

**STRUCTURAL MODELS OF CLARINET TRIO
IN THE TRADITION OF EUROPEAN CHAMBER MUSIC:
PIANO TRIO WITH CLARINET**

Continuous enrichment and intensive growth of genre varieties of clarinet ensemble music in the European tradition leads to systematization and determination of style and performance guides in the field of one of the most interesting genres, i.e. clarinet trio. Generally, understanding and studying of the history of formation, development, and functioning (especially at the contemporary stage of musical culture development) of chamber instrumental ensemble with the winds is practically unexplored in Ukrainian music studies. According to I. Polska, “general vector of historical evolution of European ensemble genres is presumed to be the following: from non-differentiated chaotic multiple options through trio models to dialogue models (duets) and “quarto” models (quartets), synthesizing duet and trio properties, and then to multi-aspect polylogic models of the 20th century” [3, p. 185]. Therefore, trio combinations have been pioneers in realization of the notion of ensemble, revealing its communicative and aesthetic essence of coexistence of various artistic components: agreed interaction, harmonic coexistence of all elements of music whole, comprehension of complementary unity of semantic timbral individualities.

Generally, the most typical instrumentations formed in chamber instrumental music may be divided into the following ensemble groups: 1) clarinet-strings-piano trio of such subtypes: a) clarinet-violin-piano trio; b) clarinet-cello-piano trio; c) clarinet-violin-piano trio; 2) winds-piano trio; 3) clarinet-piano trio with rarely used instruments and human voice. In this article, we will deal with the first type of strings-clarinet-piano ensemble.

The father of this subtype is considered to be W. A. Mozart, whereas one of the most famous in the history of music *Kegelstatt-trio* (K.498),

also referred to as the Trio for Clarinet, Viola and Piano Es-dur was written for such instrumentation¹. In Mozart's time, the clarinet was a relatively new instrument, and Kegelstatt trio, along with the Clarinet Quintet and Concerto for clarinet with orchestra, helped increase the popularity of the instrument in European music. Therefore, the next year (1788) after being written, the Trio was published by K. Artaria Publishing House. In three-movement composition of the Trio, instead of traditional sonata allegro, Mozart's first movement is Andante, and the final is even of more interest – 7-movement Rondeaux: Allegretto, where for each stage of development the composer chose peculiar presentation and development of musical material. The first solo is of clarinet, and the melody is complemented by microvariations with tutti coda; the next theme is revealed by viola with further development in the form of duet roll calls; third theme is revealed by all instruments *all' unisono*, after which the cycle is climaxed with the fascinating, exciting coda that reminds of magnificent opera finals. H. Abert should be noted here: "The idea itself to unite in one ensemble two so different timbral individualities, like saturated clarinet and viola with its melancholic

¹ The history of this masterpiece is rather interesting. Mozart wrote the trio on 10 sheets (19 pages) in Vienna and dated the manuscript from 5 August 1786. According to Karoline Pichler, Mozart at this time was a 17-year-old student, and the work was dedicated to Franziska Jacquin. Indeed, Mozart and Jacquin family (father Nikolaus Joseph, his youngest son Gottfried) were quite close friends. They performed house concerts together where Nikolaus played the flute and Franziska the piano. In a letter to Gottfried from 15 January 1787 Mozart praises Franziska's studiousness and diligence, and he dedicated a considerable number of works to the Jacquin family, most notably this trio. His friendship went even further when one year later he wrote two songs: *Als Luisa* (K. 520) and *Das Traumbild* (K. 530) for Gottfried.. The German word *Kegelstatt* means a place where skittles are being played, a bowling alley. Mozart did write that he composed the 12 duos for basset horns (K. 487) while playing skittles; he noted on the first page of that autograph: "Vienna, 27 July 1786 while playing skittles" ("Wien, den 27ten Jullius 1786 untern Kegelscheiben") – only about a week before he dated this trio. However, there is no evidence that there was a similar situation with this work, the title was added by later publishers Mozart entered this work into his own list of works as "Ein Terzett für klavier, Clarinett und Viola". This clarinet-viola-piano trio was first played in the Jacquin's house: Anton Stadler played the clarinet, Mozart the viola, Franziska Jacquin the piano [1].

