

## ■ Musical Genre and Style ■

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### Features of the Symphony and the Suite in Tchaikovsky's Piano Concertos\*

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**Abstract.** The article examines features of the compositional logic of three piano concertos by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky. In particular, the work examines the relationship between the structural features of the symphony and the suite, which have aroused only a few isolated statements in the musicological literature. The predominance of the symphonic theory as a “sign” of compositional perfection in most works by Russian composers and those from other countries has established an assessment of the Second and Third Concertos as being second-rate in a series of late Romantic concerto works. The significant role of suite structure in Tchaikovsky’s works noted by many recent researchers allows us to place a new emphasis in the interpretation of the works. The results of the analysis confirm that symphonic features are present in Tchaikovsky’s concertos to varying degrees: this is manifested in the preservation of the principles of cyclicity, sonata form, and the thematic “derivability” of musical material. On the other hand, the autonomy and disproportion of the sonata allegros, the genre nature of the individual movements of the cycle, the autonomy of the soloist and the orchestral parts resulting from the numerous cadenzas are indicators of suite logic. While various combinations of these qualities can be found in all three of Tchaikovsky’s works, from the perspective of the genre tradition, the Second Concerto is the most “anomalous,” being closer to the genre of a Concert Fantasia, rather than to the other two concertos. Thus, we can conclude that Tchaikovsky’s piano concertos may be uniquely characterised by their suite-like nature. The opposition of the two compositional principles can be interpreted in light of the composer’s appeal to the leading German and French European traditions, which became the basis of his instrumental work.

**Keywords:** Pyotr Tchaikovsky, piano concerto, compositional logic, symphonism, suite, cyclicity, Western European tradition, genre

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## Симфонизм и сюитность в фортепианных концертах П. И. Чайковского

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**Аннотация.** В статье рассматриваются особенности композиционной логики трёх фортепианных концертов Петра Ильича Чайковского. Основной проблемой выступает соотношение в них черт симфонизма и сюитности, о котором в научной литературе существуют лишь отдельные суждения. Господство симфонической теории как «знака» композиционного совершенства в большинстве отечественных и зарубежных работ сформировало оценку Второго и Третьего концертов как второстепенных в ряду позднеромантических концертных сочинений. Констатация в произведениях Чайковского значительной роли сюитности многими исследователями позволяет расставить новые акценты в интерпретации произведений. Результаты аналитической работы показывают, что симфонические черты в разной мере свойственны концертам Чайковского: это выражено в сохранении принципа цикличности, сонатности, интонационной «выводимости» тем. С другой стороны, автономность и непропорциональность сонатных аллегро, жанровая окрашенность отдельных частей цикла, автономизация партий солиста и оркестра за счёт многочисленных каденций — показатели сюитной логики. Различные сочетания этих качеств можно обнаружить во всех трёх сочинениях Чайковского, однако наиболее «аномальным» с позиции жанровой традиции оказывается Второй концерт, приближенный скорее к Концертной фантазии, чем к двум другим концертам. Таким образом, можно сделать вывод: сюитность свойственна фортепианным концертам Чайковского, и именно она определяет их уникальность. Противопоставление двух композиционных принципов можно трактовать в свете обращения композитора к ведущим европейским традициям — немецкой и французской, ставших основой его инструментального творчества.

**Ключевые слова:** Пётр Чайковский, фортепианный концерт, композиционная логика, симфонизм, сюитность, цикличность, западноевропейская традиция, жанровость

### Introduction

The compositional processes in the works of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky have long been of particular interest to musicologists. Special attention has been paid to his instrumental

works, including the piano concertos. This topic has aroused the interest not only of Russian scholars but also foreign researchers. Tchaikovsky's concertos have mainly been studied in terms of their symphonic

compositional logic. This approach has led to the formation of the persistent idea that his First Piano Concerto was the most successful. His other works for piano and orchestra, in such cases, are generally regarded as less successful attempts to find new means of expression; thus, criticism arose regarding their dramaturgical concepts and formal logic.

