

HISTORY AND THEORY OF MUSIC ART AND CULTURE

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FRENCH THEATER OF MADAME EMILIA KELLER IN ODESSA

French Music and Drama Theatre under the direction of a talented entrepreneur m-m Keller worked in Odessa in the 70-s of the XIX century. Analyzed repertoire MDM basis, mainly comprised of comic opera of French composers. There conductor Pagani merit in the promotion of the new at the time of the genre of operetta and the best examples. There a large share of dramatic spectacles by contemporary authors. Meaning of French music and drama theater um Keller is that it continued the tradition of comic opera performance and contributed to the development of a new genre of operetta at the Odessa stage.

Keywords: French theater tradition of comic opera, a new genre of operetta, Odessa scene, contemporary dramatic works.

In 1871 the theatrical life of Odessa was very intense. Four theaters were operating: Italian opera, Italian and Russian dramatic troupes, French troupe. Davidov, Vurm, Venyavskiy, Blunner, orchestra of Hungarian gipsies and choir of amateurs were putting on concerts. At that time it definately was an outstanding phenomenon.

The French musical theater in Odessa was represented by the troupe of Madam Emilia Keller. Since October 1871, every year, from autumn to Lent Madam Keller rented Mariinsky Theater in the Teatralny Lane across the street from the city theater. Due to performances of this troupe Odessa became acquainted with a number of comical operas, operettas, vaudevilles and comedies written before that time.

Opera Comique (Opéra-comique) – French genre of musical theater of XVIII–XIX centuries, based on a combination of musical pieces and conversational dialogues, was formed in its classical form and have been practiced for a long time in the same named Parisian theater. Characteristic features of comic opera – conversational dialogues, recitatives, recitatives and dynamic ensembles attracted new, more democratic audience in the age of Enlightenment.

In the first half of the XIX century comic operas F. Bualdeau's («White lady», 1825), L. Gerold's («Campa», 1831), those by A. Adan and especially D. Ober (prominent example of this genre – «Fra-Diablo», 1830), that have features of romanticism. In 1876 in Odessa the 100th anniversary of the composer Bualdeau was celebrated, who from 1803 to 1811 was a conductor of French theater in St. Petersburg. His opera «White lady» was one of the most popular.

Later both in the literature and in opera realism is established, «winning a decisive victory in the "Carmen" by Bizet (1875). Only formally, – writes A.A. Hozenpud – (alternating vocal and spoken scenes) this work can be attributed to comic operas. «Carmen» – a real musical psychological drama. To some extent this opera served as a model for realistic «verystska» operas.

The troupe of Madam Keller performed for Odessa such operas as «The Daughter of the Regiment» by Donizetti, «Black Domino» by D. Aubert and also his comic opera in 3 acts «Emma or unwise promise» (first in Odessa on 27.11.1871), «White lady» by F. Bualdye (first in Odessa on 10.16.1871) by Deroklya (Brown) and Guerin (Anna).

In season 1872/1873 the opera by A. Adan «If I Were a King» and opera by F. Paera «Cappelmeister or Unexpected Dinner» («Le maître de chapelle, ou Le souper imprévu» (14.01.1872) were performed in Odessa for the first time.

In 1873 operas «Diamonds Crown» («Les diamants de la couronne») by D. Aubert (08/18/1873), «Mignon» by A. Thomas (17/10/1873) and «Love of the Devil» by A. Hrizara (01.02. 1874) were added to the repertoire.

Next season the comic opera in 3 acts «Silver Cup» by Leon Vasser (20/02/1875) was performed «without approved changes», that was pointed out by the censor . Then the opera by Henry Lytolf «Abelard and Heloise» (20/11/1875) was added to the repertoire.

The genre of comic opera was the harbinger of more democratic theatrical performances – operettas. The essence of this genre distinguishes it from the old comic opera, although they sometimes have similar form. As an independent kind of musical theater that opposed itself to comic opera, the operetta had developed in France in the 50–60 years of XIX century. 1855 is considered the year of birth of the genre, that was founded by Jacques Offenbach (1819–1880). He wrote nearly 100 operettas and one opera. He was director and composer who founded his own theater for performing operettas. His operettas – witty and cheerful, full of colorful music, lyric or cascade – were extremely popular in Europe. Thanks to the Offenbach the operetta of Paris became the artistic event of international significance. «To the operetta genre that seemed destined mainly for the entertainment, Offenbach added social sharpness, often turning it into a parody of the Second empire contemporary to him». In the works of Offenbach and playwrights A.Melyak, L. Halevy, H. Kremye, the operetta became acutely topical, socially-oriented art, satirical and journalistic mirror of the era.

The operettes by Jacques Offenbach held the first place in the repertoire of the troupe of Madam E.Keller. The pieces performed were: «Beautiful Helen» (with Ms. E. Keller as Helen) «Wedding at the lamp», «Robbers» (with Ms. E. Keller as daughter of the bandit), «Bluebeard», «The Duchess of Herolshteyn», «Perykola» («Birds singing»), «Orpheus in hell», «Song of Fortunio,» «Castle Toto», «Bridge of Sighs», «Island Tyulipatan», «Cat that turned into woman», «Parisian life», «Genevieve de Brabant», «Red apple», «Wedding in Porsheroni» and operetta in one act «Mr. Shuflëri will stay at home on January 24, 1833, or Soiree with Italians» by Jacques Offenbach and Duke Charles de Morny.

