

INTERPRETATION OF MUSICAL TOPOS IN W. A. MOZART'S SONATA CYCLES

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SUMMARY. The article represents an important problem of modern musicology and aims to reveal the specifics of the functioning of musical topos in the piano sonatas of W. A. Mozart. The concept of topos is interpreted as a field of abstract ideas and concrete images embodied by certain musical means. It is argued that the model of the functioning of musical topos in the sonata cycles of W. A. Mozart consists of the following main topos: gallant, heroic, pastoral, pathetic, comic, which include lesser, similar modifications. The main role in the sonatas is played by the topos of gallantry, which focuses on communicative forms of secular interchange. Therefore, revealing the semantic depth of the musical topos of Mozart's sonatas will allow us to discover the musical cosmos of the composer's artistic imagery.

Keywords: sonata cycle, topos, semantics, style, principles of thinking, classicism.

Introduction

In our time, there are acute problems related to the study of the uniqueness of the composer's musical language, its semantics and topics. In the process of creative search aimed at revealing the meaning of the work, decoding the ciphers enclosed in it, one can penetrate the depths of the philosophical meaning, without understanding and reproduction of which the formation of an artistic interpretation of the work is impossible. In the field of performing and pedagogical practices, the analysis of semantic structures, their artistic interpretation should be based on the correct decoding of the semantic complexes that lie inside the topos.

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The category of topos gains a new semantic depth in modern musicology, as an indication of the structural-semantic model of the “metasyntactic level” that serves to unfold the idea of the author’s language, it allows to reveal important image-psychological, mental-emotional and illustrative-visual musical constants. The relevance of the research is determined by the problem of understanding and artistic interpretation of musical topos in musical art, the contradiction between the need for semantic understanding of the composer’s work and the current state of study of this issue. Despite a significant number of scientific works in the field of piano art, in domestic musicology the problem of identifying musical topos in the piano sonatas of W. A. Mozart was insufficiently researched, which explains the relevance and scientific perspective of this work.

The problem of understanding the topos in musicology

In modern musicology, the concept of “topos” is gaining great popularity and increasingly attracts the attention of art critics. Thanks to the category of topos, it is possible to identify repeated or permanent elements that determine the continuity of the tradition as a spiritual integrity, “semantic unity”. This category acquires special importance for understanding the meaning of music of the classicism era.

Many researchers interpret the topos in different ways, so it is necessary to look in more detail at the definition of this concept and give answers to the questions related to the structure of the topos, its scope and difference from related concepts.

The term “topos” is voluminous and ambiguous, it has firmly entered the modern space of such sciences as philosophy, psychology, sociology, cultural studies, linguistics, as well as musicology. The definition of topos in different scientific disciplines is quite diverse: “topics”, “ideas”, “common places”, “rhetorical places”. According to literary and dictionary definitions, topos comes from the ancient Greek τόπος, which literally means “place”, and figuratively – “topic”, “argument” and Latin locus communis – “place”, “part”, “plot”.² The term topos is introduced by early rhetoricians, in particular Protagoras and Gorgias. It is more thoroughly developed in Aristotle’s works “Topic”³ and “The Art of Rhetoric”.⁴ Aristotle interpreted the topic at the intersection of rhetoric and dialectics, and topos served as the main tools for finding arguments. In the future, Cicero adopts Aristotle’s ideas and applies them in the work “Topica” to judicial eloquence and legal interpretation of certain

² Topos. In *Literary encyclopedia*, VC “Akademiya”, Kyiv, Vol. 2: M – Ya, 2007, p. 489.

³ Aristotle. *Topics*. NuVision Publications. 2005.

⁴ Aristotle. *The Art of Rhetoric*. William Collins, UK, 2012.

judgments. In the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, philosophers used the topic to conduct religious and scientific debates.

