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## **POETICS OF "SILENCE" IN THE MUSICAL INSTRUMENTALISM**

*The article analyzes the specifics of silence and quietness by means of musical instrumentalism. It shows that this phenomenon is mainly embodied by music-instrumental means which is connected with objective factors. It is stated that the instrumental quietness fixes specific absoluteness of silence as a clash with transcendent as the "otherness" of sound and thematism that fully corresponds to the procedurality of musical thinking, nature of musical chronotope.*

**Keywords:** *music instrumentalism, silence, semantics of silence, quietness, performer, music time.*

In the recent decades, the phenomenon of silence in music is somehow addressed by most of musicological, composer and performing researches and judgments. The composers of the last third of XX – early XXI centuries with their creativity do not only confirm the tendency remarked by researchers to using the expressive potential of silence as a sustainable style sign, but also multiply speak about the essence of the phenomena and its actual understanding (enough here to mention Gubaidulina S., G. Kancheli, D. Cage, L. Nono, X. Lahenmann, V. Silvestrov, A. Pärt, etc.). Performers do not only demonstrate by their playing (playing – because instrumentalists express in that question more), but also explore the "birth of sound out of silence", playing silence, quietness in the caesuras and pauses, mastering the skill of "stopping consciously" and so on (M. Arkadiev, F. Hershkowitz, N. Davydov, K. Igumnov, A. Cortot, G. Neuhaus, S. Richter, A. Schnabel and others.). The analysis of the phenomenon of musical silence can be found in the musicological developments of M. Arkadiev, L. Kazantseva, A. Korobova, K. Maydenberg-Todorova, P. Mieschaninov, E. Nazaikinsky I. Nikolskaya, L. Raaben, I. Rybkova, S. Savenko, A. Sokolov, V. Syrov, V. Kholopova, A. Shumkova and others. Perhaps in the most complex problems and comprehensive way the said problematics is reflected in the thesis by I. Nekrasova "Poetics of silence in the national music of the 90's of the XX century", which clearly reveals the importance and significance, functionality and ideology of silence in its

philosophical, musical, aesthetic and technological aspect, the ratio of phenomena and concepts of silence and quietness. The goal of this article is the consideration of the specifics of silence and quietness in their musical-instrumental terms, that is by means of music instrumentalism.

"Silence", "voicelessness" have deep semantics, represent one of the oldest universal symbols that is multiply reflected in spiritual poetry and mythology, religion and philosophy. The semantics of "silence" "quietness" originate both from different types of oriental doctrines, and to European traditions (Neo-Platonism, Buddhism, Hesychasm, Sufism, etc.). In Christian spiritual tradition "silence" reveals the hypostasis of the manifestation of the Holy Spirit, marking isolation from civilization, revealing secrecy of of prayer sounding, turning to God, catartic states. The archetype of "silence" is seen in the light of such key terms as "peace" and "calmness", spiritual balance, contemplation. There appears an idea of the movement from the "small world" (soul) to infinity, "Voicelessness", "Dream is dead" [10]. The perception of silence in various religious and philosophical areas has an important common feature: positive meaning, symbol of integrity, harmony, truth and purpose of the Spiritual Path. Thus, "through esoterica of silence, not knowing the space-time and national borders can only be perceived the global pra-language of spirit" [9]. In the outlook of the late XX century dynamic view of the world changed by contemplative, which was reflected in the increasing individual-subjective origin, need to find support in the eternal ethical and aesthetic values, statement of stylistic synthesis principles in creative thinking, searching metalanguage universals, in particular, to nominating silence, quietness as a new informative element. "Due to its intangible nature, silence can easily become "material" of any kind of art, an element of any sign system, without losing the basic property – inexhaustibility of content" [9].

