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**EVOLUTION OF VASYL BARVINSKY CREATIVE  
PERSONALITY: INSTRUMENTAL CHAMBER ENSEMBLES OF  
PRAGUE PERIOD**

The attention to the chamber-instrumental genres in European musical culture significantly increases during the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The chamber-instrumental music becomes a creative laboratory of the leading European composers such as Alexander Scriabin,

Stravinsky I., Bartok B., Hindemith P., the composers of the neo-Wien School. For Barvinskyi the chamber-instrumental genre becomes the most suitable for the reproduction of his thoughts, moods and emotions during the period of his own style formation, since the delicate intellectualization, the psychological depth, and the philosophical-ethical principles of this genre contrasted the reproduction of the realities full of tensions and conflicts.

Later, the composer also preferred chamber-instrumental genres in his art and his musical and critical activities. In his view, a departure of the Ukrainian composers from a purely vocal and choral genres and their appeal to the instrumental forms confirms the beginning of a new era of the Ukrainian professional music. The composer also believed that the instrumental music, which is not associated with words, has a great potential to be promoted in the world.

The aim of the present article is to identify the specific stylistic features of Barvinskyi' chamber-instrumental ensembles, written in 1910–1915, at the very beginning of his career, throughout the period of his studying in the class of the prominent Czech composer and teacher Vitezslav Novak in Prague.

The Prague period of the Ukrainian artist' life is considered as the turning point for the formation of his musical ideology and the style of his composing. The vibrant musical life of the Czech city was full of the events and the participation of the young musician, pianist, and later also the composer and the music critic, – all of this left the considerable resonance in his work.

Barvinskyi mastered various forms and genres of music under the guidance of his talented teacher. Barvinskyi preludes for piano written in Prague were highly commended by professionals and entered the repertoire of the great number of performers; however the works have not lost their popularity today as well. The piano compositions of the other genres: a sonata, variation, the series "Love," and works for different cast, two piano trios, the string quartet (not completed), the Sextet (Variations on a theme of its own), violin and cello work, the Ukrainian Rhapsody for the orchestra, the vocal-instrumental ethnographic composition "Ukrainian wedding" for mixed choir, soloists and piano (4 hands) or soloists and the orchestra (the first part), solo songs and choral compositions were also written in Prague.

Two piano trios on which Vasyl Barvinskyi worked almost simultaneously (E-flat minor and A minor) had become his first chamber-instrumental works. The trio in E-flat minor was written in 1910 in

Prague and performed for the first time in Lviv in 1926. The work itself is lost, but we can have some idea about it thanks to S. Lyudkevych who wrote the detailed review of the concert, where the trio was performed. S. Lyudkevych emphasized that the emergence of the trio was the first attempt of the young composer in the genre of the chamber-instrumental ensemble. The author also notes that, despite the absence of a national characteristics and the presence of some kind of eclecticism, this work reveals the talent and the bright individual style of the young composer: "... although there is a trace of some eclecticism in the work by the choice of genres and some influences on the melody themes, although there is not a bright coloring and Ukrainian character yet (these are present in his later works as the Second trio (a-moll) or the sextet (c- moll) – but still the given work (like his first piano preludes) shows us clearly that Mr. Barvinskyi belongs to those composers who are composers "by God's grace", since beginning from the first undertakings of his art he reveals the individual formed face, the mature and balanced talent" [7].

According to Pavlyshyn, S., this trio should have been printed out in the early 1940's in the Moscow publishing house "Muzgiz" [10, 34]. Music was sent to the publisher, but was never published. They did not send it back and nobody found them later.