Describing the theory and history of rhetoric as the art of public speaking, scientist Natalia Kolotilova in the "Rhetoric" manual points to a significant number of topos that have accumulated over the long period of existence of the art of oratory. She characterizes topos as well-known frameworks that fit original thoughts, that is, topos are "not speeches and cannot be used instead of speech. These are certain guidelines."⁵

However, the topics in the art history sense is not equivalent to the topics in the philosophical and rhetorical sense. After all, it is the idea of "common places" that connects art history with a philosophical understanding of the topic. Topics is a system of "common places" that allows you to mark the key coordinates of the artistic world of a separate work or the composer's entire work; it is a teaching about a set of common places that reveal aspects of the development of any topic. And topos is the area of abstract ideas and concrete images embodied by certain musical means.

The interpretation of music as a "science" and the application of the terminological apparatus of rhetoric to it led to the direct penetration of the specific logical-rhetorical concept of "common places" inherent in the Baroque era. In the 18th century, the topic necessarily intersected with other forms of "general" expression and, above all, with poetics and rhetoric. In the era of classicism, instrumental music not only did not abandon the system of "common places", but it no longer needed a verbal text to understand the music. Thanks to the topic category, which includes understanding the picture of the world, a person's place in it, the doctrine of affects, the circle of images and specific musical phenomena – thematism, intonation, genre, tonal semantics, orchestration and texture, one can understand the content of musical works much more deeply and broadly classicism, and particularly the sonatas of W. A. Mozart.

Quite often, one big topos can be multifaceted and have different interpretations. On the one hand, the topos includes several possible similar modifications. On the other hand, it has limits related to semantic perception. A topos is not equal to a genre, and the term "leitmotif" is a much narrower concept of a topos, since a topos may include various leitmotifs, or may not include them at all. The concept of "figurative sphere" looks vaguer and more metaphorical than the short "topos".

In foreign musicological literature, the terms "topos" and "topic" have become widely used relatively recently. It is necessary to mention the works of Leonard G. Ratner "Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style",⁶ Robert S. Hutten "Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes Mozart,

⁵ Kolotilova, Natalia. *Rhetoric*. Center for Educational Literature, Kyiv, 2007, p. 30.

⁶ Ratner, Leonard G. *Classic music: expression, form, and style*. Schirmer Books, New York, 1980.

Beethoven, Schubert”⁷ and others. In Leonard G. Ratner’s studies one can notice a confusion that leads to dubious definitions, in particular, the march is a topos, and military music is a style, although it would be more correct to label military music as a topos, and the march is a genre that can function within different styles and topos.

In Ukrainian art history, a similar confusion is observed, when instead of the term “topic” it was customary to use other close terms: “characteristic thematism”, “typical inflections”, “intonations”, “images”, “spheres”, etc. Some musicologists characterized semantics as a topos and gave a definition of semantics close to a musical topic. However, the semantics of the musical language of classicism should be placed amid the topic, because according to many musicologists, the concept of “common place” is much broader than such concepts as “sign”, “meaning”, which are the basis of the doctrine of semantics. The concepts of genre and style intersect with the concept of topos. The close connection of the topic with stylistics cannot be doubted, especially in classicism, where the word “style” had multiple meanings. Within each individual period and in particular, classicism, the “pyramid” of genres, styles and topos will be built in its own way for each artist. After all, the topos of Eros occupies an important place in the works of W. A. Mozart, but in Ch. W. Gluck and L. Beethoven it plays a secondary role, inferior to the topos of pathos, fate, sorrow, and heroism. Pastoral and comic topos are characteristic traits of J. Haydn.

The functioning of the main topos in the sonatas of W. A. Mozart

Piano sonatas of the classicism era occupy an important place in the modern performance and music-pedagogical repertoire. However, understanding their author’s artistic content and semantic organization is complicated by the gradual loss of the communicative code that connects the author with the performer and the listener. For the performer to come close to the author’s idea, it is necessary to adhere to the specified tempo, take into account important semantic details that were laid down by the composer, use the correct articulation, strokes, and also be able to identify the musical topos of Mozart’s work.

