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**J. KOFFLER'S CHAMBER-INSTRUMENTAL WORKS IN THE  
CONTEXT OF THE EVOLUTION OF INDIVIDUAL STYLE**

The history of Ukrainian music is very rich in unjustly forgotten issue, which because of the dominant ideological doctrine of the time was considered quite superficially (in regards of musical legacy). One of such oblivions is Koffler Joseph (1896 – 1943), an artist with tragic fate, who lived and worked in Ukraine in the Polish environment. The historical significance of his artistic legacy for Ukrainian and Polish art can't be overestimated, because “seeking constant research in the field ...

creativity ... Koffler became a pioneer of new ideas of musical language, practically the first, but ... the only Polish composer who developed the dodecaphony” [4, p. 9]. The first dodecaphonic work was written in 1926, one year after the publication of A. Schoenberg’s piano suite op.25. So, Koffler deserves attention not only as a follower of New-Vienna school, but as a co-founder of a new musical-theoretical system.

Ukrainian musicological thought of this period can boast of systematic study of the works by J. Koffler. The most complete and versatile figure of the composer can be met in the writings by the Polish musicologist Holamba M., who is the author of a single mentioning in his monograph devoted to the artist [2, 8]. There are a number of smaller articles and essays that address different aspects of the life and work of the composer. In L. Mazepa’s article [4] we have a possibility to learn the biography of the artist; the scholar also provides an overview of creative works by genre criterion. M. Sudor’s article [7] is dedicated to J. Koffler’s piano heritage. V. Andriyevska concentrates her attention on chamber works in the context of Lviv-Polish composer’s activity. L. Kyyanovska [3] investigates Koffler’s art creativity in the context of Galician musical culture of 1920 – 1930 [2].

Among available sources there are those that have paid due attention to the dynamics of the evolution of J. Koffler’s style, which seems to us very interesting and colorful. It should be noted, however, that there are some genres of artistic heritage of the artist including symphonic and chamber instrumental, which came unnoticed so far. Therefore, the aim of the proposed article is to fill in the gap in the evolutionary stylistic approach to the study of specific genres clearly represented in the work of the composer.

In view of the stated above we decided to choose the object of study the chamber and instrumental realm of creativity of Lviv’s composers. The *goal* of this article is to reveal features of the evolution of the creative method and worldview of J. Koffler. To realize this goal we need to tackle the following *tasks*:

- 1) to determine the location of the composer in socio-cultural environment of the city in the first half of the XXth century;

- 2) to follow the evolution of the artist’s style, focusing on the specifics of the mature period of creativity;

- 3) to bring prominent chamber instrumental realm of J. Koffler’s creative heritage;

- 4) to analyze Trio Op. 10 and String Quartet, Op. 27 “Ukrainian sketches” as striking examples of mature and later periods of composer’s creativity.

Art J. Koffler's activity accounts for an extremely rich and complex historical phase – the so-called “inter-war twenty years”. Despite his innovative creativity, the composer could not receive a decent recognition in his home country. However, he was quite famous in the world. ISCM recognized the artist as the most outstanding exponent of the spirit of modern Polish music. It is also noteworthy that the works by J. Koffler were published exclusively in Western publishing houses, which also shows a high position in the global music community.

Let us consider the periods of composer's creative life, focusing on biographical moments and features of his style. According to the words of M. Golomb, J. Koffler was “... the composer of a specific type, whose stylistic evolution was very dynamic, but not organic” [2]. The process of his spiritual and professional formation is embedded in the traditional triad of early (before 1927), mature (1928-1939), late (1939-1943) periods, which are heterogeneous in intensity and productivity of creative work. In regards of the geographic criterion of periodization, M. Sydor suggests the following classification of the periods: Vienna (1917 – 1924), Lviv (1924 – 1939), Soviet Lviv (1939 – 1943).

At the age of 18 J. Koffler went to Vienna to study at the Faculty of Law (later it turned into the Philosophical). During this period he attended lectures in harmony, counterpoint, analysis of musical forms and instrumentation. From 1920 to 1924 he studied composition, conducting and musicology, and in 1923 defended the thesis on the problems of instrumentation and orchestral coloring. In 1924 the composer returned to the city, where he worked at the Conservatory of Music of the Polish Society. This is a short biographical sketch of the early stage of life and creativity of the musician.

