

# GENERAL THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF MUSICOLOGY

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## POLYPHONIC REGULARITIES IN THE ASPECT OF EVOLUTION MUSICAL THINKING

*The article discusses polyphonic regularities in a broad value-semantic meaning as a kind of axis around which the path of musical thinking evolution is focused. The polyphonic foundations of modern compositional creativity are revealed, serving as constructive, artistic-meaningful constants of musical language system and its elements.*

*Keywords: polyphony, musical thinking, musical style, polystylistics, musical space.*

The evolution of musical thinking is based on the objective spatio-temporal aspects that determine the specifics of language, style and genre. The evolution of each of them is individual and based on the regularities determined by the historical period. The established stereotypes of our ideas necessitate recognizing the unfolding of musical thinking logics. There occurs a mutually reciprocal process: style indicators are determined by the peculiarities of its language system, the individuality of language system is based on the general regularities of its elements, the elements of musical language show their individual form of implementation, depending on the style and genre area. Therefore, the development of musical art is a single well-targeted line of musical thinking evolution. This process is based on historically successive forms of implementation of spatio-temporal coordinates (polyphonic – horizontal, homophonic-harmonic – vertical). The dialogue of polyphonic and homophonic-harmonic foundations of musical space fills with artistic sense all the elements of musical language, structuring the musical space in certain genre-style schemes. Each of them possesses its own set of regularities, the individual appearance of which is determined by the peculiarities of the existence of musical language elements in the system of polyphony-harmony dialogue. The logics of thinking process (according to V. Bibler) is largely consistent with the principle of *polyphonic*

"dialogueness", – "Musical thought is crystallized, executed and implemented with the participation of (...) "imaginary listener", "objective observer". It is thanks to the hidden multi-compositional dialogue – *mental polyphony* – that the work in the author's mind starts actively and spontaneously "building itself" [10, p. 162] (emphasis added – G.Z.). We evaluate "mental polyphony" as – *hidden multicompositional dialogue, based on polyphonic "dialogueness", on the inner multiplicity of compositional thinking aspects, self-fulfilling itself in the "chain connection" – creation – reproduction – perception, without which its existence is impossible.* The internal *dialogueness* of the creator's thinking process leads to self-realization of his artistic positions and to their objectification in the general flow of information. Author's thinking creates, develops and updates (based on personal genre-style projection) the total flow of creation and updating of artistic regularities, ensuring the internal dynamics of each new period of artistic ideas development. "Mental polyphony" reflects the internal multiplicity of artistic thinking, its polyphonic nature (learning the sources and developing; creation and destruction, traditions and transformation; renewal dynamics and crystallization). "Mental polyphony" reveals the freedom of projection of the author's personal credo, the diversity of his artistic positions. In the art of the XX century, "mental polyphony" acquires particular psychological significance, since composers focus on specific personal positions in using musical language and accentuation of its individual components up to the level of their polycombinability: polytimbre, polyrhythm, polystructurality, polytonality, multifunctionality, and polygenre etc. *The formation of such composer's creativity context expands boundlessly our understanding of the concept of "mental polyphony."*

Evaluating the polyphonism of contemporary musical space from the perspective of *mental polyphony*, A. Samoilenko notes that "special manifestation of style activity of contemporary music becomes (...) polystylistics – freedom of style self-dialogue" of music (...) that "points to new symbolic functions of music as a language" [8, p. 92]. In this context, **musical language, elements of musical language** – *are a multilevel system of relationships between the primary systems-*