W. A. Mozart creates sonatas at a time when the piano is gaining great popularity in Western Europe. Ukrainian musicologist Natalia Kashkadamova notes:

“The close, intimate connection of Mozart the performer with the piano was revealed in the purity and maturity of his piano style, in the fullness

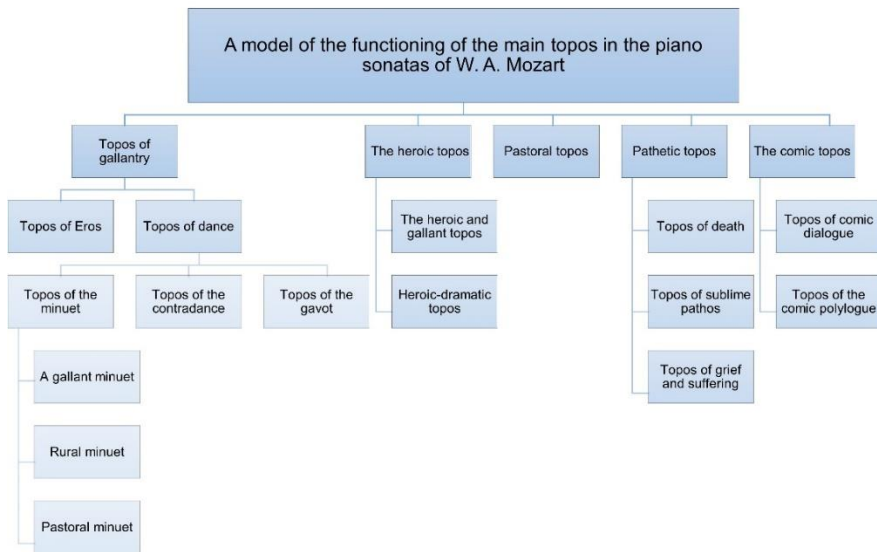
⁷ Hatten, Robert S. *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert*. Indiana University Press, 2004.

of his artistic expression. The piano sonata and piano concerto are rightly considered the highest examples of Mozart's sonata and concerto works."⁸

W. A. Mozart embodied in his work most of the figurative spheres of his time: dance, heroics, sensitivity, pastoral, etc. The meaning and content of each topos in the topics of W. A. Mozart's instrumental works changed depending on the formation of the classical semantic invariant of the genre. Artistic components of piano sonatas, expressed with the help of structural-semantic complexes, which include intonation-lexical and compositional-dramatic images, filled with a certain meaning.

The functioning of the main musical topos in the piano sonatas of W. A. Mozart can be presented in the form of a model:

Figure 1



A model of the functioning of the main topos in the piano sonatas of W. A. Mozart

The main meaning in the sonatas belongs to the **topos of gallantry**. This topos is one of those that was most often used in the music of classicism and particularly, in the work of W. A. Mozart, both in early and in late compositions. The topos of gallantry is extremely voluminous. It contains the **topos of Eros** and the **topos of dance**. The gallant topos is based on the model of secular communication, which is expressed in any form of dialogue

⁸ Kashkadamova, Natalia. *The art of performing music on keyboard and string instruments*. SMT "Aston", Ternopil, 1998, p. 226.

and monologue, except for acutely conflicting ones. This topos was common in the 18th century with its characteristic lightness and grace, tenderness and sensitivity, naturalness and ease. The main features of the gallant topos in music are: a decisive preference for “free”, emphasized homophonic writing, a rejection of baroque polyphony, as well as characteristic harmonic, melodic and textural techniques that are easy to recognize by ear. The harmony is dominated by simple tonalities with clear semantics; there are no distant modulations; typical cadence formulas are used, which seem to symbolize graceful bows, compliments and curtsies. In the texture, homophony is clearly felt, the doubling of the melody in thirds and sixths, the bass stepping in fourths, and extreme registers are often avoided. Melody is based on dance genres that are easily recognizable. Simple sizes and fairly simple rhythmic patterns prevail. Melodics are characterized by an orientation towards vocals, often with rich melismatics that arise from inspiration; second delays – lamento sigh intonations; interruption of the melody with short pauses, musical and rhetorical figures of *suspiratio*.

