

Arta muzicală

THE MUSIC OF THE PAST IN THE PRESENT

MUZICA: DIN TRECUT SPRE PREZENT

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The historical road of the development of musical art is connected with the appearance of new forms and genres, appropriate for every stylistic period. In the 20th century there existed processes, which stimulated both the merge of many genres, and the renewal of interest in the forgotten ones. In this aspect the renaissance of national culture in the opera genre takes place in Ukraine and in other European countries. The reconstruction of the old operas initiates modern re-reading of the material, which enriches essentially the artistic landscape of society in space and time.

Keywords: music, style, genre, opera, singing, instrument, performing

Calea istorică de dezvoltare a artei muzicale este determinată de apariția formelor și genurilor noi, caracteristice pentru fiecare perioadă stilistică. În sec. XX au apărut procese care au stimulat îmbinarea mai multor genuri, contribuind, astfel, la sporirea interesului față de genurile date uitării. În acest sens, renașterea culturii naționale în genul de operă are loc în Ucraina, precum și în alte țări europene. Reconstituirea operelor vechi în opere contemporane pune bazele unei lecturări noi a materialului, care îmbogățește substanțial cultura artistică a societății în spațiu și timp.

Cuvinte-cheie: muzică, stil, gen, operă, cânt, instrument, interpretare

The historical road of the development of musical art is connected with the appearance of new forms and genres, appropriate for every stylistic period.

Nowadays the unknown past arouses great interest more and more. So in the 20th century this unknown was the music of the 17th – 18th centuries, and today scientists have deep interest in the Middle Ages, Renaissance and even Ancient Times. A more thorough study of ancient music discovers for today's generation of musicians and people implicated in revival processes, many art techniques for understanding the stylistics of the studied period.

In spite of the fact that ancient music hasn't been preserved and can't be recreated, we still can imagine the genre basis, instrumentation and form of its existence thanks to researches of scientists, who make possible the creation of new music of the Renaissance period.

Although both – the musicians of Ancient time and musicians of Renaissance are so remote of us in time, the interest in this music arises for two reasons: historical and because of using plots of later epochs in musical creation, which include the ages of the Baroque and early classics.

With the appearance of the opera genre at the beginning of the 17th century (1600) the reunion of vocal and instrumental music, united within a single plot in the author's libretto and put into action through the magic of theatrical action, took place.

The first opera appeared in Italy, the musical culture of which was extremely rich and developed.

The emergence of the opera was associated with the process, which contributed to the appearance of the homophonous and harmonic style in the alternative of polyphonic style, which was dominant in the 16th – 17th centuries under the influence of the Netherlands polyphonists. Vincenzo Galilei, who was the father of the famous astronomer Galileo Galilei and had a great support among music lovers in Florence, was the opponent of the Netherlands and as a result *Florentine Camerata* appeared.

The first attempts to create a new genre took place at the end of the 90s of the 16th century without giving integral material. But the opera called *Eurydice*, written on the ancient plot (music – Perry; text – Rinuccio) was first performed in 1600. Arias were performed in a new style for that time – representative (pictorial), and music – declamatory. The event was successful and marked the beginning of a new genre – opera.

Claudio Monteverdi's operas (1567-1643), written on ancient plots – *Orpheus*, *Ariadne*, *The Coronation of Poppea* in the Baroque style became the pinnacle of Italian opera art of the 17th century.

Opera developed in European countries and became the personification of the national culture of each country. The main rival of Italian opera was the French one, then the German opera with the centre in Dresden was formed.

In the 18th century opera became the leading genre in the musical culture of Europe. Opera influenced the development of other genres – symphonic and choral art. Classicism was the leading genre in Italian opera art of the 18th century. Italian opera provided impact on the development of opera in other countries, as many musicians tried to come to Italy to study musical compositions with Italian masters.

It happened to the prominent Ukrainian composers – Maxim Berezovsky and Dmitry Bortniansky. Their work is associated with the era of the creation of opera in Eastern Europe as well as in Ukraine and Russia.