The next Barvinskyi trio, A Minor (1910–1911), was built on the Ukrainian material. The subject is close to a folk song and is heard in all three parts, uniting the whole work. Keeping the pattern of the sonata *allegro*, Barvinskyi uses the Variation form as well. Regarding the texture, such polyphonic means an imitation and icon has a great meaning here. Sustaining the classical tonal value (tonic – dominant) Barvinskyi builds an interesting tonal plan of the development in the exposition; the of the second half of XX – beginning of XXI centuries after the E major, then A major leads to F major. The harmony of the final chapter of the development is full of chromaticisms making the emotional tension and comes to the climax at the beginning of the reprise – the main theme in A minor. Enharmonic modulation leads to the key of F-sharp major, which is made by the secondary theme (as opposed to the exhibition, where it was conducted in accordance with the classical rules – in the key of majeure dominant). Thus, using the classical form of the sonata *allegro*, Barvinskyi fills it with the new content by introducing national themes, colorful harmony and unexpected tonal comparisons. The main genre-emotional images (epic, song lyrics, dancing style) are incorporated in the first part to be developed in the next part of the cycle.

The second part of the *Andante* combines its overall structure and the

three-part form with the development of the main melody throughout the composition. Its main theme is developing a palette of the first part images; the first statement of the melody for violin and cello (in octave) joined with the alternating of “background” parallel piano sixth chords creates the pastoral character of the music while the modal instability and the use of the seventh and ninth chords makes the impressionistic color. The middle section introduces the dancing character underlined by the bourdon sounding chords in the piano party. The pastoral mood comes back in the reprise.

Final Allegro giocoso (a la Kolomyika) finally establishes the element of the impetuous dances that occasionally appeared in the previous two parts. The form of the part can be defined as a sonata with the expanded coda to the main theme of the party. The initial bourdon fifths of the piano party clearly reveal the nature of the Hutsul dances. The second phrase of the main party is based on the trichord melody in the main motive of the first part. The adverse party has more lyrical character. However, in the exposition the main party as well as the adverse one are transformed by changing their texture and the thematic isolation, while the modal change occurs in the reprise; in the second conduction of the main party the primary key of A minor is changed in A-major, and the adverse party which was written in the exhibition in Si – flat major, has been changed in the reprise half step higher – in Si major. For the first time the leading motive of the work appears as an epic introduction to the work, penetrates all the three parts and differentiates leading to the climax in the third part that becomes the impetuous folk dance.

Obviously, his trio (in A minor), that was written under the direct leadership of Novak embodied the specific learning objectives. However, this work by its artistic value goes beyond training and certifies the emergence of a new creative individual who is able to bring the Ukrainian music to a new level.

The Sextet (Variations on a theme of its own), (two violins, viola, cello, contrabass and piano) became one of the most important works of Vasil Barvinskyi, not just in the genre of chamber-instrumental ensemble, but throughout all his musical art. The author began writing of the work in Prague in 1914 by order of the chairman of the Lysenko M. Musical Society by – pianist Volodymyr Shuhevych and it was dedicated to the opening of their new building and Higher Music Institute in Lviv. The composer gave his detailed list with comments about the history of the writing of the work, its structure and thematic material:

“Sextet (Variations on a theme of its own) consists of the six variations (or rather, five variations and the latter were written in the form of a massive final), the theme is rather large (26 cycles). In the theme, as in the variations I tried to express the spirit of Ukrainian folk music not just in the melody but also in the harmony as much as possible. It is clear especially in the subject, and in the variations “Lyre song”, “Dumka” (which is dedicated to the memory of my mother, and the work as a whole is dedicated to the memory of the composer Lysenko, M., and was first performed at the opening of the new building of Musical Society of Lysenko in Lviv). The finale is, so to speak, the stylized kolomyika. In the writing of the Lyre songs I used the models – the motives of lyre notes that I made at the time of Mykulychyn (Gutsul), while listening a lyre player. I began writing this work before the First World War and worked with a few months break, caused by outbreak of the war. This piece I used to show to my teacher Novak, who concluded at the end: “This work will be a success” [2, 9–10].

