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## **Works by Maria Shimanovskaya in the Reflection of Slavic Style Line of Biedermeier**

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### **Abstract**

The aim of the work is the analysis of features of Biedermeier in the legacy of M. Shimanovskaya based on the detailed investigation of Mazurkas and Nocturnes which reflect the main characteristics of the “high Biedermeier”, distinguished by religious and spiritual traits. The methodological base of the given research is the intonation system of the comparative school of B. Asafiev, representation of the results of contribution of authors which were aimed at the development of problems of Slavic Biedermeier by the means of various types of studies. Scientific novelty lies in the predominant accentuation of the Biedermeier style line in the heritage of M. Shimanovskaya.

On the whole, M. Shimanovskaya does not cross the limits of abilities of “easy piano”, giving preference to expression achievement through the eclectic stylistic combinations, while demonstrating an emphasized miniaturization of national or the expansion of culturally dominant quality of the genre. The mentioned eclecticism does not touch upon the demonic opposition of romanticism in any perceptible way, apart from the “review” of the latter in the structure of Nocturne. This is the key point of the Biedermeier logic of the “great in small”, which also emphasizes the romantic principles in the expressiveness of M. Shimanovskaya’s works and performing art.

**Keywords:** Biedermeier, style in music, musical genre, nocturne, mazurka, piano art by M. Shimanovskaya.

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## **Introduction**

The relevance of the topic is determined by the demand of art of Biedermeier and its contact with the native tradition (Zhmurkevich, 2005; Kozarenko, 2009; Malinovsky, 1989; etc.) in the conditions of postmodern neo-symbolism (Markova, 2006). Research problems of Biedermeier which is genetically connected to the German culture, got their support in the post-perestroika period of the native and world history due to its obvious “anti-progressive” direction in the protection of traditions, principles of society and family which in the New time ended up as the number one ransom victim in the promotion of ideals of “the progressive humanity”. It should be taken into consideration that in the musical field, the price for the ‘progress’ was the action of closing of the old Italian conservatories (with the active involvement of Napoleon (Barb'ye, 2006, p.83)) due to their submission to church. It should be noted that it is in them that the ideal model of musical education had been formed which was never restored in the European cultural-historical practice.

In context, the value of the protective ideas of Biedermeier which had been formed in the Restoration era turned out to be incredibly high in the conditions of destructive “multi-ideological” postmodern. An analysis of the Polish Slavic model of Biedermeier in the person of M. Shimanovskaya who connected musical traditions of Warsaw and St. Petersburg with the circumstances of her life, the more important is that historically from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Slavic musical borderland represented by Polish masters (I. Paderewski, V. Malishevsky, K. Shimanovsky and others), Ukrainian and Russian musicians of Polish origin (B. Yavorsky, I. Belza, B. Lyatoshynsky, etc.) proved to be the accumulator of high artistic and creative achievements of national and world scales.

## **Literature Review**

In Slavic countries Biedermeier is well-versed in the scientific intelligence of many researchers (Biedermeier, 1984; 1986; 2001; 2017; Zhmurkevich, 2005; Kozarenko, 2009; Malinovsky, 1989; Ossian, 1968; Sarabyanov, 1998; Heussler, 1959; etc.). Moreover, the designation of the Polish, Russian, Ukrainian Biedermeier formed a special line in the approbation of ‘provincialisms’ of Biedermeier art of this kind. The Polish Biedermeier image of word is inseparable from the image of “Lithuanian in Polish” which inspired the famous novel in verse by A. Mitskevich (1954) “Mr Tadeusz, or Last Hit over Lithuania. The Nobel History of 1811-1812 in Twelve Books of Poem.” The Russian Biedermeier, whether in painting (Sarabyanov, 1998) or in music (Oleynikova, 2010), aimed either at the “outback” of peasant life (the Venetians), or at the “bourgeois” signs of Moscow, which opposed in its First-Throne dynamics European transformations of St. Petersburg. “Domesticity”, everyday life is fused here with the manifestation of Ukrainian-Malorosian feature, which allows modern researchers to attribute the entire variety of Ukrainian song and piano writing of the 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century to the Biedermeier culture (Zhmurkevich, 2005).

