

A.D. Chernoiivanenko

THE CONCEPT OF "ABSOLUTE MUSIC" IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTALISM

This article analyzes the conceptual-categorical field of the term "absolute music" in the development of academic musical instrumentalism and its role in the history and theory of music. The meaning of the concept is emphasized in the affirmation on the theoretical and practical levels of the idea of instrumental paradigm of music with reliance on the hypothesis of I. Zemtsovskiy on the polygenesis of music. Here are revealed the relationships between the concepts of "absolute", "autonomous", "instrumental", "academic", "applied", "program" music.

Keywords : "absolute music", autonomous music, musical instrumentalism, instrumental music, philosophy of music

The power of "absolute music" is such that "music remains self-sufficient without any words", – states V. Kholopova [19, p. 192], using the German term of the XIX century, not perceived in the domestic musicology (the Slavic musical thought favored the expression of "pure, non-program instrumental music"). However, the very notion of "absolute music" in its time raised the Beethoven type symphony to a higher level of musical and artistic hierarchy by adopting the idea that actually *instrumental culture* is music as such (let us recall that differentiation of already autonomous quality of music into vocal and instrumental is reflected in the folk terminology as opposition "music – singing", the people called "*music*" the *instrumental* music-making [11, p. 92]). But according to V. Khlopova, the paradigm of absolute music "continues operating to this day" [19, p. 29], and the concept "deposited in the archives", according to T. Cherednychenko, "does not cancel the problem of coincidence of specific musical creativity with the essential fullness of sound art capabilities" [1, p. 13]. The irrelevance of this problem in today's cultural situation is "equivalent to its relevance – as a historical "point of reference" for understanding the present" [ibid]. That is why there is a need of conceptual-semantic, aesthetic-historical, musicological analysis of the concept of "absolute music", identifying its value in the development of academic instrumental music culture and understanding of the place of the latter in culture and arts. The above positions are the relevance and objective of this article.

Justification and recognition of the autonomy of "pure", "absolute" – instrumental music has been formed by theorists of art from the XVIII century, which was preceded by a fairly long period of independent status of music as an independent art – in its various generic categories. The very research of the essence and defining the concept of "music" remains an open process in the work of various theorists of the humanitarian spheres – musicology, philosophy, aesthetics, cultural studies, sociology and even medicine – till today. So, V. Kholopova devoted to such research more than 25 years [19]. It should be noted the activation of dissertation research of the issue in the field of philosophy in recent decades, serving as fully argued on the basis of ancient "genetics" of attitude to music, and through the height, the significance and complexity of musical ideas. The latter today obviously reveal kinship of the conceptuality of philosophical thinking.

It is known that in his philosophical system Hegel considers the serial row of development of various stages of human consciousness: from lower form (direct sensory perception) – to the supreme (absolute or pure knowledge), where external objects are completely overcome and the spirit thinks only its own essence. Absolute spirit, in its turn, passes through three stages of development – art, religion and philosophy. At that the "art according to Hegel – is a *direct form of knowledge of the absolute idea (emphasis added – A.Ch.)*" [20, p. 56], religion – its source of the revelation of God, philosophy – is the supreme level of absolute spirit, "full disclosure of the truth contained in arts and religion. In philosophy, idea learns itself, it rises to its "pure principle", connects the end of absolute idea with its beginning "[ibid]. If, according to Hegel, philosophy – is the world, "captured by an opinion", and the world itself is an absolute idea, then occurs "desirable completeness" of the development of absolute idea [5, p. 394]. However, according to quite reasonable indication of V. Kholopova, after the death of the great philosopher music rises to higher (than art) Hegelian levels of Absolute Spirit: its role in society and consciousness will start being compared to religion and philosophy (which was already observed in Ancient Greece, but otherwise – music was considered not only art but much more as science, means of education,