Tchaikovsky's symphonic works, in turn, have been examined from different positions. Perhaps the most original approach was that of Joseph Kunin, [1] who drew parallels with the composer's suite work. The development of this idea was carried out by Arkady Klimovitsky, [2] who not only discovered the features of a suite in Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony, but also described this principle in general. Thus, a number of "anomalies" that are inexplicable from the standpoint of symphonism found their interpretation in the proposed concept. However, there is little discussion in the relevant literature about the compositional processes in Tchaikovsky's piano concertos. The key statements belong to Nadezhda Tumanina, [3] who noted individual manifestations of suite-like qualities in the Second Concerto; however, a holistic view of this problem has not yet been formed. Considering the indisputable connections between Tchaikovsky's symphonic and concert works, we can propose the following hypothesis: a suite-like quality is also characteristic of the composer's other cyclical works, including his concertos.

### Directions of the Concerto Genre During the 19th Century

In relation to the concerto genre in the 19th century, the term "simfonizirovannyi" ("symphonised") has often been used by Russian scholars.<sup>1</sup> The designation of works of Ludwig van Beethoven, Robert Schumann and Johannes Brahms in such terms captures the essence of the historical process of convergence of the concerto and symphonic genres.<sup>2</sup> Foreign equivalents of the term "symphonised concerto" are *Symphonische Konzert* and *Concerto symphonique*. Its history is described in detail by Juan Martin Koch in his monograph *The Piano Concerto of the 19th Century and the Category of the Symphonic*. [5] He highlights the role of Henry Litolff, a French composer and pianist, who first used the phrase "symphonic concerto" in the title of his works.<sup>3</sup> The symphonisation of the piano concerto was one of the most important paths in the development of the genre in Western European music.

The first Russian composer to respond decisively to these trends was Anton Rubinstein. Already in his Piano Concerto No. 1 (1850) his synthesis and active use of the principles established by Beethoven and developed in the works of, first of all, Liszt, as well as Weber, Hummel and Litolff himself are clearly evident. His concertos can be accurately described as "symphonised"; however, he was the only composer before Tchaikovsky who followed this path. Obviously, this was facilitated

<sup>1</sup> This was also the term used in the works of Russian musicologists Genrikh Orlov, Lev Raaben, Mikhail Druskin, Igor Kuznetsov, and Mikhail Tarakanov.

<sup>2</sup> This tradition can be clearly seen in Julian Horton's statement about the concerto works of Johannes Brahms: "Concerto symphonism is in this connection an appropriate conception: Brahms' concertos are closer to Beethoven because they are symphonic." [4, p. 144]

<sup>3</sup> Speaking about the genesis of the concept *Concerto symphonique* in the context of the general symphonisation of the concerto genre, Jaun Martin Koch writes that "Litolff was the first to react to this development by calling his piano concertos symphonic..." [5, p. 133]

by Rubinstein's close connection with Western European culture and his commitment to the values of the German tradition.

Another tendency is indicated by a series of works, which began with the Concerto in *C minor* op. 4 by Alexandre Villoing.<sup>4</sup> A significant contribution was made by Mily Balakirev, who wrote the *Great Fantasy on Russian Themes* (1852) and Concerto in *F-sharp minor* (1855–1856) for piano and orchestra. As Jeremy Norris notes, they show the influence of other Western European composers such as Frederic Chopin and Adolf von Henselt. [6, p. 57]

Thus, in Russia by 1874, different development directions of the concerto genre were presented: the “Liszt” symphonic type and the “Chopin” type, more chamber-like, in line with the traditions of the “brilliant style.”<sup>5</sup> The appearance of Tchaikovsky's First Concerto (1875) at this time was met with mixed reactions in the Russian musical world: representatives of the *Mighty Handful*, according to Kunin, perceived this work “...with bewilderment and condemnation. The very genre of the piano concerto was considered in this circle as hopelessly outdated and false.” [7, p. 183] Apparently, the negative attitude was largely dictated by the rejection

of the genre of a large-scale symphonic concerto. However, Tchaikovsky himself was much more inclined towards the symphonic approach characteristic of Liszt, Litolff and Rubinstein; his opinion of the “Chopin-like” type was rather sceptical. In one of his feuilletons, he wrote: “As for Mrs. Yesipova's choice of Chopin's first concerto — tediously long, meaningless, full of routine, I cannot approve of it.” [8, p. 48]<sup>6</sup>