Maxim Berezovsky (1745-1777) was born and matured as a musician in Ukraine. Thanks to his talent and great efforts of patrons, M. Berezovsky managed to get the education of composer from the famous music theorist and historian, composer, teacher, conductor, singer, violinist and harpsichordist – Giovanni Battista Martini (1706-1784) in Italy. As a result of being taught by the famous master of musical composition M. Berezovsky wrote the opera on P. Metastasio's libretto with antique theme – *Demofont*. The opera was staged in the carnival season in 1772 – 1773 in Livorno. Four arias from the opera *Demofont* are preserved, and they are evidence of M. Berezovsky's high skills and they impress with their special charm.

Dmitry Bortniansky (1751-1825) is an outstanding Ukrainian composer, singer, conductor, the author of six operas, choral instrumental and vocal music. He got primary musical education in the Glukhovsk singing school which prepared singers for the court choir in St. Petersburg. Thanks to his evident abilities – a strong voice and musicality – D. Bortniansky was selected for the court choir of St. Petersburg, the head of which at that time was the Italian composer Baldassare Galuppi. Then, by the order of Empress Elizabeth, he took his pupil to Italy, where he studied for ten years in Venice, Bologna, Rome and Naples.

D. Bortniansky's opera work of is of particular interest. He wrote in Italy the first three operas on Italian texts of librettists, and the last three operas – in Russia on a French libretto.

The Operas of the Italian period – *Creon* (1776), *Alcides* (1778), *Quintus Fabius* (1779) – were successfully performed in Italy, including at the *San Benedetto* Venetian Theater.

At the age of 28 Bortniansky returned to St. Petersburg, where he got the post of Kapellmeister of "the small yard" of Crown Prince Paul Petrovich. Working as a Kapellmeister, Bortniansky wrote the opera *Sokol* (1786), *The Son-Rival* (1787), *Festival of the Lord* (1786).

What was the fate of Bortniansky operas?

Only one of three Italian operas was published, it was *Alcides*. The opera *Quintus Fabius* exists only in manuscript, which is kept in the State Museum of Musical Arts named after M. Glinka in Moscow, and the opera *Creon* has been lost. The operas, written on ancient plots, have a traditional style of opera seria with the influence of fashionable steams of dramatization at that time, which made it very similar to the opera-drama.

The most famous opera of the three operas of the Russian period is *Sokol*. All the operas of the Russian period belong to the lyric-comic genre with a significant association with the traditions of the

French comic opera and the Italian opera buff.

D. Bortniansky's works had an impact on the further development of Russian and Ukrainian music, that can be noticed in the works of Glinka, Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov and Borodin.

Like all old music, the instrumental and vocal music by Bortniansky, except the choir one, which could be constantly heard in churches, receded into the background, but since the 20-es of the 20th century Bortnyansky's creativity became the subject of attention of Ukrainian musicians. Stanislav Lyudkevych in the article "J. Bortniansky and Modern Ukrainian Music" (1925) called upon Ukrainian musicians to develop the traditions established by Bortnyansky and deeper and more reasonably apply them to the great cultural treasure, which is concentrated in the works of Bortniansky, to find in them the source and the basis for revival of Ukrainian music. [1]

Ukrainian musicologists traditionally call for the use of intonation of Ukrainian folk songs in choral works, which was due to the fact that the first musical impressions were produced in Ukraine, on Ukrainians – most of them were Bortnyansk's friends, including his teacher – Poltoratsky.

The influence of Bortnyansky's creation is seen in the works of prominent Ukrainian composers such as M. Lysenko, K. Stetsenko, M. Verbitsky, N. Leontovich, M. Dremlyuga, L. Revutskiy, K. Dominchena, B. Liatoshynsky and others.

Because of the period of the revival of ancient music in the Soviet Union since the 60s and the aroused interest in the forgotten works of the national opera, and after almost 200 years of oblivion, the opera *Sokol* (directed and staged by the National Artist of the USSR Boris Pokrovsky; translation into Russian by A.Rozanova) was performed and recorded on disc at the Moscow Chamber Theater in 1970.

Since 1991 the interest in national culture (not only modern, but also related to the historical past of the country) has increased because of the proclamation of the independence of Ukraine and change of the state ideology. The forgotten works of Ukrainian composers started to be performed, the names of prominent figures of Ukrainian culture were heard everywhere again. Particular interest aroused the work of prominent Ukrainians – M. Berezovsky, D.Bortniansky, A. Wedel – who created at the time when Ukraine was deprived of statehood and was a part of the Russian Empire.

