

## TRIO "I.N.O. 2" FOR VIOLIN, CELLO AND PIANO BY VLADIMIR ROTARU: PARTICULARITIES OF COMPOSITION AND MUSICAL LANGUAGE

Natalia COSTICOVA\*<sup>1</sup>

\*Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

### Summary

The article is dedicated to trio for violin, cello and piano "I.N.O." written by Moldovan composer V. Rotaru in 2004. In the author's spotlight are the musical language features and structural particularities. It is to be noted, that author's materials summarize the specifics of musical language of above mentioned opus. Among them are some elements appeared under the influence of national folklore: parlando rubato, specific treatment of rhythm, nontraditional notation principles, The Byzantine monody recreation, etc.

**Key words:** Trio, violin, cello, piano, composition, musical language, parlando rubato, neofolklorism

### Özet

Makale keman, viyolonsel ve piyano "I.N.O" için üçlüye adanmıştır. 2004 yılında Moldovalı besteci V. Rotaru tarafından yazılmıştır. Yazara göre müzikal dil özellikleri ve yapısal özellikleri vardır. Yazarın materyallerinin, yukarıda bahsedilen opusun müzikal dilinin özelliklerini özetlediğine dikkat edilmelidir. Bunlar arasında ulusal folklorun etkisi altında bazı unsurlar ortaya çıkmıştır: parlando rubato, ritimin spesifik tedavisi, geleneksel olmayan notasyon prensipleri, Bizans monaj rekreasyonu, vb.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Trio, keman, viyolonsel, piyano, kompozisyon, müzikal dil, parlando rubato, neoklorbilim

### Introduction

It is not an easy task to manage at once both pedagogical activity and composer's creative path. Not every composer shall have enough courage to work with students, not every teacher shall be able to find time and mood during lessons, competitions and other pedagogical activity for entering into the shape of inspiration. But despite specific difficulties, there have always been this kind of people. One of the rare examples of this unusual combination of professions is the composer and musical teacher Vladimir Rotaru. His creation was influenced by national folk music; his compositions are included into the educational program of the Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts. His creative work does include modern methods and special effects, besides classical manner of composition, that are related both to writing and playing the compositions. His opuses do represent a basis for students' understanding and listening to each other, while the national color fills everything with spiritual simplicity, technical fluency fitting into the strict requirements for concert programs.

### Composer V. Rotaru

Moldovan composer Vladimir Rotaru (1931-2007) is a brilliant representative of composition art of the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century – beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century. He studied composition from 1956 to 1960 at Chisinau Conservatoire<sup>1</sup> at Solomon Lebed and Leonid Gurov. Chamber and instrumental compositions of V. Rotaru could be actually classified into two large groups: solo and compositions for different ensembles. Pedagogical and organizational activity<sup>2</sup> also had a specific impact on his compositions, the thing reflected into the level of technical difficulties of composition parties. Chamber and instrumental compositions of V.Rotaru had successfully completed not only concert, but also educational and pedagogical repertoire. V.Rotaru focused a lot in his chamber and instrumental creation on work with national melos, including citations of national melodies and improvisational motives in national style. His individual style is based on assimilation of different genres and types of Moldovan folk music, while following improvisation, often having roots in folk music, gives birth to freedom and spontaneity in the process of musical material development, rhapsody composed of motives, concert style and virtuosity of musical language influenced by perfect knowledge of musical instruments possibilities and techniques. In his capacity of experienced orchestra conductor<sup>3</sup>, he tried to make use of technical and expressive possibilities of different musical instruments,

<sup>1</sup> Yazışma yapılacak yazar: Email: natali-costikova@mail.ru

multiplied on the art skills of musician – for quick dynamic parts, as well as for cantilena.

**Trio «I.N.O.»**

**Historical review**

One of chamber and instrumental compositions of V. Rotaru, well-known as specific “trptych” for piano, violin and cello, under the name «I.N.O. » is in the center of our attention. According to the words of N. Kozlova<sup>4</sup>, these compositions appeared consequently in 2003, 2004 and 2006 as a reaction of composer on the deficit of local chamber repertoire. All compositions have an identical name and order number. This abbreviation hides first letters of names of the first interpreters of these compositions, members of chair<sup>5</sup> that were directed at that time by V.Rotaru. They are: Inna Saulova, violin, Nadejda Kozlova, cello, and Olga Yuhno, piano. In spite of apparently tough, didactic and “special-order” nature of these opuses, the composer was able to create three different compositions from one side, reunited by idea and some maneuvers of musical language and playing technique, and from other side, to broaden up spectrum of expressive ways in every part of this specific “trptych” sound. In this article, we shall focus on analysis of *I.N.O. 2*. This composition represents two- part cycle of slow - fast type (*Lento e molto rubato – Allegro scherzando*), typical for Moldovan instrumental suite. This type of cycle can be found in earlier composer’s creations as a strong structural sample for a long period, the evidence of which can be “Improvisation and Toccatina for Piano”, 1972 (Composers and musicologists of Moldova, 1992, c.77), two pieces for trumpet and fortepiano-*Preludium* and “Joc ciobanesc”, 1986 (Ciobanu-Suhomlin, 2006, c.246), Sonata for violin and fortepiano (*Recitativ – Allegro scherzando*), 1992-1993 (Ciobanu-Suhomlin, 2006, c.246) etc. It is important to point out that Sonata for violin and piano has constituted a basis for musical material for trio, written by V. Rotaru in 1993, and dedicated to composer’s daughter, the violinist Elizaveta Rotaru. But cello part had an impact on the primary musical basis for sonata. This detail had not been previously noticed in the works of Moldovan musicologists. The composer made use of such a maneuver of modern composition technique as *tablature without noting bar line* only in trio No.2 from this “trptych”. This symbolic notion unites different experimental types of musical writing in the pieces of the composers of 20<sup>th</sup> -21<sup>st</sup> centuries, making use of such modern techniques of musical composition such as aleatorics, sonoristics, concrete music, electronic music, minimalism etc.