### Manifestations of Symphonism in Tchaikovsky's Concertos

The examination of Tchaikovsky's concertos in the context of the symphonic tradition has a rather long history. Already in 1878, Herman Laroche wrote about the First Concerto in a review published in the newspaper *Voice* (No. 93): “Energetic, full of life and movement, this concerto with its grandiose introduction is, of course, more of a symphony than a concerto... But as a symphonic work, it stands extremely high both in its ideas and in their development...” [10, p. 47] There are a number of reasons why one can agree with this statement.

First of all, the symphonic compositional principle is manifested in the very phenomenon of the introduction, which was an extraordinary solution for a concerto of that time. An alternative

<sup>4</sup> However, this work is not the subject of many studies. It was written in the 1830s in line with the pianistic traditions of John Field. As Jeremy Norris writes, it was “the first piano concerto written in Russia and performed abroad, and Rubinstein played it frequently during his European tours in 1840–43.” [6, p. 13] This work certainly had a significant influence on the style of Villoing's student Anton Rubinstein, as well as on Pyotr Tchaikovsky, primarily in piano writing.

<sup>5</sup> According to Jim Samson, Chopin's early works in particular “show clear influences from the ‘brilliant style’ — the concert pianism associated with composers such as Hummel, Weber, Moscheles and Kalkbrenner.” See: Samson J. Chopin, Fryderyk Franciszek. *Grove Music Online*. 2001. URL:

<https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000051099?rskey=jj1ISE&result=3> (accessed: 20.08.2025). Roman Ivanovich also wrote about the connection between the “brilliant style” and the concerto genre, emphasising its virtuoso basis, based as it was on fine technique. See: Ivanovitch R. The Brilliant Style. *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*. Ed. by D. Mirka. 2014. URL: <https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199841578.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199841578-e-13> (accessed: 20.08.2025).

<sup>6</sup> It should be acknowledged that some features of Henselt's pianism are still found in Tchaikovsky's concertos, as Edward Garden noted in his article. [9] However, no other coincidences were noted.

to the traditional classical concerto form with a double exposition<sup>7</sup> from the beginning of the 1830s was the sonata form, which was most often preceded by a short orchestral introduction in the form of a laconic preamble. Examples include concertos by Felix Mendelssohn, Edvard Grieg, Robert Schumann, Anton Rubinstein (No. 3; No. 5), and Camille Saint-Saëns. In Tchaikovsky, in turn, the introduction not only has a clearly defined structure, but also serves as the source of the thematics of the entire concerto. Following Laroche, musicologists of different generations developed this idea. Alexander Alexeyev was the first to mention the intonational “derivability” of the themes in the First Concerto in his work *Russian Piano Music: Late 19th — Early 20th Century*, [11, pp. 43–52] establishing the connection between the introduction and the main, secondary, and final parts of the first part, as well as with the Primary Theme Group of the second movement.<sup>8</sup> The search for intonational correspondences was also undertaken by the British scholar David Brown, who emphasised the harmonic similarities between the themes of the concerto; he outlined his concept in the second volume of the monograph *Tchaikovsky: The Crisis Years*. [12, p. 22–23]<sup>9</sup> All these are characteristic features of the symphonic compositional principle.