In art the image of silence is diverse and multi-functional, here silence demonstrates the quality of ambivalence with the ability to express a variety of emotions, feelings, situations and phenomena. The semantic range of the image (symbol) of silence in art extends from the expression of "timeless world grandeur"

high calmness to reproducing the "intimate reverence of the moment" [9], from "quietness – silence with "content" to "silence – with the quietness of those who are gone" (G. Ayhi). But "speculation about quietness, silence is familiar almost to all those involved in the arts (especially those who work with sound – musicians, poets). It is not just about "theme of silence", "theme of quietness", often merged in their work with the topic of sleep, death ... namely, the desire to understand the essence of the phenomenon" [6]. The definition of this essence, contents of silence is not laying the on the surface, they are shrouded in mystery ("escaping"), their actualization depends on the context, on the interaction of silence "signs", tunedness of the performer and the audience. I. Nekrasova identifies several levels of understanding the phenomenon of silence depending on the context – the real silence, the prototype of silence; its artificial "twin", artistic image; compositional tool, factor of expression, etc. [9]. This semantic and functional flexibility of silence does not only capture its ambivalent nature, but also explains the differences of interpretations of the concept in different studies and contexts. Thus, silence and quietness are not always identical and are not even always connected to each other. Silence in the conventional religious and philosophical meanings serves as a self-contained phenomenon possessing perfection, absoluteness, the quality of "point of equilibrium of the world," even a necessary condition for spiritual development. Silence is category not so much ontological but language (including, this also applies to musical language). Currently, it has the qualities of procedurality, effectiveness, finiteness. That means quietness (unlike silence) – "is always action that is based on different underlying causes. It semantically mobile and undergoes continuous internal "re-intoning" [9]. The interpretation of silence and quietness in different historical periods reflects the dominant socio-cultural silence type: ideative or sensory (according to P. Sorokin's typology) [12, p. 285].

If for linguists, literary scholars, philosophers silence already "occurred" in the scientific understanding as a "phenomenon", "archetype", "concept", "aesthetics", "universality", then for musicologists, composers and performers today a similar approach to the phenomenon is actively built (but perfectly formed). Since musical

material, as directed by M. Bonfield, "is the sounding matter organized by the composer, that is, everything that sounds (sometimes pausing) in the process of real or imaginary performance of a musical work" at this time "there are no manifestations of sound/silence in the surrounding reality, there are no such artificial or natural sounds which in one form or another would be components of musical language. And, therefore, fundamental boundaries between music and out-of-music within the atmosphere of the sound does not exist" [3, p. 77]. It is worth mentioning remarks by B. Asafiev that the first musical stimuli of rhythm-intonation in the ancient art were out-of-music "dumb stimuli": step, gesture, facial expression, dance. Contemporary composers actively engage in their compositions non-musical sounds in an effort to expand the arsenal of musical means of expression. Here, above all, it is about creating new techniques of playing musical instruments (with the active involvement of various musical "lexemes" of silence), and at the same time about stimulating the development of the very instruments. In this process of expression means enrichment, in fact, were involved academized in the second half of the XX century, accordion, domra, balalaika, bandura.

Music semantic carriers of silence can serve pauses, fermatas, chronotypical parameters, genre "formulas", volume dynamics, sound-theme, sound-image, sound production techniques, forms of instrumentalist's performing movements, etc. The specified signs of silence in music are used by composers and performers variatively, their interpretation is defined, rethought and seen in the context of the whole. In the continuity of this process of interaction of what is expressed and what is implied (evenly supplied by performer), as in any language, a kind of aura of silence is formed. The effect of the presence of this aura in music "can be likened to some kind of intention that supports semantic structure of the text from the inside, which gives it the ultimate completeness" [2].

The poetics of silence in music art is primarily associated with pauses, i.e. silence in its real embodiment. Pause has gone quite a long way before in the second half of the XX century became a phenomenon equivalent to the sound, tonness. The thesis of I. Nekrasova [9] detailly considers the stages of this path, reveals the

functions of the pause in the music of different musical styles and epochs until the second half of the XX century, when the pause becomes an integral component of the concept of the work, "independent timbre" musical fabric, not a semantic equivalent in meaning to the sound, but the "adopts to itself the privileges that previously belonged solely to it: original tonality, continuity no matter how paradoxical it is, refers to volume dynamics" [9] (works by A. Pärt, V. Lobanov, E. Denisov, S. Gubaidullina, R. Lidenov, etc.). The ability of pause to substitution of sounding in the final of many contemporary works by I. Nekrasov compares with the functions of tonics, with that difference that tonics "asserts the possibility of ending" and silence demonstrates its "impossibility". The researcher calls this "tonality of silence" "mirror tonality."

