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BASIC DIRECTIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ODESSA SCHOOL OF COMPOSERS AT THE PRESENT STAGE

The article is dedicated to Odessa school of composers at the present stage. The author singles out two directions for the development of the school, conditionally calling them traditional and innovative, showing the difference between them and their common features. The author analyses music pieces of chamber instrumental genres: "Bossa-nova" by V.P. Vlasov and «Punctum» by K. I. Maidenberg-Todorova that belong to the different directions, and shows their distinctive features and touch points.

Keywords: Odessa school of composers, traditions, innovation, V.P. Vlasov, K.I. Maidenberg-Todorova.

Odessa school of composers at the modern period is characterized by presence of two directions. One of them is vanguard. It is distinguished by great aptitude to various experiments and sound effects, among which sonorism, play of timbres and rhythms and tendency to different kinds of theatricality play the most significant role. This direction is represented by the leader – K. Tsepkenko, as well as Y. Gomelska, L. Samodaieva, A. Tomlenova, V. Larchikov, S. Azarova and their followers-students. Another direction is associated with resting upon traditions, without exclusion of innovatory elements of musical language. V. Vlasov, O. Polevoy and to an extent S. Shustov belong to this direction. Some composers, e.g. K. Maidenberg-Todorova, are hard to be attributed to the said directions, as their music pieces can be first of one, then of another style. Distinctive feature of attribution to certain direction is relation to melody: composers-vanguards clearly avoid more or less prolonged and bright melodic formations, at the same time they are indeed a stylistic feature of traditionalists' art. We do not observe any conflict though (unlike during the events of 1948 in Soviet music), it seems more like peaceful co-existence of different directions, equal in their art results, often overlapping with each other, that is why in a number of cases it is possible to speak about attribution to a certain direction only figuratively. Both the opposite directions quite often manifest in one or another proportion in creative work of one or another composer or even in a certain music piece.

The object of this article is to show differences and touch points on the basis of comparative analysis of two music pieces by representatives of different directions and generations having different art orientations. One of them is the play for bayan «Bossa Nova» by Viktor Vlasov and Kira Maidenberg-Todorova's Quartet «Punctum» for mixed

instrumental complement: two woodwind instruments – flute and clarinet – and two string ones – violin and viola.

The play «Bossa Nova» belongs to the cycle of pop-jazz music pieces by V.P. Vlasov, composed from 1989 to 1996 and published in the publishing house “Composer” (Saint-Petersburg) in 2001 [1].

Literally bossa-nova means “a new trend”.

The Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians defines bossa-nova as “direction in light Brazilian music, which appeared around 1959 and considerably changed classic city samba (carioca). Bossa nova style is based on equality of melody, harmony and rhythm and mezza voce singing” [3, p. 131].

The author of the work (V. Vlasov) deeply penetrated the essence of the style bossa-nova, having in detail shown its origin, stylistic features and peculiarities of performing in his book “Jazz school for bayan and accordion” [2, p. 72 – 75]. It should be emphasized that this style has not appeared as one for ensembles, but it was performed “by small ensembles containing group of percussion instruments, contrabass, guitar and solo wind instrument... Timing of bossa nova (let us notice that spelling of this word is possible either with or without hyphen. – *A. Antropova*) – 4/4, duple rhythm formula has two-dimensional polymetric structure. Basic beat has 4/4 timing, as opposed to the beat at 8/8 level (3+3+2+2+3+3).



It is very much uneasy to express the zest and exquisiteness of the Latin American rhythm by means of one instrument» [2, p. 72 – 73].

Then the author explains why it is bayan and accordion that have advantages for performing music pieces in bossa nova style, giving the reasons for this particular choice of the style and the instruments for performing his music piece, which is favourite and the dearest for V. Vlasov: “bass-chord system of left keyboard of our instruments presents in this case definite advantages and opportunities. The latter especially increase if one uses four-layer structure, having two layers in the left hand and two layers in the right one, when

performing bossa nova. The first layer (upper part) in this case is given to melodic line, the rest ones – to compound poly-rhythmic accompaniment” [2, p. 73].

Example № 1

10

13

16

19

22

As one may see, the metric scheme specified by the author and distribution of the accents in the play is kept as follows: basses appear at 1st, 4th and 7th beats, and 2nd, 5th and 8th beats are chords in the right hand. The melody can be played in usual metric-rhythmic

scheme 4/4 as well. As a result the mentioned polymetry – a feature of the bossa nova style – appears.

The main theme of the play includes syncopation, so peculiar to jazz, but in whole it is melodic of European type. Diatonic basis of melodism attracts attention with well known descending “lamento” suspensions, which are so widespread in various styles of European music of different countries, epochs and genres, typical sequent successions. There are associations with Baroque and classicism music (one should recollect the famous “Lamento d’Arianna” by C. Monteverdi and “Mannheim Sighs” inherited by W.A. Mozart), with native melodiousness and romantic songs, which has been transferred into music pieces by Russian and Ukrainian classics, as well as with examples of popular mass music of the previous century. Thus, the composer achieves great amount of generalization resulting in interpretation of the content of the play.