One cannot ignore the analogy with the Second Symphony, written in 1872 shortly before the concerto, which has an

extended overture. The works are also related by the commonality of thematic disposition: the exposition of the first part of the symphony begins with a scherzo theme, which in the course of development is transformed into a more energetic and solemn one; then follows a lyrical theme and a lyrical-dramatic shift in the secondary part. The same principle is implemented in the First Concerto. Similarities are observed in the development sections of the works: over the course of development, the lyrical-dramatic beginning leads to a strongly pronounced dramatic climax. Another common feature is the return of the figurative sphere of the introduction in the coda of the first movements of the cycles. Thus, the First Concerto fits naturally and logically into the context of Tchaikovsky’s other symphonic works, since their principles certainly coincide in many ways. But can the same be said about other concertos? It is obvious that Tchaikovsky’s Third Concerto, which was written on the basis of his unfinished symphony in *E-flat major* in 1893, has close ties with the symphonic genre. There are two versions of it: a one-movement concerto piece and a three-movement cycle. In both musicology and among pianists, the opinion has solidified regarding the secondary status of the Third Concerto; this led to a prolonged period during which it was not considered a cyclical work in any analysis, although the composer’s original intent was precisely that.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Double exposition is found in a number of 19th century concertos. Among them are works by Carl Maria von Weber and Johann Nepomuk Hummel, close in their style to classical genre examples, as well as Johannes Brahms, Anton Rubinstein (No. 1, 2), and Charles Henry Litolf. It should not be forgotten that Ludwig van Beethoven’s three concertos (Nos. 3–5) were also written in the 19th century. Thus, double exposition continued to coexist for a long time with the new principles of form-building in concertos.

<sup>8</sup> Alexander Alexeyev’s concept in the form of a diagram is presented in the work of Jeremy Norris. [6, p. 128]

<sup>9</sup> See also Edward Garden’s article *A Note of Tchaikovsky’s First Piano Concerto* (1981) [13] on the intonational connections of the introduction with the following themes.

<sup>10</sup> The article *The Third Piano Concerto by P. I. Tchaikovsky and the problem of cyclicity* is devoted to the consideration of Concerto No. 3 as a cyclical work. [14]

As in the First Concerto, the principle of intonational derivability ensures a tight connection between the parts of the cycle. The absence of an introduction in which the main thematic seeds would be concentrated led to the distribution of unifying motifs across different sections of the form. Thus, an intonational kinship is found between the main sections of the first *Allegro brillante* and the finale; the secondary section of the first movement with its characteristic move to the sixth creates an arch with the Subsidiary Theme Group in the *Andante* movement. The functionally independent and bright final section of the first movement is

connected intonationally and rhythmically with the main section of the finale. Another similarity, albeit not so obvious, is found between the first Subsidiary Theme Group of the finale (or the first episode) and the Primary Theme Group of Second Part (Scheme 1). Thus, a whole network of thematic echoes emerges.

The Third Concerto also has points of contact with Tchaikovsky's orchestral works. Some similarities can be found with the Third Symphony *D major*, which was written in 1875. First of all, as in the "pair" of the First Concerto and the Second Symphony, this concerns the first parts of the cycles. Thus, the exposition sections

Scheme 1. Pyotr Tchaikovsky. The Third Concerto. Intonational Connections between Parts of the Cycle

The diagram illustrates intonational connections between various parts of Tchaikovsky's Third Concerto. It consists of seven staves, each representing a different section of the work. Specific musical motifs are highlighted with rectangular boxes, and vertical lines connect these boxes across different staves to show thematic echoes.