treatment and control, that is went beyond art [9]). Actually, the musicologists of late XX – early XXI centuries declared conceptualism not only their subject but the ideological foundation of music [17, p. 28-30]. Moreover, perfected during the XVII - XX centuries "emotional capabilities and the supreme logical relationship of all elements of music" (V. Kholopova) allowed this kind of art to convey through its "silent language" even "what was impossible to express in philosophical ideas" [19, p. 23]. The obvious leader and founder of this conceptual-philosophical musical path – the path of pure non-program, nonverbal instrumentalism became Beethoven (O. Losiev argues that "Beethoven has no god", he has God" [10]) that generated further Beethoven-centrism o the further music thought" [19, p. 98]. Meanwhile, the emancipation of music actually took place in the epoch of J.S. Bach, and "was not noticeable here because Bach surrounded it with "a veil of verbal emblems" [ibid]. However, the statement of "the new art of sounds in the strict sense of the word" (H. Berlioz) would not be possible without the continued throughout the works of Viennese classicism canonization of musical language, genres, forms, instrumental content of symphony orchestra and string quartet, the major-minor system, individuality and uniqueness of musical work, composer and performer, freedom (of music and musician) from ritual and ceremonial dependence. Actually the "a priori heuristic" nature of music Baroque, which is characterized, above all, by "the emergence of opera, the development of instrumental concert, the emergence of concert halls, making affects of unprecedented power by the energy that never existed before, motor movement" has led to historically new concept of "music." The above major discoveries of art were formed to a greater extent in the instrumental ("absolute"), music (including the impact of advanced musical instrumentalism on opera). This new concept of music from the Baroque epoch becomes the exponent of a new way of music.

In the epoch of Romanticism the "musical" is interpreted as a full philosophical category; music is synonymized with real artistry, becomes a benchmark of proportionality and contingency of forms, a harmonious integrity

and completeness of artistic creations (Losiev in his various works, repeatedly and consistently carries the idea of music as the best model of dialectical *formation*). It was in this epoch that the concept of "absolute music" was affirmed. It should be noted that the formation of ideas about world music culture in the XIX century felt a significant impact from the philosophical ideas of F. Schelling, in which music is recognized as a rhythm of nature prototypes and the universe itself, and A. Schopenhauer, who gave mythological interpretation to the whole world, interpreting it as a piece of music, and music – as a means of comprehension of this world, which has the ability to express in general terms what the other forms of spirit express parts [22]. These philosophical paradigms were most brightly revealed in the instrumental form of absolute, "pure" music. Similar positions were shown by Friedrich Nietzsche: "The most clear thing in language are not words, but the tone, strength, modulation, tempo ... – in short, music is the word ... now all that can not be written" [15 sec. 751].

The philosophical thought of the XX century deepened the philosophical parallels of music, which according to O. Losiev differs from pure thought by the lack of cognitive formedness, but gives pure quality, turns us to the very essence of the world. The opinion of O. Losiev that *music is strained by the word, to Logos*" – about the **Logos**, about "that supreme substantiality, to which great music is always aimed – whether that is mythological Chaos or Logos of the New Testament" [10, p. 606]. Distinguishing in terms of elevation ("admiration") of the human spirit three states – the everyday reality of life of fallen human (his "practical existence"), art and prayer in the act of "smart acting", O. Losiev notes that "of all the arts only music comes close in meaning to clever prayer" and "higher than music – only prayer is" [10, p. 908]. The basic formula of Losiev, art form is personality as a symbol or symbol as a personality as a person – tells about the nature of expression related to the "experience of the absolute Personality." On the other hand, in its focus to human, music carries two basic views of life, existing as oppositions, relatively comparable to the "contemplation" and "action." Music and religious pull together the axiological aesthetic experience: a sense of the beautiful

and the sublime. Losiev speaks about delight, ecstasy caused by musical-aesthetic existence that intertwine with the religious outlook, attitude of love and nature, absolute values.

Indeed, metaphysical space, with which music endows us, has a deep foundation, which brings us to the fundamental principles of human existence. Music, which seems to be clearly opposed by its nature to "rationality" in favor of "fiction", in fact, confirms by the very fact of its existence and centuries of development, as an opportunity of saturated philosophic attitude with access to the Absolute. At the end of XX - beginning of XXI century music itself becomes the basis for philosophical reasoning and conclusions [12; 19 et al.]. This connection is the essence of the musical philosophy of T. Adorno, who "examines philosophy with art" (and not vice versa), because "purely concrete experience of music listening and comprehension entails philosophical interpretation and philosophical conclusions" [12, p. 310]. The "exchange of places" by music and philosophy is also indicated by V. Kholopova today [19, p. 35].

Thus, in the course of "absolute music" development in the Hegelian triad "thesis – antithesis – synthesis" (which makes his philosophical system strict, precise, allowing to show the progressive nature of the world development) today dialectical replacement occurs, i.e. "the desired perfection" of the absolute idea development now takes place in the very music.

