

# The Manifestation of Baroque Stylistics in the Music of Romantics

## Taking Schumann's Requiem as an Example

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**Abstract**—The article discusses the reception of the peculiarities of the figurative system and the musical language of the Baroque epoch in the work of Western European composers of the first half of the XIX century. A common approach for two epochs to the antithetical reflection of the phenomena of the world in their contradiction and dialectical unity is noted. The special character of the religious views of the romantics is revealed. The romantics mastered the idioms of the topos of sorrow and pathos, applying them both in secular and in liturgical genres. A striking example of an appeal to baroque sources is the Requiem op. 148 Schumann, in which the composer refuses to manifest the author's style, choosing the objective tone of the narrative.

**Keywords**—*Baroque traditions; romantic composers; idioms of the Baroque music; topos of sorrow; Requiem by Schumann*

### I. INTRODUCTION

The theme of the dialogue of styles of different eras became relevant already in the 19th century, when composers rediscovered the music of J.S. Bach. Many installations of the Baroque era turned out to be consonant with the worldview of 19th century romantics. It is no coincidence that composers of the 30-50s of the XIX century declared interest in the work of Bach and Handel.

Among those who in the first half of the 19th century actively contributed to the revival of the art of I.S. Bach, in the first place are C. Zelter<sup>1</sup>, F. Mendelssohn and R. Schumann. In the early 1930s, Schumann wrote in his musical newspaper: "... in the music cabinets of the Berlin Conservatory, which old Zelter bequeathed his library to,

carefully preserved in manuscripts <...> countless works by Bach. <...> would the time have come and would not have been useful if the German nation once decided to put together and publish all the works of Bach?"<sup>2</sup>

One cannot ignore F. Chopin, who considered Bach's work to be a remarkable school, both for composers and pianists, and who used compositional techniques and rhetorical figures of the Bach epoch in his works. One can speak with confidence about the influence of Bach's music on Chopin's work, relying on notes in his letters and on the memoirs of his contemporaries<sup>3</sup>.

The theme of baroque influences in the music of composers of subsequent generations is being developed quite actively in the works of Yu. Bulavintseva, G. Taraeva, L. Kirillina, E. Spivak, I. Hannanova, R. Hodzhava and others. At the same time, the theme of the baroque sources of Schumann's sacred music has so far attracted little attention from scientists. Schumann's creativity in the field of spiritual art is covered in articles by H. Loos "Robert Schumann and Sacred Music" and V. Kadochnikov "On the sacred music of R. Schumann". In the studies of Schumann's works by A. Ambros, D. Zhitomirsky, S. Belousova, G. Ganzburg, S. Grokhotov, O. Loseva, M. Saponov and others, the connection of his works with baroque traditions was not specifically revealed.

Meanwhile, this topic is relevant from several points of view. Firstly, from the point of view of the "maturing" of polystylistics in the music of the 19th century. Like other romantics, Schumann had a pronounced individual style, but

<sup>1</sup> Zelter Karl Friedrich (1758 — 1832), German composer, teacher and conductor. From 1800 he headed the Singing Academy in Berlin, in 1807 he established the School of Orchestra Playing (Ripienchule) in Berlin, in 1809 — the first amateur male choral society Lidertafel in Germany, in 1822 — the Royal Institute of Church Music. He taught musical subjects at the University of Berlin (since 1823, the director of the so-called University Music College). Among his students are F. Mendelssohn, O. Nikolai, J. Meyerbeer. He was a close friend of I.V. Goethe. The author of popular songs, choirs, cantatas, theater music, religious works. Honorary Member of the Royal Academy of Arts (1809). Zelter was one of the first propagandists of music of J. S. Bach, his apprentice F. Mendelssohn inherited this addiction from Zelter.

<sup>2</sup> The great minds of subsequent generations about Bach [Electronic resource]. Access mode: [https://www.e-reading.club/chapter.php/69320/84/Hammershlag\\_-\\_Esli\\_by\\_Bah\\_vel\\_dnevnik.html](https://www.e-reading.club/chapter.php/69320/84/Hammershlag_-_Esli_by_Bah_vel_dnevnik.html).