W. A. Mozart lived and worked in the rhetorical era, and his musical language relies heavily on the rhetorical word. First of all, these are baroque rhetorical figures, which he uses in his musical lexicon as signs of the previous era. German scholar G. Born in the book “Musical language of Mozart. The key to life and creativity” pathetically exclaims: “Didn’t the old music theorists declare absurd, whatever the ideological connection between dying rhetorical music and the work of an innovator so ahead of his time as Mozart?”.⁹

All the external signs and symbols of the gallant topos had a rather deep foundation – the idea of Eros, as the main meaning and the main driving force of existence. This idea absorbed all kinds of sensual and spiritual attraction: passion, love, sympathy, friendly desire, love for God and the World. The topos of Eros was one of the main ones in the entire work of W. A. Mozart. The composer associated the idea of earthly love with the tonality of A major. It is obvious that in most cases Mozart’s A major is characterized by a sensual color.

A vivid example of the use of the gallant topos in the work of W. A. Mozart is the Sonata in B major KV 333. The piano sonata was written in 1783. The work consists of three parts, where the composer rises to the highest degree of perfection and seems to break the laws of time in the last part.

The first and second parts are written in sonata form. The topos of gallantry is laid out in the first part. It is stylized in the spirit of elegant figures, mobile, lively, playful. The theme begins with the musical-rhetorical figure *catabasis*, which ends with lamento intonations. The composer uses melodic figures with delay and “curts”, which seem to imitate aristocratic manners:

⁹ Born, Gunthard. *Mozart's Musical Language: Key to his Life and Work*. Kindler, Munich, 1985, p. 16.

E.g. 1

W. A. Mozart, Sonata in B major KV 333, I part, m. 1-9.

In the second part of the andante, the musical thought moves freely and deeply. A mournful monologue emerges from the inversion of the opening melody, expressing the depression of the soul, but at the same time one can feel the possibility of consolation. Throughout the second part, there is chromaticism, which sometimes causes a slight sense of dissonance. The third part of the Rondo is similar to the first part. It begins capriciously and proudly and constantly changes its “colors”.

The instrumental work of W. A. Mozart is full of **topos of dance**, which allow us to identify the genre features of not only one dance (for example, the topos of a minuet), but also of several – counterdance, gavotte, bourree, rigodon, etc. However, supremacy in the piano sonatas of W. A. Mozart is given to the topos of the minuet, in which various modifications are present.

It should be noted that the role of dance was initially associated with magic and ritual. The spirit of the people’s culture, art, gesture was encoded in the dance. In the era of classicism, everyone danced, from monarchs to ordinary Christians. Natalia Zakharchuk points out the absence of a clear boundary between household and stage choreography:

“The peculiarity of the dance culture of the 18th century was that stage dance and domestic ballroom did not differ in any way... Household dances were quite often components of opera-ballet performances, and the dance-lexical material that ballet masters created for performances entered the repertoire of ballrooms.”¹⁰

Despite all the variety of dances of the 18th century, the minuet was considered its hallmark. It was called “the king of dance and the dance of

¹⁰ Zakharchuk, Natalia. *Historical and everyday dance*. Vezha-Druk, Lutsk, 2016, p. 21.

kings". The minuet is a dance that had no rivals among other three-part dances, because it could absorb the solemnity of the sarabande and the majestic grace of the chaconne, as well as the graceful mobility of the chime. At the same time, the minuet remained the embodiment of aristocracy.

The topos of the minuet expressed not only the idea of dignity and beauty, but also the harmony of male and female beginnings. The topos of the minuet contained several varieties that differed from each other in their semantics.