At the request of Shukhevych B. the Variations should be based on the theme of the works of Mykola Lysenko. However, Barvinskyi writes sextet on his own theme, in which he uses just a few tones of the original theme of the Lysenko’s cantata “Bjut porohy”. The First World War became an obstacle to the opening of the building, so the first performance of the work was delayed for a few years too. Sextet became one of the favorite pieces among Galician artists and successfully sounded at many concerts. S. Lyudkevych described one of them, namely, a concert of chamber-instrumental music of V. Barvinskyi on the occasion of his 30-year-old composer’s work: “The artists such as Prof. Kryshchalsky, R., Pshenychka, P., Sawickii, Prof. Kozulkevych, Mr. Zadorozhnyy and Mr. Hornytskyi gave so much effort and pietism to create an ensemble which fully reached its high purpose, they allowed fans of a good and worthy Ukrainian music to enjoy such rare beautiful moments, and, perhaps, the greatest satisfaction has been paid to the composer himself” [6].

The Sextet was successfully performed in many concerts, adding a little, at that time, to Ukrainian repertoire in this genre. In 1948, the unprinted work was removed together with others. S. Lyudkevych recalls what happened to the Sextet in his introduction to the Soviet edition of Barvinskyi chamber ensembles: “He [Barvinskyi] worked hard on reproduction of his lost sextet in the memory. Fortunately, it was done successfully, except for the last 20-30 cycles, which I have written after his unfinished drafts” [5, 402]. This edition of the highly artistic work of

Barvinskyi, V. was published along with his other chamber-instrumental ensembles in 1971.

The idea of the composer was “to reproduce the spirit of Ukrainian folk music as much as possible not only in the melody but in the harmony as well” [2, 9]. The form of Variation gave the composer great opportunity to present various genres of palette of Ukrainian folk music, to create a contrast that is based on the thematic unity. Each variation, with the exception of the fourth, has a program name (we submit the name after his manuscript, since in the printed notes, except the kolomyika they are absent); I – The Song , II – The Scherzo , III – Lyre-players , V – The Thought , VI – Kolomyika. Barvinskyi, V. unites imitation means with folk polyphony while the features of folk tunes he combines with a color impressionistic harmony.

Since the first performance in 1916, the Sextet won a high appreciation among critics as well as the great popularity among performers. Bright themes, the unique expression of the characteristics of Ukrainian folk music that is combined with the modern expressional means and the skillful use of the ensemble – all this provided for the Sextet an important place in Ukrainian cameral music.

Chamber-instrumental works of Barvinskyi in number, scope of genre and artistic value at the time surpassed the achievements of the composers not just from the western region, but from the whole Ukraine. His contemporaries, the composers and musicologists – Lys’ko Z., Vytvytsky V. in their publications noted the important role of chamber-instrumental works of Barvinskyi balance for the genre balance of Ukrainian music in Galicia: “Actually, Barvinskyi work was a turning point in the development of the instrumental music of that time, since the appearance of it transformed the face of our musical culture, being the specific vocal one it became the equilibrated vocal-instrumental culture. Despite its Europeanization, that is, the use of modern forms of music and expression, it becomes even more national than it was before, and yet it is in the orbit of the universal world of music as an integral and necessary part of it” [4, 17].

Therefore, being formed under the influence of European traditions and modern trends, Vasyl Barvinsky was able to create a national style that reflected contemporary trends as well. The composer himself described himself as a moderate modernist. According to Vytvytsky, V., “almost complete image of his creative personality” was formed while he was studying in Prague. The large melodic and the broad line of melody, the harmonic boldness and uniqueness, his famous constructive content,

spontaneity and sincerity of expression – these are the feature of his music” [3, 53].

So, having received a proper professional education in Europe, Vasil Barvinsky headed the musical life of Galicia. In the first third of the XXth century he promoted professionalism in Western Ukraine musical creativity and performance by all means of his multifaceted activities, focusing on the high European level of musical life in Prague.

**Keywords:** *chamber ensemble, trio, sextet, composition, Prague period, V. Barvinsky.*

### Література

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