It is commonly believed that the very term "absolute music" was first used by R. Wagner (1846) in his "Program" to Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in the sense of the "supreme expressive possibilities of independent art of sounds" [1, p. 12]. However, V. Kholopova, after C. Dahlhaus – the author of the book "The idea of absolute music" (1978), states that the concept emerged in the romantic musical aesthetics in about 1800, first of all in the judgments of three writers – W. Wackenroder ("The doctrine of the soul today's instrumental music"), L. Tieck (article "Symphony ") and B. Hoffman (review of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony) [19, p. 26]. These authors under the "absolute" understood "music itself", "music as such," "purely instrumental, free from verbal text, functional aim and empirically

perceived affects" [ibid] (the latter, however strongly contradicted high emotional tension of romanticism and therefore apparently caused active opposition of the Russian school of the XX century, with its "musical element" (B. Asafiev), and "surprised" V. Kholopova at the beginning of the XXI century).

After all the key idea of "absolute music" was emancipation of musical instrumentalism and related to its nature and capabilities, immediacy of Absolute expression. It should be noted that the very process of emancipation started a century earlier. It is dated from the XVII century and proceeded quite difficult and not always smoothly. Closely to the XVII century instrumental music was of practical functional value and subordinated to more "important and high" – vocal. In the XVII century even in the conditions of launched autonomization, long time existed the tradition of projection instrumental music to vocal one both in the issues of sound and theme-forming and in the field of rhetorics (in vocal art this relationship was logically determined by the presence of the word). However, already in the XVIII century, attempts were known to establish parallels between the rhetoric and instrumental performing and songwriting practice. In particular, M. Pylaiev gives the expression of French clavecin player de Saint-Lambert, who published two musical tractates, which reflected also the rhetorical perspective clavecin instrumentalism [16, p. 12]. So, Saint-Lambert points out that rather the "examples of elocution are similar to a music play, because harmony, rhythm, beat, size and other similar things, which a skilled orator adheres to in drafting his works belong to music more than rhetorics" [ibid].

German Mattezon according to C. Dahlhaus's considerations, actually puts forward the thesis of aesthetic right of instrumental music on own status and calls it a "sound language» (Klangrede) [quot. by 16, p. 13]. Rhetorical issues were specifically paid attention to by I. Forkel, G. Koch, et al., and the rhetoric played certainly the most important role in the formation and development of instrumental music forms (although Dahlhaus that recognized the importance of oratory category for music, warned against overly straight analogies). The aesthetic science of the XVIII c. considers instrumental music that had laready stood out in

practice at that time, in the context of the theory of "double mimesis" (dual repetition): vocal music imitates the "nature", instrumental – the vocal one. Many researchers (including modern ones) think that instrumental music has a later origin compared to vocal one [23]. Others (eg Matsyievskiy I. [11] O. Neustroiev [14] I. Zemtsovskiy [7], etc.), recognizing the original inextricable link with the vocal, argue that instrumental music-making is originally associated with vitally necessary processes ... and rituals with concealment of the human voice, making instruments and instrumentalism certain "iconic bearers." And in such significance – "*above-verbal translation system*" works outside of the "boundaries of the very work experience" [11, p. 7] and ritual actions. The hypothesis, according to which the origin of musical instruments is not related to vocal music and could even precede it, was expressed many years ago [14]. Maturation music "from non-music" I. Zemtsovskiy sees "not only as a "mechanical" process of isolation-allocation of musical instrument", but as the establishment of a new quality: "It can be stated that historically musical instrument – is ... some new, mutually transitive synthesis, some new, extraordinary thinking, finally" [7, p. 127].

At the turn of the XVIII-XIX centuries music finally cemented its autonomous status – the ability to express everything without needing any support, is "the art of sounds in the strict sense of the word ... independent of all others," "beautiful, all-powerful," with a "whole world of feelings and sensations" (M. Berlioz, quot. by [19, p. 26]). And musical instrument here serves as a "strange coincidence of sound and visible and simultaneously coincidence of incorporeal (i.e. intonation) and physical (tools, configuration, movement, formation of system: "tool – body – tool", etc.)" [7, p. 127]. During this very period music begins requiring "specific aesthetic attention, certain targeted orientation of hearing, skill of listening to music "from the inside" of a musical work, both thought and subject matter" [13, p. 9]. With this release of a new musical phenomenon on the aesthetic essence itself (designated later by Wagner) is associated the emergence in the German aesthetic science of the term "absolute music". Let us note that the German scientific (and including musical and