pessimism, is genius; this contrast influenced drastically the emotional substance of the work” [1, p. 355], emphasizing its elegiac intelligent harmony and calling this work “the most precious pearl of intimate chamber music [1, p. 356]. However, considering the genre subtype, such strange for the first sight combination: clarinet+viola+piano becomes classic example as to appearance of the genre of strings-clarinet-piano trio. This is not by coincidence, since the chamber ensemble is “phenomenon of close personal communication and interaction of limited number of participants in small limited space (micro space) through common emotional feelings and intellectual comprehension...<...>...it is distinguished by harmonic artistic conformity, balance, and integrity” [3, p. 187]. In his Trio, Mozart reaches exactly that “special communicative climate (according to E. Nazaykinskyi) of chamber ensemble that lies in consonance of harmony of the one and the multiple, predetermined by psychological existence and kind warm-heartedness of communication, revealing unique peculiarity and semantics of chamber instrumental genres.

Later, such instrumentation was used by Robert Schumann (*Muchener zu lungen*), Carl Reinecke Trio for piano, clarinet, and viola. At the beginning of 20th century, late romantic tendencies were concentrated and highly emotional lyric tense was emphasized by Max Bruch in his Eight pieces for clarinet, viola, and piano (1910). Each piece points out the variety of ensemble combinations, ways of dramatic and timbral plane arrangement. Avant-garde piece *Structures* by Lachenmann vividly represents clarinet-viola trios. The same instrumentation was used by Ye. Stankovich in one of his conceptual meditative pieces with symbolic poetic name “Blossoming Garden and Apples Falling Down into Water”.

The most numerous group of this type of trios is clarinet-cello-piano trios. The second person after W.A. Mozart who turned his attention to this genre was L. van Beethoven² in his Piano Trio op. 11., composed in

² The inspirer of Ludwig van Beethoven for composing clarinet pieces (including for ensembles) was his close friend Joseph Beer, similarly like Anton Stadler for Mozart or Richard Mühlfeld for Brahms. Joseph Beer was of the same age as the composer, and he resided in Vienna, like Beethoven. In his 17, he was already working at Bavarian court. Beer made magnificent impression on the audience; they said he was playing divinely. *Allgemeine Musicalische Zeitung* devoted the following comment for him: “Exceptional confidence, light technique, and the purest sound makes it possible to combine sophisticated emotions, especially in piano passages; hardly

1797 and published in Vienna next year. This is one of the earliest chamber pieces with participation of woodwinds, which were becoming popular and attractive with their novelty³. Probably, B-dur key was selected to facilitate rapid passages of clarinet in B, which were not, at that time, improved according to Boehm system [5]. The work was dedicated to Countess Maria Wilhelmine von Thun, and it is also known as Gassenhauer Trio. This arose from its third movement which creates nine variations and a theme of the melody *Pria ch'io l'impegno* ("Before I go to work") from the then popular opera "D'Amor Corsar" by Joseph Weigl. This melody was so popular it could be heard in many of Vienna's lanes. Contemporary equivalents of the term "Gassenhauer" include "hit" (success) or "schlager". Other composers who used this melody include Joseph von Eybler, Johann Nepomuk Hummel and Niccolò Paganini.

The Trio consists of three movements: *Allegro con brio*, *Adagio*, *Tema con Variazioni: Allegretto*. This is the first time when clarinet, cello, and piano are combined in chamber genres, since Beethoven's aim was different from Mozart's. He preferred the instrumentation of these three instruments that would have their advantage due to the close proximity, and at the same time distinguished by their contrast nature and

anybody of the masters could stand beside him. In 1797 the Prince of Lichtenstein accepted him for the service, and on 6th of April Beethoven was giving performance with him in Vienna at one of the public concertos of Schuppanzigh, where quintet for clarinet and winds was performed. In 1799, after completing Sonata Pathétique and quartets op.18, Beethoven composed Septet for violin, viola, cello, clarinet, horn, bassoon, and double bass, in the first performance of which participated I. Schuppanzigh (violin), J. Beer (clarinet) at the palace of Prince Schwarzbberg in December 1799, and the public concerto was held on 2nd April 1800 at the National Royal Theatre at the author's benefit evening [12, p. 206].