- First Movement, Primary Theme Group:** The first staff shows a melodic line in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats. A box highlights the first four notes: G4, A4, B4, and C5.
- Third Movement, Refrain Theme:** The second staff shows a more complex melodic line in 4/4 time. A box highlights a sequence of notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, B6, C7, D7, E7, F7, G7, A7, B7, C8, D8, E8, F8, G8, A8, B8, C9, D9, E9, F9, G9, A9, B9, C10, D10, E10, F10, G10, A10, B10, C11, D11, E11, F11, G11, A11, B11, C12, D12, E12, F12, G12, A12, B12, C13, D13, E13, F13, G13, A13, B13, C14, D14, E14, F14, G14, A14, B14, C15, D15, E15, F15, G15, A15, B15, C16, D16, E16, F16, G16, A16, B16, C17, D17, E17, F17, G17, A17, B17, C18, D18, E18, F18, G18, A18, B18, C19, D19, E19, F19, G19, A19, B19, C20, D20, E20, F20, G20, A20, B20, C21, D21, E21, F21, G21, A21, B21, C22, D22, E22, F22, G22, A22, B22, C23, D23, E23, F23, G23, A23, B23, C24, D24, E24, F24, G24, A24, B24, C25, D25, E25, F25, G25, A25, B25, C26, D26, E26, F26, G26, A26, B26, C27, D27, E27, F27, G27, A27, B27, C28, D28, E28, F28, G28, A28, B28, C29, D29, E29, F29, G29, A29, B29, C30, D30, E30, F30, G30, A30, B30, C31, D31, E31, F31, G31, A31, B31, C32, D32, E32, F32, G32, A32, B32, C33, D33, E33, F33, G33, A33, B33, C34, D34, E34, F34, G34, A34, B34, C35, D35, E35, F35, G35, A35, B35, C36, D36, E36, F36, G36, A36, B36, C37, D37, E37, F37, G37, A37, B37, C38, D38, E38, F38, G38, A38, B38, C39, D39, E39, F39, G39, A39, B39, C40, D40, E40, F40, G40, A40, B40, C41, D41, E41, F41, G41, A41, B41, C42, D42, E42, F42, G42, A42, B42, C43, D43, E43, F43, G43, A43, B43, C44, D44, E44, F44, G44, A44, B44, C45, D45, E45, F45, G45, A45, B45, C46, D46, E46, F46, G46, A46, B46, C47, D47, E47, F47, G47, A47, B47, C48, D48, E48, F48, G48, A48, B48, C49, D49, E49, F49, G49, A49, B49, C50, D50, E50, F50, G50, A50, B50, C51, D51, E51, F51, G51, A51, B51, C52, D52, E52, F52, G52, A52, B52, C53, D53, E53, F53, G53, A53, B53, C54, D54, E54, F54, G54, A54, B54, C55, D55, E55, F55, G55, A55, B55, C56, D56, E56, F56, G56, A56, B56, C57, D57, E57, F57, G57, A57, B57, C58, D58, E58, F58, G58, A58, B58, C59, D59, E59, F59, G59, A59, B59, C60, D60, E60, F60, G60, A60, B60, C61, D61, E61, F61, G61, A61, B61, C62, D62, E62, F62, G62, A62, B62, C63, D63, E63, F63, G63, A63, B63, C64, D64, E64, F64, G64, A64, B64, C65, D65, E65, F65, G65, A65, B65, C66, D66, E66, F66, G66, A66, B66, C67, D67, E67, F67, G67, A67, B67, C68, D68, E68, F68, G68, A68, B68, C69, D69, E69, F69, G69, A69, B69, C70, D70, E70, F70, G70, A70, B70, C71, D71, E71, F71, G71, A71, B71, C72, D72, E72, F72, G72, A72, B72, C73, D73, E73, F73, G73, A73, B73, C74, D74, E74, F74, G74, A74, B74, C75, D75, E75, F75, G75, A75, B75, C76, D76, E76, F76, G76, A76, B76, C77, D77, E77, F77, G77, A77, B77, C78, D78, E78, F78, G78, A78, B78, C79, D79, E79, F79, G79, A79, B79, C80, D80, E80, F80, G80, A80, B80, C81, D81, E81, F81, G81, A81, B81, C82, D82, E82, F82, G82, A82, B82, C83, D83, E83, F83, G83, A83, B83, C84, D84, E84, F84, G84, A84, B84, C85, D85, E85, F85, G85, A85, B85, C86, D86, E86, F86, G86, A86, B86, C87, D87, E87, F87, G87, A87, B87, C88, D88, E88, F88, G88, A88, B88, C89, D89, E89, F89, G89, A89, B89, C90, D90, 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have a similar thematic disposition: the Primary Theme Group in the character of *maestoso*, a contrasting lyrical Subsidiary Theme Group, and finally a scherzo final part. In both works, the exposition ends with a striking, distinctive theme, and in the Third Concerto, the closing section is perhaps the most memorable part of the first movement. In both cases, contrary to the two-theme logic of the sonata allegro, Tchaikovsky adds a third theme, which is intonationally and figuratively independent, but not developed in the development.