The aim of the work is to analyze the Bidermeyer’s “slices” of M. Shimanovskaya’s heritage on the example of Mazurka and Nocturnes, who captured the essential features of the so-called

“high Biedermeier”, sanctified by religious and civil spirituality of expression. The methodological base of the research is the intonation approach in B. Asafiev’s style comparative of the school, with particular emphasis on the contributions of the authors who developed the problems of the Slavic Biedermeier, as well as in conjunction with means of cultural, historical-musicological, hermeneutical and artistic studies. Scientific novelty is determined by the emphasis of the Biedermeier complex in the creative personality and legacy of M. Shimanovskaya.

### **Discussion**

The works by M. Shimanovskaya constitute a certain stage of Biedermeier manifestations in accordance to the historical primacy of Polish and then Russian schools. This creative and artistic ‘concession’ of primacy is symbolic – through the promotion of leadership of figures in Polish music who were formed as personalities in Ukraine, in the conditions of promotion of the Skryabinov Moscow modern in the music of nations of the Empire: I. Paderevski, K. Shimanovsky, V. Malishevsky. In this case, that who is especially highlighted is I. Paderevski whose dramatic creative biography was formed in a complex discrepancy between composing, piano and performing styles: the former, as it is shown in the analysis, coincided with the settings of symbolism, while the latter focused on the academic Chopinism, the acceptance of List’s symphonic setting in the F. Chopin’s performance.

The creativity of Maria Shimanovskaya, born as Volovskaya, is defined by its precedence to F. Chopin since she passed the same school of J. Elsner, which also defined the creative path of her great younger contemporary. Just like subsequently F. Chopin, M. Shimanovskaya was predominantly a piano composer whose heritage also includes the small forms - mazurkas, polonaises, marches, preludes, etudes, nocturnes etc. Moreover, the composer emphatically miniaturizes what is known to her contemporaries in more voluminous forms.

Describing the Polish Biedermeier, E. Malinovsky notes the significance of the “noble stream” in it (1989, p.149) which is combined with the provincialisms of the “Sarmatian” Polish-Lithuanian strata. This side of the Polish Biedermeier is figuratively captured in the following statement: “Polish ladies were singing sadly about hussars and lancers, the musician was playing melancholic mazurkas” (see: Malinovsky, 1989, p.48).

“Curtailement” of the genre-form in M. Shimanovskaya’s works is indicative taking into consideration that her teacher J. Elsner tended to display more voluminous compositions (see: Szymanowska, 1977; Mazurkas by Polish composers for piano, 1995) in his promotion of iconic for the Polish cultural situation of dance. As it is rightly pointed out by I. Podobas (2012), mazurka and polonaise were historically synonymized in the presentation of the national image-sense, but in the context of political issues of the late XVIII cent., due to the approval of “Dombrovsky’s mazurka” in the function of the anthem of Polish independence, the mazurka genre itself is combined with this representative national feature at a whole.

Hence, the “curtailement” form of the M. Shimanovskaya’s mazurka is emphasized that forms the textural resemblance to the mazurka and polonaise of M. Oginsky, which also used to represent

the emblematic of Polish in music and corresponded to the etymological commonality of the meaning of the names of these dances (see the work D. Idashak, 1960, pp.236-238). However, as it is observed by I. Podobas (2012, p.56), the simplicity of texture and form of these Mazurkas by M. Shimanovskaya is combined with a surprisingly sophisticated modal palette of “sensitive” chromaticized chanting the melodic foundations sounds that used to be far from the popular samples and used to represent the stylistic quotations of Mozart’s intonations.

Thus, in the small form of Mazurka by M. Shimanovskaya the great significance of its expressiveness is revealed which is determined by its reference to Mozart’s genius. And this ‘combination of the different’ in the general lyric image of the dance was taken by F. Chopin who tended to create only lyrical mazurkas throughout his life (see more in detail in the work of I. Podobas, 2012, p.19).

In this case the nocturnes by M. Shimanovskaya are analyzed by the edition of 1962 which displays works relating to an earlier period (the Nocturne as-dur was first published in 1825, but written, apparently, earlier, while the second, B-dur one is related to the last works of the author (Shimanovskaya, 1962, p.4).