³ Starting the new age in music art, Beethoven gave a new life and new role to the winds. He wasn't composing solo compositions for them but in ensemble and symphonic genres – one can hardly imagine his music without the winds. There are two clarinets in Octet, in Rondino, composed by 22-year-old composer for *table* music wind ensemble. This year, he also wrote three Duets for clarinet and bassoon. It may be noticeable that among later winds pieces Beethoven prefers clarinet to more traditional flute: these are Quintet Es-dur op. 16 with clarinet, Trio B-dur op. 11, for piano, clarinet, and cello, Septet Es-dur op. 20. It is interesting that the role of clarinet in these chamber pieces of Beethoven is much more intensive if compared to the first two symphonies of the same time.

timbral characteristics, finally, they correspond to triad tessitura (upper part – clarinet, middle part – cello, lower part – piano). Contrast, even conflict in terms of composer’s style category, is dominant for instrumental complement selection; it is not by chance, since the first movement is impetuous, imperative, *Allegro con Brio*, which is based on development of two elements (asserting chords, aspiring ascending succession, and song and cantilena melody) represents extended sonata form with the signs of Beethoven’s thought (3D saturated development with intensive waves of build-up, dynamic reprise and exploding coda). If chamber genres stipulate the component of communication, conversation, this movement may be characterized as passionate, dynamic conversation, discussion, where thoughts and considerations move either in single dynamic strive or vary and start competition or argument, sometimes they twist in imitating polyphonic texture to reach a consensus. Meditative and overwhelmed with warm lyric feelings, with recitative intoning, *Adagio* disposed to deeply-existential dialogue, and bravura variations, similarly to piano sonatas final movements, startle with their brilliance, joy of living, giant energy; though, this form allows the composer demonstrating the variety of principles of inventive ensemble techniques. The same elements of fantasy, vividness, and joyful spirits are peculiar to the famous *Septet*, and Beethoven himself interpreted it for piano, clarinet, and cello⁴, complementing the clarinet trios repertoire with one more valuable sample of high artistic merit.

Romantic world view and new aesthetic principles of ensemble music tradition are vividly revealed in the works of Johannes Brahms. His attention to clarinet⁵, related to creative cooperation with the prominent clarinet player R. Mühlfeld, gave rise to exceptional masterpieces in the history of Chamber Music, such as *Clarinet Quintet h-moll op.115* and *Trio for clarinet, cello, and piano a-moll op.114*, which Hans Gal called “the last spikelets” [2, p. 166], 1891 – the year when these clarinet ensembles were created, is the beginning of the last period of J. Brahms’s

⁴ This was not without a reason. When Hoffmeister in 1802, without any consent of the author, published his own adaptation of *Septet for string quintet*, Beethoven became furious and made the transcription himself. Despite some details, composer reserves almost identical clarinet part, with no alternations to material of *Minuet and Andante with variations on the theme of Rhein boatman Ich Schiffer, lieber Schiffer*. The success of the first trio and the purpose of complementing the repertoire of the famous clarinet player Beer were the reasons for this interpretation by the composer.

⁵ Johannes Brahms also composed two clarinet sonatas.

creativity. Philosophic contemplation, nobleness, spirituality of four-movement Trio (Allegro, Adagio, Andantino grazioso, Allegro) gravitate to primary forms of Haydn, on one side, and represents meditative and philosophic conceptual late-Romantic lyrics, on the other. The instrumentation selected by Brahms reflected the time fashion and peculiarities of composers' worldview the best. Highly intelligent harmony and piercing hearty emotions are united with virtuoso solution of technical issues and music language, first of all, in the sphere of ensemble notes writing. After successful performances⁶ this piece almost revitalize the genre of clarinet trio (and generally, chamber genres, which in the age of Romanticism were "somehow in the shadow of solo and orchestra genres development").