These performances were best remembered for creative achievements of artists. Thus, A. Chyzhevych wrote: «Among the great artists we can mention operetta Prima Donna Mrs. Emilia Keller, who has long been a favorite of Odessa public». «This year as well Offenbach is likely to be favoured by our audience. In the operetta «Bluebeard» as Bulot Ms. Keller appeared forever young and immortal. Derokl starring was uniquely good».

The operetta by Florimon Herve «Mademoiselle Nitouche» (1883) was extremely popular. The composer created more than 120 operettas, and many of them parodied traditional opera forms. F. Herve was the first to create a genre of comedy operetta «Little Faust» (1869). On December 12, 1874, this operetta was performed at the benefit of Dyuno, involving Tang, Blyashe, Dunayev. «Not bad music, light texture» but a parody of «Faust» by Charles Gounod itself is «vulgarity», – noted the critic.

«Madame Angoua's Daughter» and «Tea Flower» by Charles Lecoq, «Journey to China» by F. Bazin, «Nine brides and no groom» by F. von Zuppe, «Duck on three legs» by E. Jonas were performed often.

A large share of the repertoire consisted of dramatic works. This period in the history of French theater was marked by bright blooming of vaudeville comedy type. The play «Treasurebox» by E.Labish – one of the most talented playwrights - was performed.

The works of Dumas-son marked the transition from romanticism to realism. Odessites saw his plays such as «The Lady with the Camellias», «Diane de Lis», «Demi monde» (starring the drama coryphaeus of Odessa French stage Mr. Dersen). In the work of Dumas-son the ideas of love and family of mid-1850s were used, when a woman of dubious reputation was a danger to the bourgeois family. But «the theater belongs to all segments of society» – declared Dumas - son in the preface-manifesto to his plays.

Among the pieces of other authors: «Delilah» by A. Feil, «Two orphans» by Charles Dickens, «Serafina» and «Uncle Sam» by V. Sardou, «By right of conquest» by E. Legouve, «Marquis de Villemereuil» by J. Sand, «Hunchback» by Fevalya, «Sphinx» by A. Feil. «The maiden of Belle Île» by A. Dumas, a comedy in 5 acts «Young doctor» by A. Anise-Bourgeois, «Love displeasure» by J.B. Moliere, «Mother's blessing or Poverty and Honor» by A.-F. Danner and G. Lyemuan, etc. In six months the operetta troupe performed 21 operettes, 23 comedies, 7 dramas and a concert of Remini featuring Marek and all of the French troupe.

Season 1875/1876 was not easy. Ms Emilia Keller opened subscription to their performances and invited new artists. After operetta by J. Offenbach the critic determined: «The troupe managed by Emilia Keller undertook to entertain us among the boredom of the nature and pocket and weather.» In the operetta «Bluebeard» the old friends – Emilia Keller, Mestmaher, Derokl and Durand and new artists - Mrsrs. Dyuroshe, Bourgeois, Ms. Roux, Toten, Dersen performed». Totally 127 performances were held – of operetta and cascade music. The same troupe also performed in Odessa the next season.

Assessing today the performance of French actors, it is possible to state that it was not a tour, but a real theater. The theater had a large troupe that comprised of the best artists invited from Bordeaux and Toulouse: Rosa Friket (Madam Guerin), Madam E. Keller, Mr. Derokl, Mestmaher, Mosmand, Jenö and Rene, director Monbren. N.I. Moiseev wrote that the Mariinsky Theatre «left wonderful memories in the hearts of the citizens of Odessa. His stage alternated French comedy and operetta of Mrs E. Keller with famous comedians Shamonen and Mestmaher». Many dramatic performances of contemporary authors were shown. In 1876 the chief director of French theater was S. Levy, the 2nd director Lekar, designer Goujon, 1st conductor G. Pagani.

Giovanni Pagani was a regular conductor of the French theater. And it might be added that he directed its repertory policy. The basis of this policy constituted operatic works of A. Adan, F. Bualdye, L. Wasser, A. Hrizar, Donizetti, D. Aubert, A. Tom ... It is also a credit to the conductor that he actively promoted the new genre at that time, its best examples – the operetta by J. Offenbach, F. Hervé, Charles Lecoq, F. von Zuppe, Charles Lecoq ...

Pagani had authority and received commendable reviews of his performing style: «French opera orchestra behaves better (than Italian), and its conductor Pagani monitors the ensemble more and does not dampen the artists». Good that «the French troupe will come to

us in the coming season with the same members», – wrote «Novorossiia Telegraph». It seems that it is due to the conductor a French theater had the opportunity to work in another country for a number of years. Pagani often called Ivan Hiatsintovich, he was «one of them», because since 1867 he worked as choirmaster in Odessa troupe of Foletti entrepreneur. In years 1880–1890 G. Pagani was recognized as one of the leading figures of musical culture of Ukraine.

French Music and Drama Theatre under the management of talented entrepreneur Madam E. Keller continued the tradition of comic opera and contributed to the development of a new genre of operetta on Odessa stage.

With great regret «Odessa Herald» reported on July 15, 1888 that «recently in Paris a French actress famous in Odessa Madam Keller died in the age of 54. She was an outstanding actress of the theaters of «Variety» and «Pa-le-Royal», had shining beauty and richness, died in poverty».

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