Thus pause as an element of silence contains in itself many philosophical, psychological and aesthetic meanings. But pause as the "stop, cease" (translated from Latin), silence or quietness, at the direction of the leading performers has to be expressive "loud", significant and, at the same time, inextricably linked to the content of the music procedurality. That is formally interrupting the action pauses actually do the opposite role: they give a theatrical performance or a musical work continuity, fluidity, comprehensive integrity of "mood", binding together the different elements of a musical. Therefore, the most important aspect of silence functioning in music is performing. For live music piece in the process of its performing, specific-instrumental implementation. Therefore, the continuation (Rus. – "duration") and semantic content ("life") of the pause, silence in music it depends on the performer. "Performing pause is a mark, that is as if stopped in time, conveys a higher degree of awareness of the truth that is implemented by silence or understatement. But after each silence there is understanding of puzzle" [2]. No wonder many methods of silence implementation in music are based on the instrumental movement forms (the so called cadence-visual of A. Schnittke in Violin Concerto No. 4, conductor's passing in "I hear ... silent" by S. Gubaidullina etc.)

The metaphysicalness of the pause in its entirety is revealed in the space of performer-creative playing. In pure forms of the playing, such as music, poetry,

dance, pause exists as part of the performing technique, temporary continuum, "sounding" of silence, dialogue sound/silence, understanding-content in pure form. Each pause, depending on its location, in the process of rhythm of playing has its functional load, its compositional system that is based on the principles, techniques and methods of composition. Thus, T. Barsukova identifies the following functions of the pause: 1) pause as a process of image prediction, as contemplation, motivational beginning of the birth of idea; 2) pause as the reflection of playing move, supply, supervision, speculation; 3) pause as a way of the spirit of restoration, stop, spiritual energy recovery; 4) pause as the concentration of power in reasoning and as a "stopping the world" in achieving result and the moment of truth [2]. Interestingly, Heidegger (the founder of playing theory) found in common features of his concept with some ideas of Buddhism, particularly with spiritual practice of quietness. The difference is in "diving in itself" (getting out of existence) in Buddhism and immersion into the existence of the philosopher (let us recall that J. Cage – maestro of silence – was also interested in the teaching of the "emptiness" of Eastern philosophy). Playing as a temporary event has its pulsation, its phases, its rhythmic "pulse", which has "ups and downs, bursts of insight and moments of temporary remission" [2]. Musical silence corresponds to these laws of playing.

The concept of silence, pause (as sounding tone) in music quality is in the quality ratio with category *of time*. The latter is often used as primary and undetectable concept [1, p. 129]. In fact, the category of time is complex, variable and difficult to define. The study of this problem in music, philosophy and anthropology for many years was dealt with by M. Arkadiev in detail, whose observations and conclusions are especially valuable to us because the researcher is not only a theorist, composer, but also a successful performer in the field of musical instrumentalism (piano, orchestra conducting). Analyzing the history of the issue, beginning with Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, ancient Indian or ancient Chinese treatises, through innovative, nearly phenomenological in spirit and method reasonings of Saint Augustine in the XI book "Confessionum" up to the studies of the nature of time in Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, Merleau-Ponti, R. Ingarden, O. Losev, M. Bakhtin, V.

Vernadsky, the founder of chronosophy D.T. Fraser and works of I. Prigoshin – M. Arkadiev chooses phenomenological method, not only as a philosophical-aesthetic, but as analytical-applied – to describe the "living structure" of music, as it is given in "creative, performing musical text reading" [1, p. 129-130]. In this respect, and in line with the quality (qualitative) concept of time special importance is gained by the term being inaccurately translated into Russian of Bergson's term "durée" – "duration" (discrete element of the musical fabric, without taking into account the procedurality). V.I. Vernadsky translated it as continuation ("duration"), expressing basic procedural intention of Bergson about time; quality, non-discrete nature of temporary deployment of music. Generally in the historical cut the idea of time is substantial in nature. Interesting are A. Gurevich's considerations about German medieval culture (let us recall that it was in Germany that classical instrumental music culture was actively built): "... in general time is not empty duration, but filling with some specific content, each time specific, definite... Time is so real as material as the rest of the world ... it is not the form of the world existence, abstracted from things, but specific subject element, the fabric on the machine of gods ... time is not so much recognized as directly experienced ..." [5, p .. 104-112.]. St. Augustine calls time "stretching of the soul ..." [quoted by 1, p. 131]. In classical German philosophy and the further philosophical currents there was produced the idea of time, as a synonym for development, procedurality as such. Bergson had already made conclusions about the universal character of "duration" and linked it with the essence of the evolutionary world (including biological) of as a creative process development. And Vernadsky said that "the line between psychological and physical time is erased" [4, p. 45]. It is appropriate to draw a parallel with the "involvement" of pauses, silence in musical instrumentalism. Performer's hands, usually in such a moment theatrically "freeze" (do not stop but cease contacting with the keyboard, string, etc.) or exhibit some theater acting gestures of out-of-instrumental (conducting pause, "removal" of instrument, dempferization of strings in plucked ...) or directly instrumental nature (playing "in the air") – that is spatial-temporal "defamiliarization" (ros.) from sounding matter and materiality, physicality instrument in the overall