It is not by coincidence that for such instrumentation were created Trio B-dur op.29 by Vincent d'Indy (1897) with neoclassic tendencies to Old French suite cycles and Trio d-moll op.3 by A. Zemlinsky (1896), the direct successor of Brahms's initiatives. In three-movement piece (I. Allegro ma non troppo; II. Andante; III. Allegro), the composer demonstrates the whole power of late Romanticism. The texture of this trio is particularly saturated, with close entwining of chromatic and altered harmonies, rich polyphonic part-writing – one may feel the tendency for expressionistic manner. This piece that falls on the edge of 19th-20th centuries reveals not only original stylistic way of thinking of the composer, but also demonstrates new artistic possibilities of trio of such instrumentation as new ways of music culture development.

At the beginning of 20th century, this type of clarinet-cello-piano trio becomes attractive for numerous composers: Trio op.11, Fantasiestcke Op.12 J. Amberg; Trio Op.94 in G (1905) W. Berger; Trio Op.12 (1906) F. Brooks; Trio op. 45 in G (1906) R. Kahn. Popular cycle "Eight pieces for clarinet, viola, and piano" was skilfully interpreted by Max Bruch for clarinet with cello, frequently giving performances with such type of ensemble. Possibilities of clarinet-cello-piano trio fully revealed themselves during 20th century in the works by B. Frankl Trio op. 10; E. Hartmann Serenade A-dur op.24; Ukrainian composer S. Azarova used this instrumentation in her experimental avant-garde composition *Axis of Every Karuss*.

Finally, clarinet-violin-piano trios appear. Acoustically, the choice of such combination as clarinet, violin, and piano is rather controversial.

⁶ In November 1891, R. Mühlfeld participated in the first performance in Meiningen with R. Hausmann (cello) and J. Brahms (piano). The primary performance took place in Vienna, and the next month they reached unchallenged triumph at the public premiere in Berlin.

Major part of works in chamber music (and generally in vocal or other, including instrumental music samples) is range balance oriented: high (soprano), middle (alto/tenor), and low (bass/baritone) registers. However, clarinet and violin belong to high register instruments, and this makes their joint sound less balanced than, for instance, in typical string-piano trio (violin/cello/piano). Nevertheless, timbral nature of aerophones and chordophones is different; search for any contrasts between winds (clarinet) and strings (violin) and keyboard instruments (piano) entails great popularity of such instrumentation of trio in controversial 20th century, when one of the postulates of which was the idea to combine non-combined, and the symbol of such type of ensemble may be considered the trio of B. Bartok *Contrasts*.

B. Bartok wrote *Contrasts* ordered by world-famous violin player Joseph Szigeti and clarinet player Benni Goodman in 1938⁷. Trio naturally combines virtuoso innovative composer's technique of Bartok and simultaneously represents the universality of poetic aspect (J. Karpaty). Three-movement piece consists of the 1st movement Verbunkos (recruit dance), 2nd movement Pihenő (relaxation), 3rd movement Sebes (quick dance), the dynamics of which lies in tempo contrasts, on the other hand – Bartok gets the idea of contrasts through the whole range of expressive means, including timbral and acoustic ones. The important fact is that the composer turned to folk music-making principles that significantly enriched and refreshed music stylistics in the context of Neo-folklorism, expanding the boundaries of chamber instrumental genres as well. The 1st movement starts with virtuoso violin pizzicato, against the background of which clarinet leads the main theme in the nature of Verbunkos – military recruitment folk dance and songs, and series of variations remind of improvisations of folk musicians finalized

⁷ Bartok wrote this piece as a response to a letter from violin player Joseph Szigeti, but the official order was from clarinet player Benni Goodman. At the beginning, Szigeti asked Bartok to compose a small piece in two movements with duration of 5-6 minutes. Most likely, it was related to the duration of gramophone record, 2 movements per each side of the plate. So the premiere of the first variant called Rhapsody took place on 9th January 1939 in Carnegie Hall played by Szigeti, Goodman, and piano player E.Petri. Soon, Bartok added the middle part and changed the title to *Contrasts*. Szigeti, Goodman, and Bartok were playing this trio for the first time in Carnegie Hall on 21st April 1940, and afterwards they recorded it on Columbia record. Trio was published in 1942 and dedicated to Szigeti and Goodman [13].

