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***PROBLEMS OF FORMATION OF THE PIANISTS' HEARING BASED  
ON THE MATERIALS OF THE MODERN MUSIC IN  
THE COURSE OF CHOIR SCORE READING.***

*The article is devoted to the theoretical set of the problem of formation of the harmonic hearing of the students of the piano department of the musical college in the course of choir score reading studies. It defines the requirements for the training course repertoire, designates the universal properties of the harmony in the choral works of the XX century. Particular attention is paid to the identification in the musical text, recognition and artistic assimilation of stable chords (accords) used in the modern music. Some general methodological guidelines of class work choir score reading towards the formation of hearing representations about the regular consonances as an element of the harmonic language are established.*

*Keywords: modern harmony, choral music of the twentieth century, harmonic hearing, chord, and choir score reading.*

The most important quality necessary for a modern musician of the highest qualification is its universal competence, ability to perform various professional activities. One of the most common musician professions is a profession of pianist. Its main components are the activities of the concert soloist, member of chamber ensemble, orchestra or choir accompanier, accompanist, teacher and illustrator.

It is not unexpected that the program of training of pianist students in the musical high school includes a course of their preparation for work in the field of choral performing art. The main element of such training is the subject of "choir score reading" (hereinafter referred to as "ChSR"). This subject is directly aimed at developing the pianist student's competence of choral accompanier (accompanist), capable of concert performance with choral ensemble, able to carry out training and rehearsals in the class of choral singing and choral conducting.

Lecturer of ChSR course shall solve the complex pedagogical task, crucial components of which are: a) formation of systematic knowledge of the choir score with professional performing musicians; b) formation of strong aural representations of choir phonation and the ability of its reproduction by piano; c) expansion of musical experience, familiarization of the future experts with the area of vocal and choral music, with its genres, styles, means of expression; d) development of skills of prima vista reading of complex manners of execution (heterophonic, polyphonic, homophonic-harmonic textures), d) formation of the ability of the adapted presentation of choral textures (for example -

exclusion of certain voices, transposition, selective execution of choral parts and instrumental accompaniment parts), e) development of abilities of an ear for music and creative musical thinking.

Among the tasks of training pianists during the ChSR course mastering, we identify and consider in this paper the *problem of harmonic hearing development*, required for the professional accompanist in the work with contemporary choir repertoire. *The purpose of the article* is to turn the attention of specialists to the relevance of this pedagogical task, identify its main aspects and find ways to solve it.

A lot of attention in the scientific and methodological literature is paid to the issues of development of the performing musician's harmonic hearing (in particular, the pianist). Typically, this problem is considered by scientists in the context of psychology of musical abilities (L.I. Bochkarev, N. Vetlugina, L. Vygotsky, A. Gotsdiner, E. Nazaikinskii, B. Teplov, G. Tsy-pin, et al.). In addition, the importance of developing harmonic hearing was expressed in the theoretical writings, critical essays, letters and diaries of many prominent performing musicians. For example, the words by L. Oborin are often cited: "The deeper the pianist penetrates into the harmonic "by-play" of composition – L.N. Oborin said - the more interesting, psychologically profound its execution. Unfortunately, inexperienced musicians usually have harmonically shallow pool mind. ... "[3]

What is harmonic hearing, what is the importance and specific difficulties in its mastering?

According to the definition by G. Tsy-pin, "the harmonic hearing is an ear for music in its manifestation in relation to the consonances - a set of sounds of different pitch levels in their simultaneous combination" [5, p. 62]. The definition by G. Tsy-pin can be extended, given that harmony (as an academic discipline in the traditional sense) – is a doctrine not only of chords, but also their combinations with each other. V. Berkov defines this concept as follows: "... Harmony is expressive means of music based on a combination of tones in accords and accord sequence" [1, p. 907]. Therefore, the harmonic hearing (as a complex psychological phenomenon) is based on perception directed not only at the simultaneous combinations of sounds (accords and consonances), but also at the ratio of consonances.

Furthermore, according to the arrangement of the musical language, the nature of harmonic means of musical expression, the harmonic hearing is strongly associated with the

modal and tonal hearing representations, melodic perception, sense of rhythm, syntax arrangement and compositional logic of the musical speech. Theoretically, there are no properties of musical intonation which would not affect the images of consonances and chords, and would have no relationship to the harmonic hearing. And yet, in the scientific-analytical and academic practice it is advisable to focus on the central and specific component of harmonic hearing - on the notions of chords and regular connections between them.

Exactly harmonic hearing enables to distinguish one combination of sounds from the other, consonance from dissonance, regular (i.e., consistently replicated in the musical language) from random. Harmonic hearing is involved with melodic and modal hearing in differentiating the stable and unstable (gravitating) accords, in recognition of the typical accord sequences (cadence).