temporary continuum of musical work, original assumption of playing with computation in understanding of the dedicated. The extreme expression of this instrument physicality – "4.33" by J. Cage, "Minute of Silence" by E. Kislitsyn or "silent performance" of the banned song by M. Theodorakis with "silent" same guitar in hand, when the whole composition is a complete pause. The very instrument, its "life" (as the appointment of artistic sounding) in a moment of silence in the hands of performer demonstrates (increases) "absolute silence" (vocalist with "built-in instrument" – breathes, moves, looks, can cough etc.; his silence is "not absolute") and, simultaneously, the full objective (independent of human physical processes) freedom to move from a state of silence into sounding condition. Thus, musical instrument as if hyperbolizes the phenomenon, "making" it with the display of skill. Hyperbolization of silence is also associated with the ability to enhance the contrast between silence and sounding due to the density of texture, dynamics, timbre-articulatory parameters.

A distinctive feature of the instrumental performance is its intonation-moving side, performing movements forms and instrumental-sound techniques, including in the sphere of silence (respiratory muscles, providing phonation in the singing and speech, hidden from the viewer-listener). In musical instrumentalism such mechanisms are visible and perceived as such even without hearing the music (for example, excluding the sound while maintaining the TV "picture"). This feature was perfectly used by A. Shnitke in "visual-term" the Fourth Violin Concerto when the violinist is playing an increasingly high tessitura and finally as if breaking beyond the possible, "is playing" in the air. The distinctive, meaningful movement continues in silence, silent fingers playing, goes "inside the pure content." This intonation illusion is based on accompanying visual images and auditory experience of the audience, the tone timbre-style instrument luggage. Also at fairly long pauses between sonorous tones or chords, performing movements (or their sudden "hanging") remain alone with the silence and inner auditory imagination. Such a pause is filled with intonation (semantic) content, and the picture of instrumental intonation appears phenomenologically opposite to singing. In the first the "breath of hands" is presented

visually, in the second the breath is hidden and "reveals" itself in art vibration, only in caesura manifesting itself directly.

The situation of "returning time" (I. Prigozhin and I. Stengers) in the theoretical science of the second half of the XX century coincided with similar processes in musical practice and theory. In this sense the absurdist work by Cage stands as its extreme manifestation. M. Arkadiev's concept of time proposes "to learn how to rebuild our consciousness from the school habit of thinking of time as a pure and independent of the real processes length, stop thinking of it like of abstract irrespective course, that is not that easy" [1, p. 133]. That is, "we measure, most probably still not the "pure" time, not pure duration that is likely not measurable as such, but very real and specific processes in the world" [1, p. 134]. The synonymy of time and process, continuity-procedurality of physics theorists of the XX century is combined with intonation procedurality of B. Asafiev in music, with the idea of development as the main in the musical genres of opera and symphony. And if in vocal, voice procedurality of music connection can be seen with continuum procedurality of breathing, heartbeat (which is the human life, organic), then the procedurality of musical-instrumental to the specified (performing-human) is attached (layered) some independent from life of one person (musician, composer, listener) – objective procedurality "real and specific processes in the world" with its variability, reflection of universal process "everything is changing" (Bergson-Husserl), "changing matter" (M. Arkadiev). In the process of carrying out the instrument is in a sense "changing matter" itself in the hands of the performer. Spatiality, texture, articulatory-dynamic relief on the instrument is also "changing" becoming. So naturally, the absolutist expression of qualitative concept of time in music was embodied for G. Cage not in vocal, and in the instrumental work.