### Suite-type Features in Tchaikovsky's Concertos

Tchaikovsky's First and Third Concertos not only adapt the general principles of thematic development typical of a symphony, but also form parallels with his specific symphonic works. In this regard, it becomes necessary to clarify the role of the special quality of Tchaikovsky's symphonism, noted by Arkady Klimovitsky when he writes about the "interaction" in the Third Symphony of features of the suite and the symphony. [2, p. 31] Joseph Kunin also points to the opposition of these genre-compositional principles in other symphonic works by Tchaikovsky — in particular, in the Fourth Symphony. [1, p. 113] If we accept the thesis about the introduction of the suite principle into Tchaikovsky's symphonic compositions, then, apparently, it is worth revising some earlier assessments.

A completely different picture emerges in the Second Concerto, where, according to Nina Tumanina, the suite-like quality is present not in individual manifestations, but rather becomes "a feature of the cycle."<sup>11</sup> Already in the first movement, there is a whole series of genre "anomalies" that point to a completely

different type of dramaturgy that is distinct from the symphonic type. This is largely due to the context of the creation of the work: in 1879, Tchaikovsky first turned to genres that were new to him, such as the caprice, the serenade and the suite. And, as Tumanina notes, "this type of concerto cycle testifies to the general trend of Tchaikovsky's symphonic creativity in these years and to the composer's increasing gravitation towards the suite form, which was new to him." [3, p. 53] However, what is the chief peculiarity of the Second Concerto?

Its first performer, Sergei Taneyev, wrote to Tchaikovsky after the premiere that "opinions about it are quite varied, but they all agree that the first and second movements are too long." [15, p. 81] He also repeatedly pointed out the protracted nature of the cadence episodes, arguing that "by the end of the 2nd page the listeners will become tired, and by the end of the 4th they will lose patience." [Ibid.] Taneyev makes similar comments when discussing the Fourth Symphony: "...the first movement is disproportionately long compared to the other movements; it has the appearance of a symphonic poem, to which three movements were accidentally added and made into a symphony." [15, p. 27] It is obvious that such rejection could only be caused by the unconventional nature of the concept, which Tchaikovsky's contemporaries perceived as a certain violation of genre traditions. Projecting his statement onto the latest edition of the Second Concerto, in which the second movement was shortened by almost half, we can discover an unconditional similarity. The same words can be fairly applied to the First Concerto. Thus, the disproportion of the movements and the obvious completeness and self-sufficiency of the sonata allegros can be best explained

<sup>11</sup> According to Tumanina, "the chief peculiarity of the cycle of the Second Concerto lies in its unique 'suite-like' nature." [3, p. 53]

according to suite logic. In confirmation, let us again turn to the words of Arkady Klimovitsky: “Tchaikovsky felt the symphony as the limit of logical rigidity and determinism, while he saw the suite as the antipode of the symphony, primarily in this very quality.” [2, p. 32]

According to Tumanina, an important difference between the Second Concerto on the one hand, and the First and Third on the other, is the absence of continuous intonational connections.<sup>12</sup> As a result, the very principle of cyclicity characteristic of a symphonic work is undermined. In addition, it is important to note the relationship between the orchestral and piano parts, the combined presence of which in the Second Concerto is minimal. For example, in the development section of the first movement, out of 300 bars, the piano and orchestra play together in only 18 bars. Extended solo insertions are also presented in other sections of the form; in particular, the connecting part, which is significant in its volume, actually turns into a local cadence. In the second part, Tchaikovsky singles out the solo violin and cello in the orchestra; the piano part, however, is interrupted by a long pause. Thus, the active interaction between soloist and orchestra, so vividly presented in the First and Third Concertos, is absent here.