The problem of the formation of characterized auditory abilities, very relevant to the musicians of all profiles, is implemented by many disciplines of the special cycle, first of all – “solfeggio” and “harmonics”. Generally, the students of the piano faculty have formed abilities of the harmonic hearing. The tool itself - the piano - and the entire piano literature contribute to the formation of very strong auditory representations of harmonic means of music. It is found also in the course of choir score reading classes.

In addition to that, the harmonic hearing of the pianists reveals notable shortcomings when dealing with works of the contemporary choral repertoire (following the usual practice, the modern choral music should be understood as the works by composers of XX-XXI centuries). We are referring, for example, to the sharp decrease in the students’ ability to recognize consonances of non-tertian structure, to differentiate degrees of dissonance of the deviant accords, to fix regular connections of the accords in terms of non-classical modal-tonal systems of pitch organization of the intonation.

In order to remedy this hearing shortcoming the teacher holding a course of ChSR, first of all, must see about inclusion of the choral works into the educational repertoire which clearly and convincingly represent the harmonic means of the modern music. Selected works should form students’ extensive and a clear understanding of the basic styles and language properties of the choral music of the last century. The obligatory repertoire works of ChSR course should be: patterns of modernist art processing and free interpretation of folk music

(B. Bartok, Z. Kodaly, C. Orff, G. Sviridov, M. Skorik, S. Slonimskiy, I. Stravinsky, R. Shchedrin, I. Shamo, I. Yakovchuk, et al.). The academic repertoire must be represented by the works implemented in the aesthetics of expressionism, neo-classicism and neo-romanticism (A. Schonberg, P. Hindemith, L. Janacek, S. Prokofiev, D. Shostakovich, B. Lyatoshinskiy, S. Lyudkevych, V. Lutoslavskiy, O. Messiaen, V. Silvestrov). In order to familiarize with the compositional techniques of atonal music, sonorism, aleatory composition, minimalism it is enough to select small bright fragments (for example, from the works by A. Schoenberg, A. Pärt, K. Penderetskiy, A. Schnittke, L. Dychko).

Practical mastering of the examples of modern choral music must start with the historical and theoretical explanations of the teacher (note that the works of classical music does not always require the preliminary information). It is necessary to direct students' attention to the essential properties of the choral textures stipulated by the patterns of harmonic thinking. In the first place it is advisable to analyze the structure of accords, modal logic of their connection, melodic connections between them, ways of presentation (figuration), and the principles of syntactic and compositional use.

In order to perform this training task, both teacher and the students should be familiarized with the general principles as well as certain (at least, the most significant) musical language systems of harmony of the twentieth century. Therefore, the construction of the techniques for development of the modern harmonic hearing in the course of ChSR should be started with solution of purely theoretical problem, namely -identifying features of harmony in modern choral music. Right these features can and should become a reference point for the work on the development of the students' harmonic hearing. Following this, it will be possible to solve the problem of finding instructional techniques, forms and conditions of educational work. Further, we will try to present only one of the lines of development of the characterized problem, namely - a line of work over the auditory images of regular chords (accords) of contemporary music.

Pointing to a huge variety of harmonic means of expression in music of the twentieth century, nevertheless many researchers (D. Bernard, T. Bershadskaya V. Zaderatskiy, Z. Karg-Elert, J. Cohn, P. Hindemith, Yu. Holopov, H. Erpf, et al.) identify a range of properties inherent in all modern harmony as a whole [6].

For example, according to Yu. Kholopov, the basic patterns of modern harmony are as follows: “1. New interpretation of dissonance (its free use); 2. Twelve-step structure of pitch system (any chord in each of the twelve sounds of the chromatic scale is possible in this tonation); 3. Rebirth of functional relations between the elements of the system; dependence between the nature of the relationship of elements of pitch system and the structure of the elements themselves” [4, p. 5].

In quoted paper, the researcher outlined two another features of modern harmony. The first of them is an unusual variety of chords and accord means of expression. Yu. Holopov called this property as “individualization of the tonal harmonic structures”. We can’t but agree with this observation of the scientist. The most original, bright individual harmony systems are created in the twentieth century by M. Ravel, S. Prokofiev, I. Stravinskiy, D. Shostakovich, P. Hindemith, A. Schoenberg, B. Bartok and O. Messiaen. In the modern Ukrainian music, B. Lyatoshinskiy, A. Karamanov, V. Silvestrov, M. Skorik stand out for their individual harmonic language. Differences of harmonic means developed by named composers sometimes are so great that they may seem to have nothing common with each other. This fact creates great difficulties for the solution of the task of development of professional musicians’ modern harmonic hearing.

