



The Polyphonic Genre in the Work of Rodion Shchedrin

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Annotation: This article examines the specificity of the genre of polyphony in the 20th century and the general problems of the cycle «24 Preludes and Fugues» by R. Shchedrin created during this period. The article may be useful both for pianists and musicologists and composers as additional material in the research on this issue.

Keywords: Polyphony, type, harmony, texture, stylistic norms, modern polyphony, dramaturgy, avangardism, intonation, canon, choral music, method.

Introduction.

Professional music of the 20th century gravitates toward polyphony differently from the work of composers of the 18th and 19th centuries polyphony in terms of constructive significance is no longer secondary to tonal-harmonic relations. The techniques of thematic development and form typical of the melodic thinking of Bach and the old counterpointists are being revived, but at the same time polyphony is not just a rendition of the basics of early music, but is a distinctive, stylistically rich phenomenon.

The main part.

Music of the 20th century is characterised by a highly complex polyphony in which polyphony takes one of the leading positions. The significance of polyphony increases dramatically. Polyphonic forms and means of polyphonic language were significantly renewed (two and three tone fugues, use of polytonality in polyphony with different themes). In some cases polyphonic forms loosely combine different kinds of polyphony, e.g. under-voice narration combined with bass counterpoint (contrapuntal three-voice).

In contemporary music, polyphony actively interacts with homophonic-harmonic articulation, and this interaction is expressed in the polyphonic enrichment of homophonic forms. This is most evident when the general compositional plan is determined by the laws of homophonic form and the development within the individual parts is based on polyphonic techniques.

There is an opinion that everything is possible in modern polyphony. This is not true, for modern polyphony would have no right to be called polyphony if it did not satisfy the requirement to combine independent voices. "Anything is possible" refers only to certain intervals. After all, if you compare the polyphony of Hindemith, Shostakovich, Shchedrin, and Bartók with the isorhythmic motets of the era in which tunes based on different harmonies, metric formulas, and even texts in different languages were combined simultaneously, there is a major similarity between them - the role of coordinating moments (meter, harmony) is minimal, and the layering of texture and the need to adjust the ear horizontally is maximum. From the point of view of polyphony, it is important that changing the stylistic norms of counterpoint does not change the basic meaning of counterpointing the voices.



In the 20th century, music underwent an interesting search for a new thematicism and a new use of previously established structures. Just as harmony was realized within polyphonic music, so the new - modern polyphony - began by giving polyphonic meaning to the elements of homophonic music. Small structures-motifs and refrains-and the emergence of popel themeism are of great artistic value: first, attention is concentrated on the expressiveness of the smallest elements of speech, and second, small-scale themeism allows you to test and improve a variety of development techniques.

Rodion Shchedrin is one of the outstanding Russian composers, preserving the deep traditions of Russian musical culture. His work is a bright and innovative phenomenon of Russian music of the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries. Over the years of versatile creative activity he has created a significant number of works in various genres. Shchedrin's music covers the most diverse spheres of imagery, from intellectual reflection and dramatic conflict to joyful enjoyment of life and brilliant satire. Shchedrin's work is a vivid national picture, which is born out of historical, literary, folklore prototypes.

The individuality of Shchedrin's style is formed from a combination of the universality of perception of the world and the originality of the musical language, sensitive sensitivity to learning new things and careful, respectful attitude to tradition. Raised primarily on Russian music of the first half of the 20th century, in the 1960 1970 years, Shchedrin tried various avangarde techniques, but did not become an avangarde artist. By intelligently and fragmentarily using elements of dodecaphony, sonority, aleatorics, and pointillism outside the avant-garde context, he develops his own musical language. Endowed with a vivid personality, the composer captivates from the earliest works with his mastery. Shchedrin's individual authorial style is formed in contact with various trends in contemporary music (neofolklorism, avangardism, neoromanticism, polystylistics, neocanonical tendencies), which he does not shun, but also does not immerse himself in them completely.

R. Shchedrin's original work arouses warm interest in musicians and music lovers. This is natural, first of all, because his music is enriched with a bright modern feeling. Shchedrin is a truly Russian composer. His connection with national music is manifested not only in the implementation of folklore, but also in the composition of his music. There are also sources of Shchedrin distribution of variational methods for the development of thematic and polyphonic textures in Russian music. The creation of the "24 Preludes and Fugues" cycle was caused not only by Shchedrin's interest in the work of J.S.Bach, and his great interest in the works of polyphonist masters of the era before Bach, but also by the entire historical process of the development of world music culture.

The terms «Prelude and Fugue» conjure up in our imagination a monumental structure erected by all the greatest composers. The idea of such a polyphonic cycle is not a product of random creation in Shchedrin's work, as Shchedrin used more polyphonic forms and polyphonic techniques in many of his works. The composer regularly turned to various forms of the polyphony genre.

Shchedrin's collection «24 Preludes and Fugues» consists of two volumes, the first is written in the sharp tonality, the second - in the flat tonality, each volume contains 12 preludes and fugues. Sharp tonality preludes and fugues are written at the same time bright, colorful, full of intelligence. In the fugues we can see clarity, vivid dramaturgy and stagecraft. In the flat tonality preludes and fugues, the tendency to dramatization and the predominance of other figurative scenes are clearly noticeable - we can observe soft inner lyricism, tragic processes, philosophical meditation. Preludes and Fugues have a circle of quart and quint along parallel minor tonalities.. The general dramaturgy of the cycle is the exchange of contrasting tones, the characteristics of the genre, imagery, the structure of the counterpoint technique in the composition.



The thematic nature of fugues (thematism) is unique. Thematic etudes, which include 20 or more thematic recitatives, stand out. Some themes have a clear structure due to the repetition of the rhythm. Development of themes was carried out by traditional methods: inversion, rakokhod. Intonation changes can be turned off while keeping the rhythm. The form of fugues is different: three-part, using a canon, choral fugues and fugues with sonata-like features.

The thematic findings in R. Shchedrin's fugues are extremely interesting. The composer decided to expand the fugue figuratively and meaningfully, looking for ways to expand it. Shchedrin made significant changes in the genre of polyphony. The themes of Shchedrin's fugues are so complex that it was important for the composer to help the listener understand the main idea and all its complexity. He also widely used various rhythmic changes. The composer used the method of expanding the theme in the exposition of the E flat major fugue. The theme of this fugue is written in the form of an etude.

Conclusion.

Shchedrin's Preludes and fugues create significant difficulties when trying to identify not only a harmony, but also to grasp its leading tonal reference points. Many preludes and fugues are based on sound sequences complicated by the use of various chromatic steps (up to twelve tones). The tonality ceases to play an organising role not only in the horizontal dimension. Blurred to the limit, it ceases to control the structures of the vertical.

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