In contrast to the symphonic principles of organising the whole in the First and Third, the suite-like nature of the composition of the Second Concerto provides grounds for posing another question about Tchaikovsky's dialogue with the two leading Western European traditions of that time — the German and the French. It is precisely in Saint-Saëns's concertos, which Tchaikovsky knew well, that much in common with the solutions observed in the Second

Concerto is revealed. In Saint-Saëns, the soloist is brought to the forefront using a number of special techniques. Thus, the main presentation and development of the thematics takes place in the piano part, while the orchestra, which mainly plays an accompanying role, is included in this process in the imitative sections. Saint-Saëns also introduces *quasi cadenza* episodes, which in the intensity of their motivic work sometimes surpass the main development. In addition, one is struck by the significant number of virtuoso insertions and passages, which are filled with a variety of piano techniques. It becomes obvious that these compositional solutions were fully accepted by Tchaikovsky and applied in the Second Concerto. French features in the works of this period were repeatedly noted; in particular, a journalist from the Leipzig newspaper *General-Anzeiger* claimed that “the richly gifted composer thoroughly studied German and new French music, but without causing the slightest damage to the originality of his talent” (Cit. ex: [16, p. 587]). However, the First Concerto did not evoke such associations with the French tradition among Tchaikovsky's contemporaries. Rather, the thematic work in it apparently allowed for direct analogies to be drawn with the German style of writing.

Finally, it is necessary to mention the genre, which in general plays an important role in Tchaikovsky's work and is considered one of the essential attributes of the suite. In the Second Concerto, the slow part fully corresponds to the romance genre, since the vocal element is undoubtedly predominant in it. The finale, in turn, has dance-like features, which can also be said about third

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<sup>12</sup> “The parts of the concerto are independent in terms of themes, they have no intonational commonality, due to which there is a feeling of some disunity between the parts, despite the requirement to perform them without interruption” notes Tumanina. [3, p. 53]

movement of the First Concerto: along with the introduction of rhythmic formulas characteristic of the polonaise in one of the episodes, the emphasised rhythm of the Primary Theme Group also indicates the clear genre sources of the thematics. In the second movement of the First Concerto, features of a pastorale are revealed, while the fast episode is maintained in the waltz genre. However, one cannot fail to take into account that the bright genre colouring of the themes was generally characteristic of the late Romantic symphony. Indeed, Tchaikovsky was not original in this case.

Thus, all three concerts have suite-like features, which are combined to varying degrees with the principles of the symphony. Tchaikovsky's only work for piano and orchestra in which suite logic dominates is the Concerto Fantasia op. 56. First of all, it is expressed in the form of the piece: despite the sonata features (the presence of two theme groups and a traditional tonal plan), the first movement is dominated by a rondo-type beginning. The separateness of the sections is expressed graphically in the text itself. Thus, Tchaikovsky places a double bar before an episode, and a general pause before a reprise. The middle section of the first movement is noteworthy because it is written, firstly, in the form of variations on a new, previously unexposed theme, and secondly, for solo piano. The composer provided for the possibility of performing the fantasia in a one-movement version, as a result of which the phenomenon of the code *ad libitum* arises. Finally, the principle of contrast — one of the most important

indicators of the suite — was embodied in the second movement of the work. Thus, Tchaikovsky freely constructs the compositional logic of the Concerto Fantasy. As Klimovitsky writes, “it becomes obvious what Tchaikovsky meant by the words about the suite as not requiring ‘subordination to any traditions and rules’.” [2, p. 30]

### Conclusion

Thus, in Tchaikovsky's piano concertos, suite-like logic is manifested in various ways, bringing thematic-dramaturgical, structural, or genre features to the forefront. Nevertheless, symphonism remains the predominant compositional principle, above all in the First and Third concertos. The Second Concerto, which is much more “suite-like,” gravitates more towards the Concerto Fantasia,<sup>13</sup> but some principles (in particular, the sonata form) are preserved in it. Thus, here, suite-like qualities and symphonism coexist and intersect, shaping a work that is unique in its qualities. It is important to note that both symphonism and suite-like traits in Tchaikovsky's piano concertos have distinct characteristics: in the first case, it is the “derivation” of themes and the purposeful thematic development; in the second, an emphasis on the principle of contrasting sections and the thematic autonomy of the cycle's movements. These principles can be regarded as a kind of sign of Tchaikovsky's dialogue with the German and French traditions of European instrumental music, whose synthesis became the foundation of his individual compositional decisions.

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