<sup>3</sup> Letter to Julian Fontana No. 325 dated 08/08/1839: "... I make corrections to the Bach's Paris edition, not only the mistakes of the engraver, but also the ones legitimized by those who supposedly understand Bach (I do not pretend to understand better, but I am convinced that sometimes I guess)" [1]. Preludes and fugues were the main material during the preparation of Chopin for his own concerts. "I close for two weeks and play Bach. This is my preparation; I don't learn my compositions." [1].

at the same time, he deliberately resorted to stylistic modeling (the plays Chopin and Paganini in the Carnival cycle), selecting the most typical means for the style of a particular composer expressiveness.

Secondly, from the point of view of Schumann's interpretation of the theme of spirituality in music and its selective approach to the means of expressiveness of the Baroque epoch, despite the special nature of religious beliefs, Schumann created the Requiem according to the orthodox model, which incorporated many conceptual and musical-linguistic signs of Baroque art.

The above arguments prove that the theme of the embodiment of Baroque influences in the spiritual works of Schumann is far from exhausted.

## II. ROMANTIC RECEPTION OF THE BAROQUE TRADITION

Before characterizing Schumann's Requiem, it is necessary to find out the points of contact between the art installations of the Baroque and Romantic periods, both in terms of aesthetic preferences and in terms of the choice of means of expression. Note that, despite the many ideas of Baroque composers that served as a source of inspiration for the authors of the 19th century, romanticism is dynamic in relation to the art of past eras, adapting substantial and musical-linguistic ideas to the present.

Baroque aesthetics is characterized by the poetics of contrasts, implemented in the assimilation of macro- and microcosm, reliance on the theory of affects, the priority of the word. In a fundamental study, M. Lobanova proves that "in essence baroque thinking is antithetic" [2]. Inheriting the traditions of Baroque art, the romantics revealed the extraordinary complexity and depth of the psychic life of a person endowed with intuition and feelings. Man for them is a small universe, a microcosm. And this brings the romantics together with baroque ideas about the likeness of space and man.

At the same time, the typification of emotional states typical of the Baroque era and their reduction to affects differs from the way artists-romantics are prone to individualization of mental life, to single forms of its embodiment. The inner world of a romantic artist is often materialized through the objects and realities of surrounding life. So, nature for them becomes not just an element, but a friend and interlocutor, and the world of people is often represented with the help of genre-everyday associations. Two areas — psychological and genre-everyday — can contrast, reflecting the twofold perception of the artist.

The demonstration of phenomena in their contradiction and dialectical unity also makes related approaches to the representation of reality in Baroque and romantic art. According to a fair statement by G. Taraeva: "The principle of "dramaturgy of antithesis" lies at the basis of many works of that period" [3].

The other side of the antinomy is dual faith, based, on the one hand, on the orthodox Christian faith, and on the other, on the mystical perception of the visible and invisible worlds,

in which visible objects are symbols and signs of the presence of supernatural reality. On the one hand, emotionally experienced plots and postulates of the Bible, on the other hand, a philosophical and ethical interpretation of life realities as symbols of the world of things.

A romantic synthesis led to the formation of a special religious mentality in which faith in a supernatural, mystical-religious intuition was united on the basis of emotional perception. The religious views of the romantics have incorporated theistic (oriented towards orthodox Christianity), deistic (inherited from the Enlightenment), pantheistic and mythological representations. As a result, the understanding of religion in romanticism loses confessional certainty and becomes vague. For example, Schumann characterized himself as follows: "Religious without religion" [4].

The Baroque theory of affects, which lost its comprehensive significance in the 19th century, was nevertheless inherited by the romantics. If for topos of lyricism, sensitivity and gallantry, composers resorted to new means (originating in song, romance, genre-everyday sources), then the sphere of sorrow and tragic pathetic, marked by high ethical pathos and emotional intensity, was assimilated and widely used by romantics.