*signs having their own "legal code," depending on the psychological specifics of thinking and having direct setting on the implementation of their semantic ideas the author's intention.* The complex of elements-systems (sound, rhythm, harmony, melody, timbre, register, texture etc.) forms exactly a specific musical language system, i.e. a system of higher order, based on any particular relationship between the primary systems-signs. The very concept of "modern musical language" in the past, on the turn of the century, time may be blurred *ad infinitum*. The composer now has the opportunity to work not only with "pure" natural material, he possesses a wide range of unique-individually artificially constructed material. The *updating of initially natural material of musical art, its language system* has led to a variety of different techniques the composer's pattern: modality, seriation (dodecaphony), serialism (structuralism), aleatorics. Constructive ingenuity in updating language system strengthens the aspect of radicalism, special technocentrism and rationalism, which led to the emergence of new sound combinations and constructions of musical fabric relief. For contemporary music, the fundamental principle is *rethinking* the functional role of different elements of musical language and the norms of their interaction, developed over centuries of historical development of music art. Estimated freedom and a kind of complete independence of elements (sound, register, timbre, rhythm etc.) in dodecaphony technique, serialism, pointillism, constructivism etc. are subject to even more stringent laws of mastering their personal musical space. And the *expressiveness* of the composition concept arising on their basis, its part or just a theme, depends on the *constructive perfectness* of the *pattern* formed by them, on the *logics of interaction, collocation* of all the independent *components*, allowing to perceive a specific composition at the level of stylistic harmony.

It can be stated that the basis of the change of the spatio-temporal parameters of musical thinking is the principle of a chain dramaturgy; each style model is formed from the preceding one and forms the subsequent one inside itself. The continuity of the process of changing spatio-temporal parameters of musical language creates different texture parameters based on their horizontal-vertical

coordinates. Different accents in the logics of musical fabric formation (according to B. Asafiev) on vertical or horizontal line dictate the norms of their unfolding and the specifics of the elements of musical language. From the sound to the common system of musical space, emerges the system of objective and subjective regularities dialogue. Objective indicators obtain a real form of their existence only through the subjective aspects of their implementation, i.e. the composer's artistic creativity. The spatio-temporal factor is *a form of thematism existence specific for temporal arts, the foundation of musical thought formation, providing its formation – the development of artistic composition in such an art form as music.* Most researchers dealing with the concepts of space and time in music, especially emphasize their role in shaping the stylistic harmony. According to the researchers, all the stages of musical thinking evolution are based on interconnection, interdependence, *intertransitivity* of spatio-temporal dimensions. The *graphics* of polyphonic space, *monolithic* of homophony relief, until chordal chorality, *lacy architecture* of heterophony arise on the basis of various accents of manifestation *in time* of the spatial coordinates of a particular *style* type. "The unevenness of *intonation space* is directly reflected in the flow of *music time*, which is also subject to a kind of distortions in live intoning "[10, p. 158] (emphasis added. – G. Z.).

Space is a seemingly limitless concept. M. Heidegger appeals to listen to the language, verbal definition of space: "What does language say in the word "space"? This word speaks about stretching. It means: something spacious, free of obstacles. Space brings with itself freedom, openness to human settlement and habitation" [12, p. 314]. At the same time space is clearly regulated within certain limits of possibilities of its perception. Space "in general" does not exist. It is estimated by our consciousness as a form of perception of reality – *real or artificially formed* by the works of composer, artist, filmmaker, sculptor, writer etc. *Spatial parameter* requires *personal* timelines, and the *temporal* one, with all the individuality requires the implementation of their characteristics in a certain *clearly defined space*. The dialectics of spatio-temporal coordinates has its own

genre-style relief, which provides temporary basis of the process of form-making in composer's work: song quartet, symphony, opera, etc. Under *space* in music, we understand "symbolic idea" of it in the artist's mind: of the listener, artist or composer. The existence of musical space is a fact of *psychological* view, since it occurs for each person *individually*. Space, in our view, realizes all the events taking place in this *sound volume of musical matter*, a kind of *graphics of relief* of musical events, which are based on the laws of *genre, style, form*. The main parameter of the existence of *space* in music is *time* and out of time – there is no space. Vertically, beyond time, space is a type of harmony by combining separate sounds (polyphony of strict writing), chord types (High Renaissance, classical and romantic styles) to clusters (music of the second half of the XX century and early XXI century). The procedurality of music, as an indicator of the specifics of its artistic expression, reflects "special emotional fullness of time moments ..."; music in general allows observing the movement of time ... as the experience of entering "... certain axiological condition as "a temporary state of the world" [9, p. 44-45].