Gallant or aristocratic minuet is characterized by a singing melody, which is often duplicated in a third or sixth decorated with melismas; second intonations "sigh"; capricious dotted rhythm. Bright examples of the gallant minuet in the sonata works of W. A. Mozart are: Minuet from Part II of Sonata No. 4 in E flat major KV 282; Part II of Sonata No. 6 in D major KV 284; Theme from the first part of Sonata No. 11 in A major KV 331.

E.g. 2

Menuetto I

W. A. Mozart, Sonata in E flat major KV 282, part II, m. 1-16.

The pastoral minuet is close to the gallant, as a rule, it does not have an up-beat and is accompanied by bagpipes (Sonata No. 6 in D major KV 284).

The rural minuet, or the folk minuet, differs sharply from the pastoral one and shows a certain roughness, clumsiness and casual cheerfulness (Minuet from Part II of Sonata No. 4).

W. A. Mozart used minuet-scherzo, ritual minuet in his work, and he is also considered one of the founders of dramatic minuet, which characterizes the image of stability and courage.

The heroic topos occupied an honorable place in classicism. It was based on the ideal image of a hero (valiant man, ruler, warrior). The "heroic tonality" was considered to be E flat major, convenient for most wind

instruments. In melodics there are quatto-fifth intonations; tirats, which have retained their rhetorical and emblematic meaning of "lightning and thunder". Melismatics also has a "heroic", valiant meaning and has a virtuoso character; in the melody there are jumps on long intervals, which in turn symbolize determination, sometimes anger and fury. Heroism could be softened by a gallant style of writing.

The heroic topos in the work of W. A. Mozart, unlike L. Beethoven, did not occupy a significant importance. The sensitivity that manifested itself in the early work of W. A. Mozart in tender, transparent, melancholic tones gradually leave the "gallant game" and becomes saturated with psychologism and an explosion of new feelings. The heroic topos of Mozart's sonatas can be divided into heroic-gallant and heroic-dramatic.

The semantic structures of the stable intonation complex of the characters – "aristocrats" from the operas of W. A. Mozart, penetrating into the theme of the sonatas, serve as lexical signs of heroes of noble origin. The heroic topos, characterizing opera characters, corresponds to the image of the Lady, conveys her inner strength, nobility of feelings. In an inextricable combination with the lyrical and gallant component of the image of the Lady, the heroic is also expressed in the utterances of the Lady, as the hero of Mozart's piano sonatas. The determination and inner strength of the Lady as the hero of the second movement of Sonata No. 8 in D major KV 311 are conveyed by dotted rhythm formulas, figures of the "heroic gesture" and signal intonations, which are combined with etiquette formulas and ornamentation.

Noble heroics and lyrical gallantry are most vividly manifested in the main theme of the first part of sonata No. 4 KV 282, which is written in the sublime key of E flat major. Already in the first bar of the sonata there are three "heroic" intonations that replace each other – a dotted rhythmic formula, a fourth jump and an ostinate "signal". The content of the following phrases of the Lady, internally strong, courageous and externally tender, graceful, are made up of combinations of graceful "dancing" squats and "heroic gesture" figures (m. 2-3), a graceful trill and a decisive dotted rhythmic formula (m. 3).

The attributions of the dramatic component of the Lady in the work of W. A. Mozart are combined with the intonation and semantic features of the mourning aria: lamento intonations, musical and rhetorical figures saltus duriusculus, catabasis, passus duriusculus, pulsating ostinato in the accompaniment.

Adagio

W. A. Mozart, Sonata in E flat major KV 282, I part, m. 1-9.

The pastoral topos was one of the stable ones in the art of classicism. The pastoral topos was based on the traditions of the European philosophical and artistic understanding of the relationship between man and nature. The pastoral topos has its own set of musical figures that have a pictorial meaning. In the work of W. A. Mozart, there are pastoral and natural images, with the use of traditional symbols in them. But unlike other composers who described nature, in W. A. Mozart it is always enlivened by the presence of man. In the piano sonatas, the pastoral image can be traced in the second parts: No. 1 in C major KV 279, No. 2 in F major KV 280, No. 10 in C major KV 330, No. 13 in B major KV 333.