The former of these, Nocturne As-dur, the subtitle of which is “Le Murmure” (“the murmur, whisper”), I. Belza relates to the “romantic soundtrack”, specifying the translation as “The Murmur of the Water” (Shimanovskaya, 1962). However, the genre itself, announced by D. Field during the revival of the sacrament of the early Christian holiness which used to be the central motif of “celtomania” in the first half of XIX century, respectively, is combined with the image of night church singing in its musical expression, and therefore it could not be unambiguously associated with the “landscape sketch”. After all, if in the Poems of Ossian, which were published by J. McPherson, the type of Irish bard lyrics is represented (Ossian, 1968, p.485), in which the lyrical landscape was part of the sacred singing hymns, written “not latter then XII cent.” (Dillon & Kershov, 2006, p.941), that is, in the era of heyday of Irish-Welsh scientific monastic poetry, the depicted by M. Shimanovskaya image could not be solved by relying solely on the uniquely fine feature.

I. Belza himself explains the multidimensionality of the mentioned method of expression by the fact that the music of the analyzed Nocturne was also used in the song “Viliya” by the author himself (according to “Conrad Wallenrode” by A. Mitskevich). Although there is a river there, “flowing in the lovely Koven valley among tulips and daffodils”, the poetic-patriotic symbolism behind this description is also obvious though (see: Shimanovskaya, 1962, p.4). In favor of this spiritual-semantic ambiguity also speaks the rondal structure of the Nocturne which is, moreover, approximates the form of the ancient rondo of harpsichordic heritage of the rococo authors, the meaning of which is connected to the Divine presence (Methodological function of the Christian worldview in musicology, 2007, p.102).

The Poetry of Ossian, which was so jealously taken by the contemporaries of M. Shimanovskaya and inspired J. Field to create the piano Nocturne, picked up by the creativity of the Polish pianist-composer who was endowed with a talent for reproduction of the lyric-hymn

landscape, which is characterized by the experts in this type of literature in the following way: “They [Irish poets] the first in Europe to have such a strange vision of nature in almost unnatural purity not only due to the fact of <...> living in a forest and sea environment but also because of carrying in this environment such an outlook, beautifully purified by endless spiritual exercises” (quot. in Dillon & Kershou, 2006, p.281). Here is an example of this type of poetry, where the “murmur-whisper” is obvious, but the height, inspired by the animation of the existent:

“I am willing, oh, Son of the living God,

The eternal ancient King,

For a secluded hut in the thicket,

For it to be my home.

The green shallow waters

Around it,

A clear backwater, to wash away sins

With the mercy of the Holy Spirit...” (Dillon & Kershou, 2006, p.281).

The meaning of this Celtic poetry, which was presented to the world in the temporal space of early Romanticism, is reflected in the following formula: “Earlier than others Celts began to chant the beauty of nature, earlier than others they began to search for spiritual closeness in friendship, and in battle – honesty and respect for the enemy <...> It was the Celts who combined magic with beauty, and power with morality, and all of this before the Christianity with its strong moral incentive” (see: Celtic church in the middle ages, 2018).

As a clarification of the meaning of “murmur-whisper” of the Nocturne As-dur by M. Shimanovskaya the emphasized melody by accentuation in the middle voice is pointed (as-g-as-as-g-as-b-as). This kind of etude-prelude mechanics takes a remarkable place in romantic “musical mythology” – including the “whisper of forest” in the famous Siegfried-Idyll from the second act of the opera “Siegfried” by R. Wagner. However, this kind of mechanical “howling” of the voice has fundamentally different loads in different works by different authors.

The mentioned melodic line is based on the idea of the Circle, that is, the return to the highness which the theme is designated with, the Circle being a symbolization of the Divine (Gudman, 1995, p.25). Moreover, the supporting sounds of this tune consist of the move as-g-b-as, that is, the motif of the Cross. The introduction of this serious symbolism into the “murmur”, not complicated by its invoice play, is consonant with what is commonly called “the noble Biedermeier” (see Malinovsky, 1989, p.141), that is, the combination of bourgeois-burgher simplicity, inspired by the purity of the Belief, and salon-aristocratic preciousness.

In order to explain the mentioned above about the structure of the ancient rondo in the reviewed play it is clarified that the main theme in the form of a period of repeated type takes the first 16 bars after which the building-up fragment sounds (bars 18-24). The refrain (bars 25-32) is a

new section (bars 33-43), after which its main theme sounds in Des-dur (bars 44-51). Next is the building-up-bundle, emphasized by the tempo inhibition (*ritenuto*) in b. 60 which leads to the refrain again, this time in f-moll (from b. 62). The final conduct of the refrain is focused on the fundamental key As-dur (from b. 78) and summarized in the coda (bars 94-106).