Diffusion of different style indicators is characteristic of art in general and reflects the internal dynamics of individual artistic phenomena. "Clean", "absolute" types of dialogue in music can be represented precisely as theoretical models. Since in historical life music each *previous* form of musical dialogue prepares the *next* one, but each next one saves, transforming it, experience of the previous one" [8, p.107] (emphasis added – G.Z.). The analysis of a musical work as an integrated art system is only possible based on the understanding of traditions in the *legal system of creative thinking*. This is one of the main ways of understanding the regularities of *form-making*, entering the system of *expressiveness*, the logics of *dramaturgy*, finally – the content of the work, in the name of which the entire creative process was carried out" everything new is impossible without what it inherited. We simply exist in ongoing development ..." [7, p. 59].

In the historical evolution of music as a temporal form of art, the highest form of logics of manifesting expressive fundamentals of musical language

elements was the legal system of strict style polyphony as the original way of organizing musical space in professional music. The historical process of the polyphony development creates the program of music evolution: dialogue *rigorous – free style*, in our opinion, is a *compressed summary* of projecting the laws of musical thinking as a sphere of temporal form of art. The interaction of subjective (horizontal) and objective (vertical) factors emerging in the polyphony of XII – XVII centuries penetrates on the basis of the expected dialogue, into other style systems. Their regularities come into contrapuntal interrelationship with each other, causing the logics of horizontal-vertical coordinates of musical space. Such particular mobility of the system of musical thinking contributes to the free movement of time frames in the historical process of the emergence and development of musical styles.

A special role of the polyphonic nature of artistic thinking, asserting the fundamental principles of various style expressions, is noted by Yu. Yevdokimova in her research [4-6]. Evaluating the history of the five centuries of the development of Western European multi-voiceness, she especially emphasizes the idea of enduring value of the polyphonic thinking system formed during this period: "Further, – the researcher writes – the systems of style will change, musical language, more and more new expressive tasks will be solved by means of *polyphony*, new opportunities will open up in the methods of polyphonic technique, but these techniques themselves, and, above all, the *laws of the polyphonic multi-voiceness*, formed in the artistic practice during five centuries since the emergence of multi-voiceness, in their essence will *remain*" [6, p. 274] (emphasis added. – G.Z). Speaking of the "polyphonic Renaissance" of art of the XX century, we imply the rule of polyphony laws in the overall process of art development. From the special independence of each element of language (sound, line, interval), from white notation, from particular impersonal objectivity of forming horizontal-vertical regularities of strict writing texture to the bright expressiveness of mode-functional system of free writing polyphony. Free style polyphony changes the accents in the dialogue of horizontal-vertical coordinates to

the direction of their interaction, their kind of equality. In the polyphony of free writing the specifics of polyphonic space is concentrated in the **subject**, in particular, the **subject of a fugue** as a figurative-expressive concentrate of the whole process of stylistic harmony formation, identifying the regularities of form-making in the new understanding of the functions of musical language elements.

Thus, in a single system of polyphonic thinking the prospect of a new stylistic direction – homophony is built. The formation and expansion of genre diversity system in the free writing polyphony (fugue, suite, variations on basso-ostinato, concerts, sonatas, opera, etc.) leads to in-depth rethinking of the logics of musical thinking in the direction of vertical regularities. From the depths of the polyphonic multi-voiceness of the laws of form-making processes of polyphonic forms **sonata** grows as the supreme manifestation of the laws of homophonic-harmonic style. Additionally the functional significance is kept of the expressive aspect of polyphonic methods system and their focus on particular effectiveness, activity and dynamics of tension forming. There is not a single study in the classical sonata without emphasizing its dynamics and tension by the methods of polyphonic writing, namely canonical sequences, canons, strettos, etc.

The preclassical polyphonic sonata, according to N. Goriukhina, created an environment for the formation of the principles of sonata-symphonic thinking [3]. Thus, the XVIII century is the era of special evolution of musical thinking laws, in which the dialogue of horizontal-vertical coordinates shows itself on a new level. The primary level of vertical regularities in the homophonic-harmonic system based on the genetic basics of the horizontal, i.e. polyphonic regularities. Namely, new aspects of creating a theme within various type of periods, the prevalence of the principle of squareness, a different attitude to space as a unified system of musical body existence, but not as in polyphony – an element of musical language. But the predominance in the laws of the sonata-symphonic thinking of such polyphonic regularities as a single line of its dramaturgy unfolding, chain dramaturgy forms a sonata-symphonic cycle on the basis of the dialectical unity of contrasting principles (the principle of derivative contrast) as a whole, regardless