The mature phase of his creativity (1928 – 1939) is “characterized by the same dynamics that is characteristic for contemporary European culture in general” [2] – that is because his stylistic content was a combination of neoclassical features with elements of individually treated dodecaphony and sonorism. The period of artistic maturity also tends to be different: there are two bright sub periods – acme phase (1928 – 1935) and the exhaustion phase of a performance of the creative process (1935 – 1939). While during the first phase the most innovative pieces of music were created (that brought him fame and international recognition), then, after 1935 the composer begins to lose the reputation of bold innovator, and the intensity of the creative process gradually decreases. J. Koffler's mature revisions are significantly higher than in quantitative terms of his heritage of early and late styles. Of 37 works that were written by the

composer during his relatively short creative life about 25 were published.

Tendencies of regression, appearing during the second phase of mature period, can be seen during the later years (1939 – 1943) of his life and professional development. As noted by M. Holamb, after 1935 the “loss of interest in experimentation was directly dependent on the political situation, the growth of the pro-fascist sentiments and ever-increasing waves of anti-Semitism in Europe” [2]. As far as the later period of J. Koffler’s creativity is concerned, the changes of the artist’s attitudes are influenced by the ideological demands of the ruling social ranks. His style changes to simplification of musical language and forced folklore that brings late socialist-realist compositions to earlier, more dependent opus of composer: “socialist realism did not bring any new stylistic qualities, but only showed a strong trend of regression” [2].

Let us consider the projections of chamber and instrumental genre in the works by J. Koffler. He wrote 7 pieces, and three of them (“Little Serenade”, “Capriccio” and Quartet op. 20) are little known; early string quartet op.5 was rejected by the author as unsuccessful attempt (in his opinion) to master 12 tones technique; music stuff and audio recording of Sonata for Cello is also unavailable. We will consider Trio op.10 and String Quartet “Ukrainian Sketches” op. 27 as examples of J. Kofflers’s stylistic evolution.

Trio for Violin, Viola and Cello, Op. 10 (1928) is a work created during J. Koffler maturity as a composer; his performance at the Festival of Contemporary Music Society in Oxford in 1931 brought worldwide fame. This new opus shows the change of attitude to 12 tones. As M. Holamb rightly observes, “Koffler stops adoring dodecaphonic series reducing the amount of compositional technique, content to just simple thematic series. Aesthetic becomes more important than technique” [2]. In the opinion of L. Kyyanovska, this opus does not contain any folk style links “... due to the “idea of the genre”, i.e. the orientation of chamber and instrumental music seems faster on intellectual perception while implementing universal philosophical content rather than mentally determined national tradition” [3, p. 283]. Compositional structure of this trio is a freely treated sonata-symphonic cycle in which the first part is written in sonata form, the second is a slow fugue, the third – rondo-sonata. The entire trio combined series, where each is issued in a new rhythm, cementing not only the musical material of each part, but the whole cycle:



from modal qualities of melodies” [4, p. 38-39] – says L. Mazepa.

In terms of composition, the String Quartet is a 6 part suite where J. Koffler inclined to simplify the language of music in favor of socialist-realist aesthetic that was only true as the introduction of Soviet political space combat. All of the suites are based on Ukrainian folk songs melody of the first part reminding the ballad “Oh Drove Cossack” from the collection of Clement Kvitka, the second is close to the “Shchedryk” by M. Leontovich, and the third contains kolomyyka features; the fourth and fifth remind folklore rituals in spring; the sixth is a typical Cossack melodies. Musical language of Quartet is greatly simplified comparing to the previous works of the period, including string trio.

Summarizing the considerations on the evolution of J. Koffler’s creativity, we can mention that his early period is characterized by the search for his own creative “Me” (first being influenced by late-romantic trends, and after some time by dodecaphony). The creative maturity manifests uniqueness and originality of the author’s identity, the achievement of this period is higher manifestation of unconventional thinking of the artist, whereas the late period appears to be a creative diminuendo. Thus, the evolution of J. Koffler’s style seems to be rather wavy, with a very bright culminating stage of artistic maturity and reduction in later period (according to the typology by N. Savitska), which was “a result of reaction to the dominant ideological doctrine” [6, p. 280]. Despite all stylistic diversity and heterogeneity, the creativity of the composer looks quite holistically and typical.

**Keywords:** *style, dodecaphony, creative maturity, chamber-instrumental works, socialist realism, new classicism, evolution.*

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