Harmonic language of the play is based upon extended tonality peculiar to XX century, however, having clearly expressed functional relations, upon dissonant chords, peculiar to jazz, and besides upon rather traditional classic successions with typical cadential formulae and deviations, in which secondary keynote is replaced with shrill sound of seventh chords. The final chord of the play is also interesting – tonic four-two chord with ninth as penetrating secondary tone, emphasizing the “nostalgic” beginning.

The backup is masterfully supported with chromatic backgrounds that considerably enrich general sound. Chromatic descending progression from stage I to stage V in middle parts attracts attention as symbol of tragic imaging, starting from the famous “Chromatic Fantasy” D-minor by J.P. Sweelinck (a – gis – g – fis – f – e; measures 11 – 15); this contributes to creation of slightly sad mood in this case.

Associations with music of the past and different types of allusions in the play are numerous and various; the framework of the article restricts the ability to mention all of them, however, one is worth being mentioned. It is quite unexpected and, no doubt, applied by the composer subconsciously: rather typical progression e – f – g – f – e appears in the upper part in the chord succession with triplet quarters (measures 47 – 48). At the same time diminished octave appears in it (at the sound of g) between VII stages of harmonic and natural minor types. The former adds special roughness to the sound; similar melodic course is recognized in orchestra performance to the well-known Nadir’s romance from “The Pearl

Fishers” by G. Bizet. The hero is flooded with sad and at the same time sweet reminiscences about his past love.

The principle of variety combined with rondo is the ground of the play formation. After eight-measure introduction, intonation, rhythm and harmony of which are connected with the main thematic content of the whole piece, main theme sounds in form of double period (32 measures) with the most usual proportion of cadences (period of repeated formation, the first period ends with half cadence at dominant, the second one – with complete cadence). Then there is a small section in new theme (measures 40 – 47) in parallel tonality (that is very indicative of Russian songs and romances) that forms open period ending with main tonality dominant (at the same time there is no contrast, the new theme is perceived like inherent development of the previous one), afterwards material of the main theme is a little developed (measures 48 – 65). Then the first variation on the main theme sounds with compound rhythmic pattern of back up with insignificant rhythmic changes in melodics (measures 65 – 81). However, this variation is not formed as double period, but is twice diminished and forms well-set sixteen-measure period (the device when double period is diminished is often used by composers-classics). After the varied second theme in the previous tonality next variation of the main theme sounds (measures 89 – 105) with more considerable change – method of melody chant is applied, accompaniment is facilitated, however, polymetry does not disappear: time signature 4/4 overlaps mixed time signature 8/8 with measure structure 3+3+2. The play ends with developed coda (measures 105 – 125), in which thematic elements of the whole play are combined with some new melodic formations. Thus, the following scheme of the music piece is built:

Introduct. – A (theme) – B – Develop. – A₁ – B₁ – A₂ – Coda

As one may see, theme A is eligible for the role of repetend, taking place thrice during the whole music piece in the varied form. The structure is traditional, often met in pieces by composers-classics and examples of light music, including pop-jazz.

Integrity of the music piece is provided with intonation and harmonic unity between all its sections.

The play “Bossa-Nova” has deep concept based, as we suppose, on autobiography. This is a music piece by the mature author, who has lived the bigger part of his life and who is experiencing certain nostalgia for his youth, which, unfortunately, ended so quickly and

can not return (such impression emerges mostly because of the mentioned “lamento” sighs-suspensions, wide use of minor chord sounds). At the same time, he has succeeded in his life, certain things were achieved, there were nice moments, and the sense of satisfaction is present. It is pleasant to recollect the past years; life is wonderful and smartly built, despite its transience. No tragedy or drama... Slight sadness. There appears association with J. Haydn’s concept in the oratorio “The Seasons”. In addition, extended generalization is inherent to the play “Bossa-Nova”, as the author aims at synthesis of the individual (autobiographic) aspect with the emotions peculiar to representatives of elder generation in general. That is why music of the play is perceived as close and understandable by the listeners, though it is quite possible that it manifests on subconscious level.

Thus, the music piece by V.Vlasov goes above exceptionally entertaining, dance music, it embraces the nature of wide generalization, like, for instance, many examples of classic music based on genre art (e.g. waltzes and mazurs by F. Chopin).

As one may see, traditional features are combined with innovative ones in the music piece by V. Vlasov. Musical form of the play, grounding on bossa-nova style that has already widely penetrated into music practice, bright melodic basis, use of jazz harmony combined with clear harmonic tonality system peculiar to classic music can be attributed to the traditional features. Innovativeness consists in synthesis of bossa-nova style with melodics of European type, presence of insightful content, putting this pop-jazz play in line with serious music and intention for the play to be performed by solo instrument – bayan or accordion.