of the number of parts. And actually the sonata allegro form, as a scheme reflects the regularities of vertical-homophony, and as a process – is based on the logics of the polyphonic growing of thematism, that is, on the regularities of horizontal – polyphony, in other words, *polyphonic sonata-ness*. In our opinion, polyphonic sonata-ness is *a special system of interaction the principles of fugue and sonata forms* as the supreme form of *generalization* of their structural and expressive regularities. It is understood that the level of interpenetration of different genre features, which creates a new quality of form-making processes. This is not just synthesis – it is a *new formation*. At all the stages of the evolution of sonata thinking, a single coordinate is detected providing the specifics of sonata dramaturgy. The polyrhythmy of I. Stravinsky, the neoclassical idea of S. Prokofiev's works, the principle polycombinability in the musical texture of A. Honegger, the neofolklore refractions of the laws of B. Bartok's sound complexes variant development, – basically are the individual forms of manifestation of sonata-symphonic thinking in the modern polyphonic context. In each individual case we face a variety of regularities in the structure of musical language, but the discovery of interrelationship system between them may become one of the possible criteria for evaluating the nature of modern polyphonic sonata.

The epoch of the XX and XXI centuries generalized the dialogue of horizontal-vertical coordinates interaction on a completely new level of their co-existence, on the level of prevalence of horizontal regularities again. And just as in the period of polyphonic regularities development in modern music branching occurs into music directions of avant-garde (strict style) and classical breaking of polyphonic foundations of musical thinking (free style). Art has no clear boundaries. Any laws in art creativity are in the process of their dialectical interaction, that is in the process of forming contrapuntal dialogue between the main stylistic indicators, in modern music – polystylistics. In this aspect polyphony as a means of organizing musical space plays an important role in the development of musical thinking from the Middle Ages to the modern times. There is a kind of *three-phasesness* in the history of development of polyphonic thinking principles:



structural-compositional role of polyphony in the epoch of the rule of polyphonic thinking of strict and free writing, figurative-expressive role of individual polyphonic techniques in the epoch of Classicism – Romanticism, the revival of the principles of constructivism in the epoch of the predominance of graphic techniques of modern texture formation.

Polyphonism as an artistic-structural category can be represented in different aspects. On the one hand – as the multiplicity of style "denominators" of the epoch, personified in the creative figures of classical composers of the XX century, since "culture always has personified state ..." [11, p. 4]. On the other hand – as the basis of organic synthesis of the multiplicity of style directions, in other words – polystylistics as a measure of creative thinking of the epoch.

According to most researchers, "degaussing" of the system of tonal dependence determines the special role of linearity, which increases the functional significance of temporal parameters of musical space. In other words, the logics of horizontal unfolding of voices (lines, layers) performs decisive, purposeful role in the development and unfolding of musical composition. In the very process of the formation of this musical composition appears so much characteristic of the music of the XX century the principle of polyphonism in the broadest sense of the term, without "binding" to specific techniques and genre formations.

Thus, by the end of the XX century a through-line is built of evolution of the laws of polyphonic thinking. It is polyphony with all its compilation of regularities in the history of music at all the stages of its evolution that was the genetic code, which revealed the main indicators of style directions. The leading role of the time factor in music art significantly determines the peculiarities of its spatial characteristics, related to their *expressive* and *semantic* opportunities. The formation of the music as a distinctive branch of artistic creativity occurred in parallel with the formation and realization of the regularities *of spatio-temporal dialectics* as the basis of compositional thinking. The centuries-old history of the "designing" musical space reflects the stages of evolution of musical logics in all the genre-stylistic parameters of its creative realization. They can include the

foundations of arranging stylistic harmony, the principles of musical dramaturgy, the laws of formation of thematic and techniques of its development, type of texture, as the implementation of specific spatio-temporal aspects, the specifics of relationship of individual voices, sounds, lines in vertical and the peculiarities of their horizontal formation, as units of musical space with individual specifics of their temporary unfolding. Thus, the basis of the full range of arguments on this subject appears the idea that polyphonic regularities are the basic aspect, focusing the main directions in the evolution of musical thinking.

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