A musical instrument is a materialized embodiment of performer synchresis, in which music is built. Materializing perfect sound images and presentations, musical instrument is able to create new music-sound ideas itself in the field of "pure content" without the mediation of words. Already upon the manufacture the instrument is "filled" with live protointonaton (V. Medushevskyi) and, simultaneously, exquisitely

polished performer (master) options of sound/silence. This work is continued by the composer. But real life into musical instrument is breathed in by the performer. Thus, the instrument represents potential musical space with a variety of features that the composer and more specifically the performer organize in a particular process, chronotope according to their individual unique (composing and performing) plan. And here the correlation general – single acts in ambivalent and mutually-reciprocal quality. Protointonation as a generalized semantic-sound formula of a work does not only include the signs of silence. The very phenomenon of protointonation refers us to silence as a symbol of integrity that translates ancient senses of being.

Thus, in the musical arts silence (between sonorous tones, before and after them, as well as in absolute expression) has semantic meaning no less, and sometimes more important than the sounding (let us remember Neuhauser's "sound should be shrouded by silence"). In the second half of the XX – XXI centuries silence became some universal phenomenon (for different kinds of art) that provides integrity to contemporary culture. And in musical culture, it plays a critical role in the structural and semantic organization of musical composition. The very "motif of quietness" silence and its variants ("concentrated" (emptiness) and "absolute" (vacuum)) [6] is a reflection of complex integration processes taking place in the sphere of artistic, literary, philosophical, religious, political searches for the modern era.

In music the phenomenon of silence are largely embodied in the musical instrumentalism. This is due to more pronounced contrast (texture, dynamic, range, sign-theatrical) of sounding/silence, absence of instrument's background elements of human silence (breathing, coughing, involuntary movement, etc.) with concurrent objective, technically and physiologically independent willingness (ability) to shift from a state of silence to the state of sounding. The instrument even in a state of silence represents not just the potential of sounding, but the very artistic sounding (as opposed to possible material-everyday in person). Simultaneously instrumental quietness captures specific absoluteness of silence (with full denial of earthly sound environment – breathing, involuntary movements, coughing, etc.) as a clash of transcendent, as the "otherness" of sound and thematism [6; 7], but not their

nothingness that fully meets the procedurality of musical thinking, the nature of musical chronotope. It is no coincidence G. Ayhi introduces the concept of "Mastery of Quietness".

The visibility of intonation-movement aspect of instrumental music-making, forms of performing movements and instrumental-sound techniques, including in the sphere of silence (respiratory muscles, providing phonation in singing and speech, hidden from the listener-spectator), quality of "changing" matter of the instrument allows perceiving quietness as silence "with content," and performing movements (or sudden "hanging"), remaining alone with silence and internal auditory imagination create intonation-semantic pause. Forms of music-instrumental performing movements (playing in the air, silent stroking keys or instrument valves, etc.), absoluteness of instrumental silence, its theatrical visual exaggeration embody the otherness of sonorous tones and themes in their performing diversity: silence as the disappearance of the matter and of joining with the Absolute (unrealized project of O. Scriabin "Pure pause"), as non-musical sounding of the external world ("4'33" by J. Cage), "silence with the content" (collision with unlimited) and "silence with the quietness of those who have gone" ("Misterio" by V. Silvestrov for clarinet solo), blissful tranquility, tense expectation, immersion into a dream-oblivion, romantic dream, etc. The semantic range of image-symbol silence is ranging in music from intimate-reverent to philosophical.

Understanding this mysterious phenomenon has involved humanity for many centuries, and the variety of its manifestations in various forms of art is inexhaustible. According to the conclusion of ye. Nazaikinskyi "silence as voluminous image, as an element of imaginative palette of art ... represents more whole universe to which it is needed just to approach only slightly for it not to be seen as one star" [8, p. 216]. Music instrumentalism with its non-verbal nature of pure content allows performing such an approach in the bright embodied inscribing ideal sound images and ideas.

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