Let us consider Kira Maidenberg-Todorova’s Quartet «Punctum». As we mentioned, it was written for flute, clarinet, violin and viola.

The author uses innovative performance devices inherent to vanguard music: microchromatics (it is pointed out that sounds must be played quarter of tone lower or higher in a number of cases); numerous different clusters (half-tone and quarter-tone), creating colorful, but rather intense dramatic soundings; use of percussion properties of the instrument – playing the flute and the clarinet valve keys without blowing; playing the viola behind the bridge. It seems that such devices are used for embodying forces strange and hostile against human.

Measure features are absent as well as consequent traditional division of beats into strong and weak. Timing is in seconds; chronometry is specified in score in detail.

Program name of the Quartet is «Punctum», from Latin it means “dots”. Indeed, listening and examining this music piece, a person has associations with one or another row of dots. However, one may think that there is a concealed program; possibly it appears in the composer unwittingly, at the level of subconscious, but nevertheless it is present. Let us try to follow it.

The beginning of the Quartet is very dramatic; dialogue of two contrast thematic elements is created: an imperative (note *deciso espressivo* – decisively expressive) in *fortissimo* and timid respond to it (*usingando* – *insinuating*) in *piano*.

There appears association with the beginning of “Pathetic Sonata” by L. Beethoven, where *forte* chord and respond to it – several *piano* chords – are confronted. As a result of multiple confronting of the contrast elements, brightly expressed dialogue of inexorable fate and its victim – human – appears. The same as in the beginning of the Quartet «Punctum» (example № 2), however, proportion of length of the elements is different in Beethoven: one chord confronts the most expressive succession with uprising melodic progression in the “Pathetic Sonata”, while in Maidenberg’s Quartet the second element is represented with timid weakening ascending progression.

Example № 2

Punktum Kira Maidenberg-Todorova

The image displays a musical score for a quartet titled "Punktum" by Kira Maidenberg-Todorova. It is divided into two systems of staves. The first system includes Flauto (Flute), Violino (Violin), Clarinet in B, and Viola. The second system includes Flauto (Flute), Violino (Violin), Clarinet in B, and Viola. The score is annotated with timing in seconds (e.g., 4", 5", 3", 6") and dynamic markings such as *ff* (fortissimo), *p* (piano), and *usingando* (insinuating). A circled '1' is placed above the first measure of the first system. A note at the bottom left of the second system reads "* play 1/4 tone lower".

However, the entering viola (number 6) with dry mechanic motion (note *secco!*) starts struggling with human voice, surrounds it with hostile “dots” – the theme rests upon the same surrounding of basic tones with auxiliary ones (example № 5).

Example № 5



Melodic and rhythmic line of the viola is perceived like progression of pushes-dots because of its discontinuity resulting from numerous pauses. The violin joins the viola with similar progression. The wind instruments confront the string ones – dialogue-confrontation starts again. Soon the wing instruments are captured by line of the string ones – human nature is conclusively suppressed. Dramatic culmination appears at sound of all the joined instruments in *fortissimo* (wind instruments have desperate *frullato*, all the rest – assertive *deciso*; number 8). Mechanical knock of all the instruments, sounding at that moment as percussion, confronts the desperate sound twice. Finally sound of the instruments with *frullato* overcomes, in the wind instruments it is confronted with expectant general pause lasting rather long – 6 seconds. The whole music piece ends with the same imperative sound of all the performers of the Quartet. Evil forces win.

Eventually, the composer managed to create convincing, brightly expressed concept, which is often embodied with firm symphonic opus in several parts, in genre of chamber instrumental music within short period of time (the piece lasts only four and a half minutes). The author shows all complexity and ambiguousness of vital processes. Intonation unity that contributes into integrity of the general development is peculiar to the Quartet. At the same time the piece is based on quite strong conflict, which makes the Quartet sound dramatic. The instruments sometimes act like single force, having joined in general sounding, and sometimes confront each other in pairs. The functions of the instruments are unambiguous, constantly changing, embodying semantically opposite images. The theme is also unambiguous in its semantics depending on timbre form and dynamics. As a result, compound dialectic interaction of the instruments with their themes emerges.

Thus, comparative analysis of the music pieces that belong to the different directions clearly shows that their basic difference is in relation to traditional means of musical language. The first piece – “Bossa-nova” by V. Vlasov – is distinctive for bright melodism, based on traditions in the sphere of harmony, musical form, but at the same time it contains innovative features in genre interpretation; the second one – Quartet «Punctum» by K. Maidenberg-Todorova – is based on sonorism, meanwhile melodism is minimally expressed and traditions are quite veiled. Clearly expressed concept is peculiar to both the compositions, that is why they are of great interest for listeners and performers. Both the compositions make significant contribution into development of Odessa school of composers.

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