In addition, the liturgical genres of the Baroque era remained carriers of sustainable ways of embodying affects — a glorious, solemn plan, lyrical, divine content, asking for character, as well as the effect of pathos, sorrow and suffering. But if the topos of lyricism and sensitivity in the music of romantics have found new means of expression prompted by the song genre with a certain hypertrophy of a personal, confessional beginning, then the ways of embodying the topos of sorrow and pathos were largely inherited from the church-baroque tradition. And this is no coincidence.

The topos of sorrow and pathos in baroque music is endowed with such a high ethical meaning (related to the theme of crucifixion), depth and intensity of feelings, immersion in one affect, that composers of subsequent generations used the same means to embody sorrow in secular genres.

The topos of sorrow perceived from baroque art was perceived by the romantics as a symbol of fate. This is exactly how Schubert interpreted it in the Double, from the Swan Song cycle. In addition to choosing the h-moll tone, low register, rhythmic formulas of the mourning march in combination with the recitative of the vocal part, the attributes of the baroque style give the romance an elevated and pathetic sound. From the very first notes in the piano introduction, the motive of the cross, duplicated in three octaves, sounds. Throughout the play, the ostinate sound *fis* is repeated, which is a symbol of either a funerary bell, or an obsession. In harmony, incomplete "empty" chords, Neapolitan harmony in the cadence, retardation cadence at the end (Bach allusion) are used. The ratio of the recitative melody and the intense harmony creates a one-time contrast.

The idea of "one-time contrast" (T. Livanova, E. Nazaikinsky), in which different textured layers perform different functions, is borrowed from Baroque: a harmonically unstable layer is a carrier of an emotional, expressive principle, while another — less mobile — layer represents a volitional, external principle that controls emotional stress. Such a bundle can form when using a static melodic line and dynamic accompaniment. An example is the Prelude op. 28 No. 4 *e-moll* of Chopin. Based on the Bach model, the composer uses the chromatic version of the Phrygian revolution, placing it in the upper line of chords. The intonational "core" of the melody is a second downward motive, the contours of which make up the rhetorical figure "*passus duriusculus*", known as the motive of suffering, sorrow.

From baroque art, romantics perceived the division of genres into high, medium and low. "High style" was usually attributed as a sign of church music and contained idioms of sacred music of both classical and Baroque eras. "The genre did not always coincide with the style, but usually, when it came to "church, theater and chamber" styles, the corresponding genres were also implied. <...> at the same time, theatrical style could be used in church music, and theatrical and church style in chamber music" [5].

Most Baroque traditions were manifested in liturgical genres. Composers of the 19th century borrowed polyphony, chorality (as a thematic basis and as a type of texture), a figurative system (topos of pathos, grief and tragedy), rhetorical figures from high genres. Among the borrowings can be attributed the achievements of baroque composers in the field of harmony - for example, elliptical revolutions, various interrupted revolutions that help create zones of harmonic tension.

Other manifestations of topos of high genres: 1) antiphone performances of choir groups, concert interpretation of spiritual genres (alternating solo and tutti, ensemble and choir); 2) terrace-like speaker; 3) the design of the topos of lyrics and sensitivity through a solo voice, delays, dance rhythm formulas.

In the XIX century, composers, due to the secular nature of their activities, paid little attention to liturgical genres. Nevertheless, cantata-oratorical works on biblical subjects were in demand — an example is Mendelssohn's oratorios "Elijah", "Paul", "Christ". In the work of romantics, sacred music acquired the character of a lyrical outpouring (Schubert), expressive-dramatic narrative (Requiem of Berlioz), or reproducing the signs of a traditional model of stylization (Bruckner, Liszt).

### III. THE STYLE OF SCHUMANN'S SPIRITUAL WORKS

The style of Schumann's spiritual works is determined by their purpose. Until the 50s, he created works of the cantata-oratorio genre for concert performance. "Handel inspired [Schumann] to create secular oratorios, Bach's "Passion", as an unattainable ideal, rather frightened him from this music than attracted to it. In addition, there were no orders for such works" [6].