Sonata in C major KV 279, Part II, Andante is written in F major, full of expressive shades. This is a wonderful picture of nature. Soft, pastoral colors in the spirit of “gallant style” can be felt in the music. The form of Part II is the old sonata form without elaboration (the elaboration is replaced by an episode). The theme-melody of the main part consists of chordal sounds of the main functions, very song-like and expressive. Special sophistication is given to it by the triplet accompaniment. The variety of means of musical expressiveness are closely combined with the dramaturgy of the work and are aimed at revealing its figurative content.

E.g. 4

W. A. Mozart, Sonata in C major KV 279, Part II, m. 1-8.

The comic topos in the work of W. A. Mozart, based on the expressive means of opera-buffa, can be felt in the thematic of the sonatas (gracefulness, capriciousness, laughter) that resemble one or another character. In most cases, there are expressive means of joy. Thanks to this bright direction of sound, the sonatas of W. A. Mozart affirm the main idea of his work – cheerfulness, an optimistic view of life.

A wide range of various migrating opera characters is revealed in the plots of piano sonatas, the semantic structure of which conveys the situation of stage dialogues. In the Sonatas of W. A. Mozart, the comic topos can be divided into the topos of comic dialogue and the topos of comic polylogue.

Prototypes of the heroes of the dialogue scenes are revealed in the comic characters of the cunning Rosina and the aging lover Don Polidoro, the socialite couple Count and Countess, as well as the servant Simone and the maid Nineta from the opera “The Feigned Simpleton”. For example, the embodiment of the topos of comic dialogue – the conversation of a comic couple of servants in love is revealed in the texts of the finale of Sonata No. 2, KV 280 (m. 38-67) and the first part of Sonata No. 18 KV 576 (m. 1-16). The comic effect is provided by the combination of intonation vocabulary, typical for characterizing the loose behavior of common people and vocabulary characteristic of representatives of aristocratic circles. The Servant’s lines combine signal intonations, “cavalier salutes and bows” with sharp “exclamations” and impulsive “exclamations”. The Maid’s lines are also based on the paradoxical juxtaposition of “squatting” and lamento intonations with expressive “exclamations” and “quick talk” at a fast pace.

A distinctive feature of the theatricalization of the plots of W. A. Mozart’s piano sonatas is that they often feature buffoonish scenes with the participation of several heroes, which is characteristic of the comic polylogue topos. Conflict polylogues involving the Count, the Countess, as well as the Servant or the Maid became the most typical for opera buffa. As an example, we can cite the plot organization of the Rondo from Sonata No. 7 KV 309.

The pathetic topos in the 18th century were primarily associated with the philosophical and aesthetic categories of “great” and “sublime”, and directly in music with the poetics of the church and theatrical style. Pathetic topos seeks to depict sublime passions, mournful and sad. Johann Friedrich Agricola remarked: “Pathetic, according to the general understanding, is called everything that is full of strong passions.”¹¹ And if elegant gallantry was based on the idea of Eros, then pathos was an intricate complex of worldviews, which included the ideas of Fate, God, Higher Powers, Death, Immortality.

The eternal “theme of death” is one of the most philosophical themes in W. A. Mozart, along with the theme of love, it runs through the composer’s entire work. Acceptance of death, lack of fear of it, belief in the immortality of the soul and the afterlife – a better world – all this was combined in the composer with a real love of life for a very young person. The topos of death can be felt not only in the Requiem and instrumental music of W. A. Mozart, but also in opera works, in particular, in the operas “Don Giovanni”, “Idomeneo”, “The Clemency of Titus” and others.

