specified, becomes a culmination point in the development of the whole cycle, the generalizing idea and musical material of all its components. The similar

dramaturgic "plan", built on the fundamental extraction of the fugue section, but again evokes the analogies between C.Franck's composition and the structure of a church sonata. The intonation basis of its theme – the descending achromatized movement, known in musical practice of the 17th-18th centuries as "passus diriusculus" ("harsh movement") and defined as "a cup of suffering" [2, p. 110]. Its expressive significance in C.Franck's theme is intensified by the rhythm-intonations of the "sigh motif", divided by pauses.

Similar musical-rhetorical content, representing the generalized image of grief, is partly balanced by the *Largamente* note, appearing in Choral earlier as well. Its purpose is not as much connected with the tempo, as with the nature of the material presentation. It "implies sublime, broad, full of dignity, sonorous performance". From N. P.Koryhalova's point of view, «Franck has found a very accurate definition of the composition's character in the theme of fugue ..., having inscribed *Largamente* above its first bar, which not as much dictates the speed of the movement, as directs the performer to be reserved in the chosen tempo» [6, p. 53]. The similar combination in the theme of mournful expressiveness and, simultaneously, austerity and reserve of its representation creates an image, filled with dignity, emotional strength and depth.

"Come una cadenza" section not only connects Fugue with figurative Prelude, but also lays the groundwork for the appearance of the theme of Choral (v. 157), diatonic of which resists the strained chromatics of the Fugue theme.

The culmination of the composition becomes the counterpoint combination of simultaneous phonation of the Fugue theme (lower voice) and Choral (canto). Finally, the theme of Fugue and its harmonic sphere is "gradually forced out" by the choral melody and the domination of «bell-type» celebratory C-major.

The idea of the conclusion of the composition on a material of "enlightened" diatonic of Choral not only marks the spiritually positive result-conclusion of the analyzed cycle, but also evokes the associations with the liturgical tradition of Bach era, particularly, with the spiritual cantata, the direction of the development of which has always been focused on a choral as the source of spiritual truth and, at the same time, an intonation core of the whole composition. "Choral in a cantata is similar to the sun, penetrating through everything and warming everything up. It is similar to the knowledge, the light, and the composition serves as its path » [1, p. 65]. Franck's "Prelude, Choral and Fugue" appears, thus, to be in contact with both the tradition of a church sonata which could itself replace almost all the leading

sections of a mass, and with the German musical liturgical tradition, creatively apprehended by C.Franck through the works of J.S.Bach which is consistent with the romantic idea of the spiritually uniting force of the art, drawing together in many of its functions with religion and overcoming the confessional delimitation for the sake of the comprehension of Truth.

The expressive qualities in the analyzed cycle acquire the special meaning and are shown at the most various levels. They are evident in the strongly pronounced dynamic contrasts, in the impressive juxtaposition of various types of structure, diatonic and chromatics, in the exposure of the «organistic» peculiarity of the piano, and in the allusions to the intonation-rhetorical "dictionary" of the baroque era and its representatives, having a great significance for the works of C.Franck.

And finally, the peculiar type of the composition's expressiveness is revealed in such an organic for the composer's style symbiosis of the "past" and "modern", in the context of which the genre-style experiments in the sphere of piano cycle (correlated with the searches of his many contemporaries) are supplemented with the typology and expressive qualities of a church sonata and a German spiritual cantata of the Baroque epoch. All the above mentioned is quite coordinated with the basic characteristics of the phenomenon of "expression" as a whole, defined also as “means of expression by a person their identity with a certain group, community, culture” [13].

The inspired and strict music of C.Franck convinces of the value of ethical ideals of the composer, which allowed him to become an example of high dedication to the art, utter devotion to his work and human duty.

R.Rolland once said about him, quoting the words of Jean Christophe, the character of his novel: «... to this unearthly Franck, this saint from music was able to carry the unfading clearness of a patient soul through the life, full of deprivations and despised work, and thus – that humble smile, which illuminated his art with the light of kindness» [10, p.253].

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