The originality of the oratorio-cantata works of the composer was largely due to the influence of Schumann's song lyrics. The composer was aware of the genre features of all of his compositions and, as a consequence, the need for a certain environment for their performance. Usually, researchers consider the originality of Schumann's religious views on the example of early spiritual writings ("Scenes and Faust", "Requiem for a Mignon"), referring to the composer's point of view regarding the poem "Paradise and Peri" (1843): this is ... an oratorio not for a praying hall, but for cheerful people" [7].

Some of Schumann's writings are inspired by biblical imagery. For example, the ballad "Belshazzar" op. 57 (1840) to the verses of G. Heine, based on the plot from the book of the prophet Daniel (Dan. 5: 1-9, 30). Schumann wrote two spiritual works on the texts of F. Rückert: "The Christmas Eve", op. 71 for the soprano and orchestra (the composer called the play "Spiritual Poem" in a letter to the publisher), as well as the motto "Do not Despair in the Valley of Sorrow" op. 93 (Psalm 23) for the double male choir a cappella (1849).

A new stage in the work of Schumann begins in the 50s. In January 1851, Schumann wrote: "To devote his strength to sacred music is, perhaps, the musician's highest goal. However, in youth we are all still so firmly rooted in the earth, with all its joys and sorrows; only getting older, we push our branches upward" [7].

In 1851, beginning the work on the Luther oratorio, Schumann, in a letter to librettist Richard Paul, outlined his views on the creation of sacred music: "If possible, avoid only narrative, speculative, preferring everywhere dramatic form. <...> Wherever possible, give me an occasion for a choral presentation. You know, "Israel in Egypt" by Handel; for me it is the ideal of a choral work. <...> Music should influence not so much with skill, but with brevity, strength and clarity" [7].

The appeal of R. Schumann in 1852 to the Mass (op. 147) and Requiem for the four-voice choir and requiem orchestra (op. 148)<sup>4</sup> is due to his official duties as a music director in Düsseldorf, according to which the composer was to provide the corresponding works services in the Catholic Cathedral of the city. According to the contract, Schumann was obliged to arrange four church concerts annually.

The state of the musical accompaniment of the service in the Catholic Church of Düsseldorf can be judged by the letters of V. Mendelssohn, who served as the music director of this city in 1833–1835. In a letter to his sister, he said: " It is fatal that among all the notes available here, not a single tolerable mass was found; nothing of the old Italians, all entirely modern tricks. I had a desire to go round my

<sup>4</sup> Actually, Schumann left two Requiems - op. 98b and op. 148. But the paraliturgical "Requiem for a Mignon" (1848), composed of poetic fragments of Goethe's novel, is a lyrical vocal and instrumental poem. To the first words of the Latin Requiem, in addition, a choir of the final scene in Schumann's music to the poem by G. G. Byron "Manfred" op. 115 (1848). Finally, there is a song of the same name, included by the composer in a collection "Six Poems by Nikolaus Lenau and Requiem (Old Catholic Poem) for Voice and Piano" op. 90 (1850).

possessions in search of good music" [8]. To replenish the repertoire of liturgical music in the Catholic Cathedral of Dusseldorf, he searched for the works of Palestrina, Lasso, Lotti in the music collections of churches in Bonn, Cologne, Elberfeld.

In a letter to the Protestant priest Bauer dated January 12, 1835, Mendelssohn reported: "I was amazed to find that Catholics who have been using music for many centuries and perform music in their main churches almost every Sunday they still don't have a mass about which it would be possible to say that it is more or less tolerable, doesn't interfere too much and is not too operative" [8].

Robert Schumann, becoming the main city conductor in Dusseldorf, faced the same situation in the Catholic Church and began to actively correct the situation. At the Sunday Catholic service, he performed Beethoven Mass. On Palm Sunday, 1852, under his leadership in the Protestant Church of Dusseldorf sounded "Passion for John" by J. S. Bach. Later, he performed the Bach Mass in B minor, and in 1853, the oratorio G.F. Handel's "Messiah". Also for the service, Schumann made a new edition of the motet "Do not Despair in the Valley of Sorrow" op. 93 for a double male choir with an orchestra (1852).