**“I.N.O. 2”**

In this composition of V. Rotaru, like it was mentioned before, there are no bar lines, and the function of musical flow division into different phrases is assumed by general short pause. This detail creates certain difficulties in ensemble playing, at the same time adding basic improvisation element. Musical material is based on motives, phrases, dissonant intervals, concretely on interval of second that had become a complete constructive element in the building up of thematic material and thus penetrating in varied way into chords structures, acting in their harmonious and melodic interpretation as one of the key elements in the dramaturgy of composition. In the first part composer offers to performers the opportunity of becoming his co-authors. Freedom of tempo and meter allows performers to interpret the initial motive in convincible and unforgettable manner. Violin with cello start the motive with octave unison in style of Byzantine monody, while piano provides instead triplets octave jumps and inserting the mentioned above characteristic movement on seconds. It is a well-known fact that monody is a musical composition, which main texture feature is monophony. Monody supposes singing or playing musical instrument in unison or in double octave manner.

Music example 1

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Violin, Cello, and Piano. The tempo is marked "Lento e molto rubato" with a note value of a quarter note equal to a dotted quarter note. The Violin and Cello parts begin with a melody in unison, marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The Piano part features a triplet of eighth notes with an octave jump, marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic and the instruction "simile". The score is written on three staves, with the Violin and Cello staves grouped together and the Piano staff below them.

Slow tempo, recital character, playing around main melody tones ending up in dynamic culmination, and reminding melody structure *parlando rubato* in Moldovan *doina* style. Division of dramaturgic functions of ensemble takes place between string group and piano. Compositions with cello and violin are dominated by unison presentation that is why the beginning and the end of phrases, character and dynamics of string parties should match each other. The tones of cello and violin strengthen up general sounding in the performance of this severe gloomy motive. Second motives acquire melodic and harmonious development, while rhythmic groups of eights in tandem with piano chords convincingly reach the culmination of the first part (part B):

Music example 2

The second part *Allegro scherzando* was written in sonata-allegro form. Vivacious and technically colored main part reminds of national pieces in the rhythm of dynamic masterpieces of S.Prokofiev, representing “optimistic hymn of dynamics of active movement” (Mironenko E. 2000. p. 43). According to the idea of the author, the rhythm of theme can be compared to fast Bulgarian dances. Here there is an explanation for permanent changes of even and odd meter: 2\4 and 3\8:

Music example 3

The vivacious motive of violin is continued by fortepiano on the background of bourdon musical accompaniment *pizzicato* on open strings in the piece for cello. It follows the favorite motive of author of octave unison of violin and cello: one more player on stringed Instruments and pianist on the level of synchronic articulation in vivacious tempo. The second theme (number 2) is lyric by its character, although it comprises the intonations of main motive:

Music example 4

The musical score for Music example 4 consists of three staves. The top staff is a single melodic line in treble clef, starting with a circled '2' and the tempo marking 'Un poco meno mosso'. It features a series of eighth notes with accents, marked 'leggero e poco cresc.'. The middle and bottom staves are a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a rhythmic pattern of quarter notes with accents, marked 'p' and 'leggero e poco cresc.'.

The change of instruments' functions interpretation and change of format of the presentation of musical material is strengthened strongly by dynamics (*leggero e poco cresc*) and tempo (*Un poco meno mosso*). According to its genre type, this is aria. Violin solo part is supported by characteristic *arpeggio* accompaniment for aria and piano part. At the same time, the cello part is not so individualized and bears only background character. Quarter notes, interpreted in accentuated *non legato* style reminding by character of its soundings *pizzicato*, while raising sixteenth notes should be interpreted synchronically with violin part in the matter of technique and dynamics. The development section (number 3) begins with polyphonic expression of the mixed violin and cello party. The first stage of development section had been written in tempo *Piu mosso*.