theoretical) idea in general was fairly widespread in Europe, was distinguished by harmony and systematic presentation, full coverage of events and musical practice. At that in Germany the whole problematics of the aesthetic was under the patronage of systematic philosophy, and such a strict upbringing and similar theoretical discipline possessed neither the aesthetics of France nor the aesthetics of England [23, p.11], nor (let us add) Russia. "Absolute music" became one of the central concepts of musical aesthetics in the XIX - first half of the XX century thanks to German philosophy in which the term "absolute" had a wide range of meanings (were actively mastered the concepts of absolute ideas, spirit, identity, intelligence, etc.). From said range the aesthetic concept of "absolute music" took, above all, the importance of the "supreme," "ideal," "self-sufficient essence".

The philosophical idea of absolute in instrumental music (as opposed to rank preferences of vocal genres of Rousseau, Kant, in the theory of musical affects by Diderot, etc.). was affirmed in the theoretical considerations (and composer creativity) of romanticists (F. Liszt, C. Gounod, G. Laroche and al.). T. Cherednychenko already in the XX century indicated that "absolute music were called the instrumental works, free of applied functions not related to programness" [19, p. 27]. The admiration of the first romanticists with the freedom and independence of musical instrumentalism fully reflected the new deals of the epoch: instrumental music "creates rule itself" (Wackenroder) converts symphony into "drama in instruments" (Wackenroder, Tieck), "rises above the limitation of the final, approaching the infinite" (Hoffman) [quot. by 19 p. 27].

Wagner by the term "absolute" also meant the music that directly expresses "infinite", reveals freedom of dance and speech roots (in the emancipation of music from language was seen its "absoluteness" by Nietzsche as well). In parallel, Wagner's conceptual field reveals expressions "absolute language of sounds," "absolute melody", "absolute harmony". It should be noted that in the future, under the influence of Feuerbach, who argued with the "absolute philosophy" of Hegel, and with own ideas about the "work of art of the future" Wagner changed his attitude to the term. In 1850-ies the composer meant under it "partial art" that

separated from its roots (the word and dance in ancient Greek tragedy) and has decayed to the level of "empty abstraction" [lexicon]. Similar formal-objective conclusions were reached by the founders of the term. Thus, Hoffman used the term "structure" [quot. by 19 p. 27]. However, at the height of romanticism more rigidly were revealed the formal positions of not German but Czech-Austrian aesthetic school represented by Ye. Hanslyk, R. Zimmermann, A. Hostynskyi. The first offers a complete exemption from out-music associations, reducing the subject and content of music to "sounding moving forms", the second just stated that "the sphere of music – are the sound ideas, that are neither feelings nor ideas," the third called instrumental music formal, pointless [quot. by 19 p. 27], which was incidentally found unacceptable by J. Brahms, a friend of Hanslyk.

But now the music aesthetics "elected" the first mentioned by Wagner content, that introduces to the concept of "abstract music" the idea of comprehensive expression of musical specifics, its peculiar aesthetic essence.

Starting with the last third of the XIX century, the term "absolute music" has been identified with the ideal schematics of musical forms, with the tectonics of the composition (O. Hostynskyi, 1877, A. Halm, 1913) – a formal line, but also – with the freedom of creativeness from traditional structural patterns (F. Busoni, 1906, considered prelude and connecting fragments of Beethoven's works as examples of absolute music, because they lacked symmetry and regularity). C. Dahlhaus and T. Cherednychenko correlate his position with A. Schoenberg's idea of "musical prose" (1950) – the supreme manifestation of music specifics.

The main concepts of "absolute music" are summarized in the book by E. Kurt Bruckner (1925). Kurt rightly identifies two basic meanings of the term "absolute music", established by his time and actual in ours – 1) autonomous instrumental work; 2) musical embodiment of the supreme spiritual principles ("absolute"). Similar two aspects of the concept are also shown by O. Losiev: "Under the "absolute" or "pure" music I mean the music, devoid of any visual, verbal and other non-musical images. Pure music is one that does not contain any

extraneous "program" and has only pure sonority" [10, p. 14] – but with revealed face of the God, turned to human, noted among other arts as "prayer."