Schumann's spiritual works for the concert hall (and "for cheerful people") are of a confessional and personal character, while Schumann is inclined toward the canonical reading of the text in liturgical writings of God's office. In Requiem, Schumann deliberately reproduced the attributes of the church style. His music combines personal, romantic, confessional and objective, collective-prayer principles.

#### IV. REQUIEM BY SCHUMANN

In Requiem, several figurative lines can be distinguished, the alternation of which forms a dramatic relief of the cycle. This is a dramatic line presented by No. 3 of "Dies Irae" and the first part of No. 6 of "Domine Jesu Christe". Lyrical images are concentrated in No. 4 "Recordare", No. 5 "Qui Mariam" and No. 7 "Hostias". The group of rooms of a glorious character is No. 2 "Te Decet Hymnus" and No. 8 "Sanctus". In addition, narrative is present in "Issyem Aeternam's" No. 1 rooms and in separate sections of the rooms (No. 4, "Liber Scriptus").

Thus, the sequential presentation of numbers forms microcycles with a contrast alternation of images:

- No. 1 narrative, No. 2 glorious, No. 3 dramatic (which corresponds to the stages of prayer: conversion - glorification - prayer);
- No. 4 narrative, No. 5 lyrical, No. 6 dramatic;
- No. 7 lyrical, No. 8 glorious, No. 9 narrative.

The dramaturgy of each microcycle forms a baptizing wave, which leads to a local climax in the last issue of the microcycle. The main climax is located in the third quarter of the entire cycle (No. 6-8).

Each of the figurative lines has its own set of means of expressiveness. The dramatic line, reminiscent of the tension

and pathos of the baroque topos of sorrow, absorbed to the greatest extent the signs of the corresponding style. This includes the widespread use of polyphonic expositions of material in numbers and in individual sections of Requiem (fugue, fugato, imitation).

No. 6 Domine Jesu Christe is the closest to the Baroque style. It is written in a complex two-part form, consisting in all respects: the minor fret is replaced by a major, the polyphonic presentation of the first part (fugue) is replaced by harmonic (choral). After the thematicism of the Baroque type in the fugue, the first section in the second section follows the theme of signal nature — affirming, fanfare. Even the opening and closing phrases of the entire issue, based on the same textual and thematic material, have different meanings and set off the composer's dramatic plan: from supplication — to hope and glorification.

The opening four-stroke has two functions. On the one hand, the compositional function of conception is called to draw attention to the choir of copper and the solemn chorus "Lord, Jesus Christ, the King of Glory". On the other hand, the entry function is a warning to the listener about the nature of music, its genre and style features. In this case, the high pathos of the text of the issue and its dramatic content are embodied by means developed in the Baroque era. It should be noted the choice of the h-moll key, firmly connected in the minds of the listener with the High Mass of Bach.

Neapolitan harmony is often used to translate a dramatic situation, an effect of grief and dramatic conflicts. This chord with the same semantic content is found in Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin and others. Also used retardation cadence ( $D_7 - D_7 \rightarrow S$ ), which Etinger calls the typical harmonic Bach formula. Also we note the auxiliary turnover  $D - S - D$ , which occurs repeatedly in dramatic numbers and serves as a cycle-unifying means (just like retardation cadence, Neapolitan harmony, and interrupted circulation).

The first part of the item is a fugue, brief, but with intensive development (measures 5-26). The fugue has a three-part structure, without interludes. The theme of the fugue in "Domine Jesu Christe" clearly echoes the baroque melody: with its outlines, it repeats the core of the g-moll fugue theme from Volume I of the Bach's "Well-tempered clavier". B. Yavorsky connects this drawing of the melody with the theme of the cross, crucifixion, atonement through the accomplishment of the cross torment.