According to wording by Yu. Kholopov, the second common feature of the modern harmony is as follows: “Pitch structure of modern music quite differently (we mean – differently than in classical music – N.S.) uses the physical nature of sound” [ibid, p. 7]. This statement has an exaggeration: the physical nature of the sound "dictates" its conditions not only for classical, but also the most innovative music. This nature is sometimes the only property that allows us to consider the modern works as music. However, if to understand according to Yu. Kholopov "the use of physical nature" as the ratio of consonances and dissonances, it is possible to agree that the "harmony of modern music in a number of events passes into types of pitch structures, which can not be properly understood from the standpoint of the old concept of harmony (among them – series, sonorism, electronic music and others) "[ibid].

Many theorists note the phenomenon of dramatic expansion and, to a large extent, destruction of that set of sustained chords, which was formed and acted in music throughout XVII-XIX centuries. It is referred to the complex of accords of tertian structure (triads,

seventh chords, non-chords with their conversions). Process of complication of language element data and the admission of any unusual combinations of tones became one of the paths that led to the ultimate individualization of the harmonic units.

This does not mean, however, that in the music of the twentieth century there are no chords, that the element of arbitrary or accidental harmonies reigns supreme. Firstly, the musical culture of our times is represented by a huge field of massively popular genres and styles, wherein the old harmonic language based on the functionally stable triads of major-minor modal system regularly "operates". Note that some choral works of present times reveal genre and stylistic proximity to the area of massively popular music and, accordingly, traditional nature of the accord science.

Secondly, in the twentieth century there is a steady trend towards complication of tertian chord structure by introducing additional elements into their structure (non-accord tones). Such additions, as a rule, increase the degree of dissonance and unpredictability of chord elements, increase the number of types of chords that claim to be accord units. However, such changes do not necessarily destroy the functional properties of the accords. They may even reinforce them. Samples of functionally stable, although complicated tertian harmony are abundant in choral music by B. Liatoshynskiy, Z. Koday, D. Milhaud, A. Honegger, C. Orff, S. Prokofiev, G. Sviridov and others. In the early stages of ChSR course it is desirable to give preference to the individual systems of harmony, preserving consistency with the classic-romantic musical language.

Thirdly, it is in the choral music of the twentieth century the process of disintegration of traditional accord forms had no such explicit nature, as in the instrumental music. This is explained primarily by the fact that the choir sounding can not free itself radically from the natural acoustic prerequisites of harmony. In particular, we are referring to those harmonic elements, which are "prompted" by the overtone structure of the sound having a phase of periodic vibrations in the vibration-sound process. At the same time we do not dispute the proposition by T. Bershadskiy that "In the twentieth century the jump (in the development of harmonic means of expression – N.S.) is defined by the rejection of an acoustically "confirmed" laws, tendency to avoid their influence" [2, p. 174]. However, with respect to the choral music such a judgment should be somewhat amended: aesthetic appeal, brilliance, constructional stability of intonation in choral music is largely dependent on the structure of

chords formed by the vocal parts, and therefore - objective laws of acoustics. Nature of the vocal actions and hearing reactions does not enable the contemporary choral music to break the connection with the accords, resting on overtone patterns, i.e. intervals of perfect octaves, quint, quart, large and small thirds of the natural structure. These interval units continue to play the role of regular and stable elements of the harmonic language also in modern choral music. For teacher of ChSR it is also advisable to start with such stable structures to solve the task of formation of hearing representations about the chord elements of modern harmony.

Thus, an important step in the solution of considered problem is the dealing with choral works resting on chords of diatonic system non-traditional for academic music, but quite natural for the national polyphony: quart-chords, quint-quart chords (quint consonance with the included quart tone) , quart-third chords (quart consonance with the included tertian tone), clusters of two or three diatonic seconds. For this line of work for students it will be extremely useful to get acquainted with choral works by I. Stravinsky (cycle “Christmas carols”, “The Wedding”), G. Sviridov (cycle “Kursk Songs”), I. Shamo (“Yatranskiye Igri”), V. Agafonnikov (“Vocalise”), Yu. Evgrafov “Cafe “Neringa”).

Preservation of traditional accord forms in modern choral music is also due to the fact that this area of composing and performing creative art is much stronger than the area of instrumental or even vocal solo music, associated with the genre and stylistic traditions of musical culture. In XX century the choral phonation remains capacious artistic symbol of the religious unity of people, sublime spirituality, sacred, mystical experiences. The type of polyphonic choral texture, which was and remains the clearest representative of harmonic thinking is also kept in practice. In a broader sense, the choral music continues to serve as a metaphor for human society, the image of unity of individualities, rational and inspired coherence, *harmony* in the Greek sense of this word. This semantic complex of the choral writing reveals both traditional and new accord lexical items with the utmost clarity.