The concept of "absolute music" separates "pure" music from the program ("fine art"), which is characterized by the expression of something specific. But often defining borders between absolute and program music is quite difficult. Regarding the music programness and its absolute nature the issue can be considered open in the light of the famous statement by Tchaikovsky. The alienation of the concept of "absolute music" on the territory of domestic musicology is explained by the above and denial in it of "empirically perceived affects" and the "musical element" of the Russian school of composers of the XIX century.

In general, the concept of "absolute music" was repeatedly subjected to criticism from various, often contradictory positions. Thus Hegel opposed it, believing that "instrumental music ... is not art at all." R. Wagner eventually concluded that "where music can not go on, comes the word" and he called the Ninth Symphony of Beethoven "funeral ringing of symphony." According to H. Eggebrecht, the concept of "absolute music" underestimates the complexity of music equipment and the mechanism of its psychological impact, and ignores the fact that even the most abstract musical structure is characterized by a meaningful beginning. S. McClary somewhat mimics P. Tchaikovsky, arguing that any music explicitly or not, contains an implicit program. Kretzschmar denied the notion of "absolute music" within the framework of hermeneutical theory. V. Karp notes that there is a constant oscillation between the two poles of music – the absolute and the program [2]. This, incidentally, is not the only pair of poles. Thus, high music has an irresistible duality: the religious-transcendent meaning, asceticism depth, peace (expressions of F. Schleiermacher, O. Losiev, S. A. Hubaidullina, G.V. Sviridov) – and sensual reality associated with the sincere origin. O. Losiev points to the "contemplation" and "action" inherent to music in its orientation to person. Everything is complicated by the conceptual field of the term.

However, the concept of "absolute music" played a major role in the history and theory of music, having established at the theoretical and practical levels the notion that instrumental art is actually music. Under the form of expression of this high art is first of all understood Beethoven's type symphony, the concert and sonata instrumental genres. In favor of "instrumental musical paradigm" comes the music education system (from ancient time to present), which implies basing on the instrumental skills of playing, instrumental intonation, instrumental repertoire. In the context of the concept of "absolute" ("pure" instrumental, autonomous) music were crystallized and studied the phenomena and concepts as well as the fundamental properties of music as an art form, such as "out-notionality", "non-verbality", "inner essence", "pure contents", "ideativeness", "height", "poetry", "world of spirit", "infiniteness", "endless melody", "endless harmony", "new aesthetics of number", "concrete music", etc. According to C. Dahlhaus, instrumental music as devoid of associations with the text and the program requires "especially profound attention, particularly focused listening, it eventually replaces church music on the pedestal of "holy art" [21, p. 143]. That is music occupies the *closest to Absolute* hierarchical level and in this sense is legally "absolute." Its sometimes excessive theorizing and philosophization are justified by the fact that academic music has always been built on the background formulated ideas ("dogmas of church fathers, decisions of church councils, decrees and regulations of secular power, artistic manifestos, professional rules of masters, etc." [19, p. 202]), which is absent for example in folklore, where there is only the aesthetic level organization.

As a result of theoretical-historical review of the concept of "absolute music" we can conclude its irreversible conjugation in the content-conceptual field with the concepts of "autonomous", "instrumental", "vocal" "vocal-instrumental", "program", "applied" music. In our view, these relationships are formed in such pairs of synonymous, antonymous inclinations and the correlation of the order "whole – partial". The "floating boundaries" of such definitions are related to the binary meaning of the term (E. Kurt – meaning 1 and meaning 2).

- 1) *"partial / whole"*: "absolute 1", "absolute 2" / "autonomous", "academic";
- 2) *"whole / partial"*: "absolute 1", "absolute 2" – "instrumental", "absolute 2" – "vocal-instrumental" academic;
- 3) synonymous: "absolute 1" – "instrumental academic"; "absolute 2" – "academic" (instrumental and vocal-instrumental);
- 4) antonymous: "absolute 1" – "vocal", "vocal-instrumental"; "absolute 1", "absolute 2" – "applied"; "absolute 1", "absolute 2" – "program" (but "program" through semantic mobility of this term – let us remember P. Tchaikovsky – can act in other correlations, such as "whole – partial", so "Seasons" by Vivaldi not can be regarded as absolute music since it contains a large number of descriptors).

In modern music, the role of out-musical means of expression in music contents is increasing. Most researchers conclude that music represents many of the values and meanings that are understood in terms of the concept of "absolute music".

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