In the new section, built on the text "Et de profundo lacu", a varied core of the topic in the form of a fugato is held. The function of the new section is twofold: partly it plays the role of an intermediate between the two sections of the form, partly it takes on the role of a modulating developmental site — a bundle after polyphonic development in the fugue. From here comes the active tonal movement — *h-moll*, *cis-moll*, *gis-moll*, *H-dur*, and then a switch to choral exposition and a long dominant organ point.

The second section of the issue is an affirmation and glorification of what follows from the text "Halleluja!" and the symbolism of the theme: the downward movement from



the first step in major is often used in chorales of the anthem plan.

The final four-stroke, repeating the material of the entry in major, "rings" the number, giving it integrity. The number ends, as it began: solemnly, pathos, at a more measured pace. The harmonic entry pattern is also repeated — this frame creates harmonious unity and wholeness of the form. The principle of grouping texts within the issue also resembles Baroque forms with contrasting alternating sections and simultaneously-affecting over a single section.

On the whole, in the cycle, expression and pathos are manifested through the declamatory nature of melodic constructions, exclamations, jumps in melodies to descending reduced intervals: quart, fifth, seventh. Baroque allusions are created with the help of active modulation development, the use of "special" chords: Neapolitan sixth chord, reduced seventh chord, phrygian turnover (with *passus duriusculus*), and retardation cadence.

An important role is played by tonal semantics: minor fret (sharp sphere) and, in particular, *fis-moll* in No. 3 "Dies irae", *h-moll* in No. 6 "Domine Jesu Christe", *gis-moll* in No. 7 "Hostias" Schumann was receptive, sensitive to tonal semantics. In his compositions of the key, something always means something, for example: the more flats in the key, the more the lyrical sphere is affected. And the fact that a sharp sphere prevails in the Requiem is also not an accident.

In the lyric pieces, the romance type of melody dominates - as an individual voice in a common prayer in solo performances or solo sections inside the number. The form in such numbers resembles a song prototype — square constructions with loses. In glorious items, as a rule, they use the major fret, marching rhythm formulas, quartary upward jumps in the melody, simple, mostly trident, harmony.

## V. CONCLUSION

The study provides the basis for the following conclusions. Requiem takes a special place among other composer's spiritual works. 1) It represents a new type of religiosity for Shuman, oriented towards orthodox spirituality. 2) Schumann here seems to refuse the manifestation of the author's style, choosing the objective (author-neutral) tone of the narrative. 3) It is intended for service in the Catholic Cathedral.

He shows himself to be the heir to the Baroque traditions in many aspects. Among them are the following: rhetorical figures; type of melody; the abundance of polyphonic episodes and numbers<sup>5</sup>; detachment (neutrality) of the author's position, no confession; the topos of sorrow and pathos; following the word; cyclization of the composition; a one-time contrast, manifested through the contrast of textured layers.

The high pathos of baroque music, where the highest peak of sorrow was achieved, expressed with extraordinary nobility and power, was received by the romantics in both liturgical and secular music. It should be emphasized that the high genres of the baroque music have a concentrated ethical meaning and emotional charge, explained by their spiritual genetics, and therefore composers of subsequent eras often use the means of expressiveness found in baroque art to achieve the same heights.

On the whole, in the 19th century music the changes of the value-style landmarks take place as one can follow the example of the creative evolution of R. Schumann. "This, metaphorically speaking, is a parabola, initially aimed at the romantic endlessness of creative innovations, but, ultimately, returning to the classical beginnings of European music. And the creative path of R. Schumann, as you know, culminating in his newfound in the 1840-1850s a classic, it seems to us a kind of microcosm of individual style development, subsequently repeated by the macrocosm of romantic music of the whole XIX century ..." [9].

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<sup>5</sup> A counterpoint warehouse is very important. Schumann refers to counter-punctual presentation as a musical instrument, which in the representations of his time is typical of genuine church music in the style of Palestrina, and therefore clear in its meaning. So Schumann creates objectivized religiosity with the help of church music.