In methodical terms it is expedient, especially at the initial stage of training, to work with students on scores of spiritual works by contemporary composers, such as: “Symphony of Psalms” by I. Stravinskiy, Diptych “Our Father” by V. Silvestrov, “Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom” by M. Skorik, “Liturgy” for soprano and male chorus by L. Dychko, and “Ostrog triptych” by A. Kozarenko.

Now, based on the statutory provisions, we can move on to more specific recommendations regarding the teaching methods of development of students' harmonic hearing in the course of mastering of modern choral works in ChSR class.

As was said, it is advisable to start the study of any choral work of the twentieth century with its preliminary analytical research and discussion. It is useful to identify (if possible) the individual stable chords (accords) and small harmonic idioms linking together two or three harmonic elements. Realized structural differences between selected elements can be reinforced by the verbal characteristics. The word sign coupled with a identified element does not necessarily have different theoretical rigor. On the contrary, here it is desirable to involve free associations and give the names to new harmonic elements, focusing on their synesthetic perceptions, emotional evaluation or context meaning. It is advisable to assimilate the selected elements of the harmonic language (chord lexical items and idioms) at first separately and then in the context of the integrated composition constructions - song verses, sections of the composition structure.

Special attention should be devoted to the cadences, i.e. the harmonic structures completing the half-phrases, periods or composition sections. In the classical and romantic music the accord cadences had a special significance: they accumulated energy of modal movement and produced extra strong structures of chords and structures of their consistent coupling. Cadences didn't loss their significance in the music of the contemporary time, since they are inevitable and necessary for the syntactic and thematic construction of the form (we refer to the original and precise cadences in the music by B. Bartok, S. Prokofiev, V. Silvestrov, D. Shostakovich and others). In our view, it is desirable to memorize some cadence idioms and play in different tones, different textures to form constant image of corresponding harmonic expressive element. A useful exercise aimed at adaptation of the hearing to one or another typical consonance and remembering is its textured variation (in the broadest sense, the figuration of the harmonic element). In particular, the student can be given the task: to present a particular harmonic element in the sounding of a homogeneous two-voice (with divisi), mixed 4-voice, antiphonal (two-choir) structure of the performers.

The important subject of the student's auditory attention while working on a choir score is voice-leading. In modern music it is significantly different from the voice-leading subordinated to the strict standards in the works of classical-romantic era. The music of the



twentieth century allows almost any couplings of the harmonic units. Very often (since K. Debussy), the principle of a parallel movement of all voices is applied, which results in a homogeneous harmonic formation. It happens that the paralleled harmonies form two different contrast formations in terms of the contour and this sign. Sometimes, the sequence of harmonic chords leaves the auditory impression of melodically disconnected elements (for example, in the works that are based on twelve-tone or serial technique), although actually, the melodic connections are always objectively present in any harmonic texture.

For development of the voice-leading properties in modern harmony the students' attention focusing on the line of bass voice is useful. Regardless of the style, even whether the accords have tonal or atonal nature, the bass tones are important determinants of the harmonic elements and melodic development of all voices.

One of the most difficult challenges facing the students of ChSR class is to achieve the effect of apperception (i.e., appearance of hearing representations going before the performing actions and direct acoustic impressions). The performer always requires such representations. They are especially needed in prima vista performance of score. Without this, firstly, there can be no smooth, error-free and especially artistic and expressive performance of accompaniment part. Secondly, the apperception of harmony is a prerequisite for a critical, analytical and creative approach to the phonation, to the comparability of the dynamics of each reproduced tone. Availability of the critical hearing brought up on modern music can provide the accompanying pianist with the opportunity and right to participate in the creation of the performing concept of the work together with the conductor-choirmaster. This should be explained to the students-pianists at the beginning of the course, and it is useful to recall this in the course of classes for creation of the strong motivation to studies.

So, the solution of the problem of formation of harmonic hearing of the students of the piano department in ChSR course involves: a) inclusion of section devoted to modern styles of choral music into the course outline, b) selection and introduction of choral works of the twentieth century into the training process that represent the most important systems of harmonic means of expression; c) adaptation of theoretical assumptions about general characteristics and trends in the harmony of the twentieth century to the conditions and objectives of ChSR; d) concentration of efforts of teachers and students in the formation of hearing images of stable unconventional harmonies and their combinations. Hopefully, the

implementation of these requirements will contribute to the effectiveness of training of the professional pianists for the tasks of the modern educational and creative practice.

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