The topos of death and suffering were expressed with the help of intonation complexes, both individually authored and traditional baroque. Sonata A minor KV 310 became a vivid example of instrumental music expressing the theme of death. In the Sonata, Mozart semantically fills various units of musical language – melodic, harmonic formulas, musical and rhetorical figures, as well as tonality. The difficult thoughts and feelings that overwhelmed the composer during his journey from Germany to France in 1778 are skillfully embodied in the key of A minor, which expresses a keen personal feeling. This tonality is very rarely found in the work of W. A. Mozart, and J. Haydn did not use it at all. German musicologist Hermann Abert labeled this work as Mozart’s first tragic sonata.¹²

From the very beginning of the sonata, one can feel the topos of death, it is expressed by the juxtaposition of the tonic organ point and the dominant harmony, which form a consonance from two seconds – the idea of dissonance, which is actively progressing in the development. The left-hand part is endowed with another characteristic technique – ostinato, on which a psalmodic prayer figure is superimposed (repetition of the motif at the same pitch), which ends with the “over-theme” of fate (a descending triad) and a second intonation of lamento.

¹¹ Tosi, Pier Francesco. Agricola, Johann Friedrich. *Instructions for the art of singing* (1757). Wiesbaden – Leipzig – Paris, 1994, p. 183.

¹² Abert, Hermann. *W. A. Mozart*. Yale University Press, New Haven, 2006. URL: <https://archive.org/details/wamozart0000aber/mode/2up> (date of access: 3.02.2024).

Allegro maestoso

W. A. Mozart, Sonata A minor KV 310, I movement, m. 1-7.

And only in the last part, the musical-rhetorical figure of the catabasis is filled with the image of repentance, redemptive suffering, and the downward turns obey the psalmodic intonation. The catabasis figure expresses the “affect of submission”.¹³

Having deepened the tragic figurative sphere of instrumental art and solidified a unique compositional style, in the A minor sonata, W. A. Mozart created a dramatic tense scene, as if he “opened the curtain” over his life.

Conclusions

The topic category in musicology covers a wide semantic field - from world understanding and worldview to the embodiment of musical images by certain musical phenomena – thematism, intonation, genre, tonal semantics, orchestration, texture, etc. During the 17th and early 18th centuries, the musical topic formed melodic turns that set forth expressive methods of gallant, pathetic, sorrowful, heroic, comic and pastoral images in music. Multifaceted large topos could contain much smaller ones and have different interpretations but keep certain boundaries of semantic perception.

The main role in Mozart’s sonatas is played by the topos of gallantry, which focuses on the forms of secular communication. This topos is voluminous and contains smaller, similar modifications: the topos of Eros and the topos of dance. The gallant topos relies on characteristic harmonic, melodic and textural techniques that are easily recognizable by ear. In sonatas, it is often found in the first parts and, particularly, in the main parts. Topos of

¹³ Dings, Manfred. Small lexicon of musical-rhetorical figures. University of Music, Saar, 2019, p. 18. URL: <https://docplayer.org/160678434-Kleines-lexikon-der-musikalisch-rhetorischen-figuren.html> (date of access: 25.01.2024).

dance permeate the entire instrumental work of W. A. Mozart. The supremacy receives the topos of the minuet with various modifications, which are usually used in the second parts of the sonata cycle (Sonatas No. 4 in E flat major KV 282; No. 6 in D major KV 284). The heroic topos in the sonatas should be considered together with the semantic structures of the stable intonation complex of the operatic characters corresponding to the image of the Lady (Sonata No. 8 D major KV 311). The pastoral topos in the sonatas was based on the concept of the relationship between nature and man. It is clearly visible in the second parts of the following sonatas: No. 1 in C major KV 279, No. 2 in F major KV 280, No. 10 in C major KV 330, No. 13 in B major KV 333. The comic topos in the sonatas of W. A. Mozart is revealed thanks to associations with the characters of the opera-buffa. The pathetic topos (death, suffering, the topos of sublime pathos) embodied sublime passions, mournful and sad, which were expressed with the help of individually authored intonation complexes and traditional baroque (sonata A minor KV 310).

Therefore, revealing the semantic depth of the musical topos of Mozart's sonatas will allow us to discover the musical cosmos of the composer's artistic imagery.

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