by stentorious cadence of clarinet. Marginal concentration of potential energy allows characterizing the 2nd movements as volcanic rather than relaxing despite its title “relaxation” or “rest” [9, p.2 05]. The violinist must retune (scordatura) two strings for the last movement: GDAE, lowering the E and raising the G a semitone each, imitating the principles of folk playing (violin player retune the instrument several times). Against such background, clarinet reveals virtuoso themes in sophisticated metro-rhythm progression that are based on one of the most demanding rhythmic authentic cultures, i.e. Bulgarian Rhythm. One may feel the notes of jazz improvisations, where Benni Goodman’s clarinet was second to none⁸. B. Bartok and his *Contrasts* initiated a new page in the history of clarinet trio, whereas this piece became one of the most popular in the 20th century among similar works and had plenty of performance interpretations, giving rise to further composer’s search⁹.

The genre of Trio for clarinet, violin, and piano was complemented by: Aram Khachaturian (1932), Charles Ives Argo (1934), Darius Milhaud Suite Op.157b (1936), E. Křenek (1946), G. Ustvolskaya (1949), A. Berg’s manuscript discovery - Adagio for violin, clarinet, and piano was very symbolic¹⁰. In the second half of 20th century this genre subtype of clarinet-string-piano trio becomes very popular for composers in many countries and of various stylistic preferences and trends. The following are among the authors: A.Arutyunyan (1963), D. Martini (1973), V. Bolkom (1994), G. C. Menotti (1996). There are interesting programmatic pieces that represent this genre in dimension of artistic conceptual solutions: “Nibiru by D. Brockmann (1999), Variations post by J. Harbison (1982), Horse with the Lavender Eye by S. Hartke (1997), “Trio of the Lake Samish” by Alan Hovhaness op.415 (1988), Le Futur Du Silence *Henri Pousseur* (1993), “Island of Song” by P. Scholes (1995).

Composers of 21st century, having the experience of previous eras, strive to find contemporary solutions in various spheres of music art. In the context of the article, it should be emphasized that the viability of

⁸ It is interesting that Bartok in his conversation with Szigeti noted that *Contrasts* were partially inspired by “blues” from the second movement of Sonata by Maurice Ravel for violin and piano [9].

⁹ In particular, prominent Ukrainian ethnomusicologist I. Matsiyevskiy continues Bartok’s approach in such type of ensemble, creating the trio “Songs for clarinet, violin, and piano”, based on the own rich national traditions, namely on triadic music and authentic culture.

¹⁰ The piece was published post-mortem in 1956; it is author’s interpretation of 2nd movement of Chamber Concert (1925).

ensemble instrumentation of clarinet+violin+piano is magnificent: here are “*Sunlit Peaks and Dark Valleys*” by D. Erb and live by Douglas Knehan (2002), *Sonate Trois Petites Filles* by John Craton (2003), *Ensierosa Ilonga Punkt Tres* by J.M. Solare (2003), “Hypnosis (in another room)” and “The End of Summer” by Ned Rorem (2004), “Metamorphosis” by J. Harington (2005), *Trio* by E. Manukyan (2007), “Lemuria by P. Scholes (2007), *Concerto di camera* by A. Zolkin (2007); “Greek Fairytales (inmanent-ballet in five scenes: postmodern tango) by M. Ribera (2008), “*Jerez Exedrae* by G. Diaz (2011), *Triolog* by F. Stover (2012).

The peculiarity of clarinet timber vision and its expression and dramaturgic functions in ensemble shall reveal the author’s idea and demonstrate specific composer’s signature, being the quintessence of style, whereas the chamber instrumental music is one of the most essential measurable units of composer’s mastery and laboratory and experimental basis for mastering new expressive means and techniques at the same time. Generally, artistic and aesthetic peculiarities of clarinet in ensemble music are rather comprehensive, since they emphasize its certain deep sound shades in an ensemble but revealing new, yet unknown properties of this instrument.

Keywords: *ensemble music of the twentieth century, chamber and instrumental genres, clarinet & piano trio, the typological model.*

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