The availability of the Opera National Heritage always confirms the importance of the cultural condition of the country, so there appeared a desire, which later became a need to revive it and thus, better understand the spiritual world of predecessors. D. Bortniansky's opera became the object of implementation of the revival of Ukrainian opera thanks to the availability of musical material and having an example of its setting at the Moscow Chamber Theatre. *Sokol* (*Le Falcon*, the full name *Falcon Federigo degli Alberigo*) consists of three acts to a libretto in the French language of the librarian of the future Emperor Paul I – the Swiss by origin Franz-Hermann Lafermera. In the lyric-comic opera the vocal parts are combined with spoken dialogues, the storyline for which, served the story, taken from the *Decameron* by Boccaccio (the fifth day, the ninth novel). The opera, by its origin, is a complex musical-dramatic genre. Its aesthetic effect on the listeners is caused by the unity of instrumental music, singing, text and stage action. So it was common practice until the last quarter of the twentieth century to perform all the operas translated into the national language.

The opera *Sokol* was performed on 15 October 1995 for the first time in Ukraine (the concert dedicated to the 380th anniversary of the foundation of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy). The artistic director of the production is the national artist of Ukraine – Natalia Sviridenko, special translation into Ukrainian done by Maxim Strikha. On May 10, 1996 the opera was shown at the National University Mohyla Academy "in the stage version (conductor – Sviridenko, directed by V. Bilchenko, plastics by A. Rubina) [2].

The production of *Sokol* became an event in the cultural life of Kiev in 1995-1996, and a worthy conclusion of a complex way of thinking about music and stage material in terms of modern performance. The opera *Sokol*, in the interpretation of the Moscow Theater was convincing enough and ac-

curately conveyed the atmosphere of the Russian theatrical traditional plays of the nineteenth century [3].

The musical material in Ukrainian setting was performed in an authentic manner, but the direction was modern. Singers performed their roles in dynamic movements – dance, plastic movement, what heightened the sense of the text.

The text of the dialogues and arias was masterfully translated into Ukrainian by Maxim Strikha, who retained the style of the time of Boccaccio's stories, but brought a spark of contemporary humor. The performance was held so successfully that the press responded with a variety of reviews, then followed the continuation of success at many other festivals: *Seventh Art Berezillya* (Kiev), *Mandrivna akademiya* (Odessa), *Kharkiv Assembly* (Kharkiv), *Lesya's autumn* (Yalta), *Farbotoni* (Kanev) [4].

The concert performance of D. Bortniansky's opera *Alcides* took place in 2002. "Unforgettable was the first spring evening, which combined distant, but united by the universal human aspirations of the times: the time of myths of ancient Greece, the second half of the 18th century and the beginning of the 21st" [5, p. 7].

The performance of the opera *Alcides* was preceded by hard work of the author of the project and the whole staff of the Chamber Opera Company. In spite of the great music of choirs and arias, excessively bulky and extremely tightened recitatives, the action of the opera was delayed and it was clearly contrary to the tempo of the time of the 21st century. The concert performance of two ballet items remained without choreographic solutions, and were performed only as instrumental pieces. Also an obstacle to a full stage production was the part of the main character – Alcides, designed to be performed by a counter-tenor and high tessiturno Fronima's part. All these problems remain to be solved by the future producers of the opera *Alcides*, the fate of this opera in the twenty-first century depends on the successful solution of artistic problems [6].

20 years later after the first production in Ukraine, D. Bortniansky's opera *Sokol* was renewed by the forces of the faculty-student staff of the Art Institute of the Borys Hrinchenko Kyiv University at the Festival *The Old Music in Old Lviv* (Lviv, 2015). The performance took place in the *Italian Yard*, which is similar by its age and style to the time Boccaccio wrote his novels. The authentic performance that preserved innovation directions and the authentic style of the room in which the opera was performed, played a positive role.

The same success had the rendition of *Sokol* at the festival *The Old Music in Old Krakow* in 2016 (Krakow, Poland).

The old opera is alive in the 21st century. Return to the masterpieces of the antiquity fills modern art with special intellectual and artistic sense and animates the cultural life of modern society.

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