The recorded in the aforementioned music sheet the Nocturne B-dur is also the subject of the Polish edition of 1977 (Lissa, 1970). The mentioned play was one of the most frequently performed works by this author. Compared to the J. Field's Nocturne and the Nocturne As-dur which was analyzed above, there are obvious parallels in the predominance of lyrical images.

However, the experience of writing vocal compositions ("ballade-thought" according to I. Belza's classification (Lissa, 1970, p.3)) to the texts of "Historical songs" by Nemtsewicz defined the emphasized and dialogical form of presentation, which implements the elements of theatrilization and dramatization, in the work by M. Shimanovskaya. However, in this case, M. Shimanovskaya appeals to the Rondo, though not of the ancient type but, but of the five-part one which is related to the Viennese classical type. The initial – idyllic – theme is based on the emphasized sixth, *the perfect* interval of early Christian modal system (see the volume of the mode in Gregorianism and famous chants) which was established in its intonationally expressive self-sufficiency, unlike, for instance, "the Russian sixth" which quests to the resolution to the fifth complex.

In so doing, the sixth moves outline the "broken" path creating the features of the hidden polyphony, indicative for sacred melodies, register "distribution" of which formed a source of dialogical expansion from b. 9, and then the appearance of the first episode, b-moll (bars 17-26) in which the motives, presented in bars 9-16, are edgy curtailed. The second episode begins in Des-dur. In dynamic-register bars 35-45 the idea of dialogue, which brings to life the hymn-climax of the refrain in the main key, is sharpened (b. 46).

Accordingly, the dramatic elements laid in the leading theme are overcome in the climax zone, and the "brokenness" of the tune path, emphasized with the sixth and twice shown move to the sixth in the first and second conduct of the refrain, is "aligned" in the third one: for once the sixth forms the chanted "skip" which is filled with the following smooth movement. Accordingly, in coda (from b.53) the register mappings form the correlation of "echo", the sequences catabasis form touched and gentle resolutions of contrasts of the themes-motives, shown in the former stages of the development of the composition.

As it can be seen from the made analysis it is obvious that the motif contrasts in the process of sounding of the work are aimed at the convergence of motif-images, shown in the exposition in tembral-invoice confrontation. Here the core difference between the image of the Nocturne is laid, even the dramatized one, as it is exposed in the analyzed B-dur sample of this type of genre typology, and the Nocturne by F. Chopin, presented in ballad-dramatic extension the poetic three-part, contrastingly presented structure is filled with romantic antinomy. In M. Shimanovskaya's works the reconciliation-humility as a result of comparisons and developing fragments dominates.

The final three-beat is symbolic (bars 61-63) the supporting highnesses of which proclaims the motif of the Circle (see above) in the register passage “scatter”.

### Conclusions

In general, M. Shimanovskaya by demonstrating a principled miniaturization of the nationally significant (Mazurka) or the expansion of culturally dominant (Nocturne) genre quality, clearly does not go beyond the limits of the possibilities of the “easy” piano, achieving artistic expression by eclectic stylistic combinations, summarized by lyrical unity of presentation. The designated eclecticism, soft enough in expression, does not concern the demonic opposition of the romantics in any way, except for perhaps “looking around” at the latter in Nocturne. Such is the Biedermeier-gentry logic of the “great in the small”, which also colors the romantic principles of the expressiveness of the works and the performances of M. Shimanovskaya.

The mentioned feature of creativity of M. Shimanovskaya, who inherits the creativity of J. Field both in pianism and in the style of composer’s writing, naturally accumulated signs of religious symbolism, which defined romanticism of F. Chopin in many aspects, especially which are related to his interpretation of the pianistic playing. The latter, as it was already emphasized, led to the connection with harpsichord of the Rococo – within the limits of the piano art. Accordingly, Z. Lissa (1970, pp.342-348) considered the direct precedence of symbolism of O. Skryabin, which was kicked back by the “shock” aggressiveness of music of modern-avant-garde of 20<sup>th</sup> century (Lebl, 1966), but restored in its priority position at the end of 20<sup>th</sup> – at the beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century, in the methods of expression of Chopin-composer.

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