Music example 5

The musical score for Music example 5 consists of three staves. The top staff is a single melodic line in treble clef, starting with a circled '3' and the tempo marking 'Piu mosso'. It features a series of sixteenth notes with accents, marked 'mf'. The middle and bottom staves are a grand staff with a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a rhythmic pattern of quarter notes with accents, marked 'f cresc.' and 'mf'. There are also markings for 'pizz.' and 'f'.

The harsh motive from introduction, based on the octave unison of string instruments, can be identified in the expressive theme (number 4). This is the first climax point of development section into which every note is interpreted with accentuation, synchronically, on large bow with full and dynamic sound that adds effect of declamation pathetic:

Music example 6

The musical score for Music example 6 consists of three staves. The top staff is a single melodic line in treble clef, starting with a circled '4' and the tempo marking 'Moltomagatato'. It features a series of eighth notes with accents, marked 'ff' and 'espress.'. The middle and bottom staves are a grand staff with a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a rhythmic pattern of quarter notes with accents, marked 'ff' and 'arco'.

The appearance of new part (c. 5) is based on three-sound vivacious and “wild” canon in tempo *Presto possibile*. Speed of tempo directly depends from mastership of interpreters and possibilities of the instruments. The applied herein composition technique –the octave unison of violin and cello – requires from musicians a fine motor skills, identical with phrase structure and fixed accents. All three instruments are equal and bear solo function.

Music example 7

Next culminating point (c. 6) is also connected with change of tempo *Molto animato*. The transformation of main motive does happen here due to triplet division instead of duple one:

Music example 8

The main motive is expressed in violin part with double notes, while cello part repeats violin's motive, giving timbre intensity to culminating point. There is chord texture in the piano part, thus completing pauses in string parts. Gradual increase of tension into development section leads to general climax point (c.10), into which the motive of first part plays on *FFF*, thus insuring thematic union of cycle. This fragment means termination of development section and appearance of the main motive in recapitulation:

Music example 9

Recapitulation (c. 11) begins with presentation of main motive in violin part on *p*, keeping the form of exposition, characteristic for initial presentation of this motive. Violin to begin with, then the continuation of motive on piano, while the cello part uses *pizzicato* on open strings, returning joy of dancing motions.

### Conclusion

Regardless of modest nature of this composition that does not exceed 5 minutes, it sounds efficiently at chamber concerts and is positively perceived by audience. Due to brightness of thematic colorfulness and golden mastership of technical difficulties, the trio occupies a worthy place in national concert repertoire. The mixture of original national material, in this case Bulgarian and Moldavian, with innovative ideas of 20<sup>th</sup> century music – Stravinski, Prokofiev, –can be heard with facility and positive air.

According to the composer's words in context of the interview given to E. Mironenko in her monograph "Vladimir Rotaru": "I write in my Moldovan musical language. The same principle is included in the art of Aram Khachaturian, if I have got it right, who composed in the language of Trans-Caucasian people. As for Moldovan music intonations, rhythms and modes, I can perceive all this with heart" (Mironenko E.2000. p. 13).

As it can be concluded from our analysis, the composition of V.Rotaru comprises in the matter of musical style the tradition of classical musical art of 20<sup>th</sup> century filled with such stylistic genre of 20<sup>th</sup> century as *neofolklorism*, thanks to such particularities as meter irregularity, folk intonation features, rhythmical energy, and metamorphosis of form building principles characteristic for folklore. We identified in this composition of V.Rotaru such neofolk tools as tablature without noting bar line, modification of Byzantine monody expressed in one-voiced narrative of ensemble parties, rhythmic *ostinato* accompaniment etc. All these techniques contribute to unification of musical heritage of Turkey and Moldova, emphasizing general features of their folk heritage and composer's creativity. Meanwhile, this kind of closeness creates all conditions for positive perception of Moldovan composers' creations by Turkish audience.

### Bibliographical Referencies

1. Compozitori și muzicologi din Moldova. Lexicon biobibliografic. Chișinău. Universitas, 1992, 264 p.
2. Ciobanu-Suhomlin I. Repertoriul general al creației muzicale din Republica Moldova (ultimele două decenii ale secolului XX). Chișinău, Editura Cartea Moldovei, 2006, 331 p.
3. Мироненко Е. Композитор Владимир Ротару. Firma editorial-poligrafica «Tipografia Centrală», Chisinau, 2000. 97 с.

---

<sup>1</sup> Currently Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts

<sup>2</sup> Since 1976 – Head of the of Chamber Ensemble Chair of the Moldovan Conservatoire

<sup>3</sup> 1962-1971 – he had the position of the conductor of the Ensemble of Folk Dance "Joc" orchestra and Band Director of the Symphony orchestra of the Radio and Television of Moldova.

<sup>4</sup> N. Kozlova - Nadejda Kozlova, University Professor at the Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

<sup>5</sup> It is about Chamber Ensemble of Moldovan Conservatoire "G.Musicescu" in Chisinau, currently known as Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts