

Bai Quan

**OPERA MELODY AS A SUBJECT OF MUSICOLOGICAL DISCOURSE:
TO ARTICULATION OF THE ISSUE**

The article under consideration deals with the actual criteria for evaluating the phenomenon of opera melody, there are outlined ways for creating a unified theory of opera melodies. Generalization of the provisions of a number of musicological and cultural studies makes it possible to single out a textual approach to the study of opera melodies, to determine the main ways of its characterization. The interrelations of the operatic melody and the semantic modes of verbal communication are considered.

Keywords: opera melody, operatic melos, melodic theme, artistic communication, semantics, "psychological polyphony".

The creation of the theory of opera melody remains one of the vital tasks of musicology for several reasons. Firstly, the melodic material of the opera provides its special artistic appeal and expresses its intonational-stylistic specificity; Secondly, the category of opera melody was not yet a special subject of musicology; Thirdly, the concept of melody needs development and refinement from the aesthetic, genre-style and intonational-stylistic aspects. Opera poetics in its historical formation is not only closely associated with the phenomenon of melody, but also contributes greatly to its semantic isolation. Therefore, the study of this phenomenon allows us to clarify the general musicological approaches to melodic "tasks" and the possibilities of music.

Proceeding from what has been said, the main task of this article is to determine the basic communicative prerequisites and principles for the formation of opera melodies as a semantic paradigm of musical art, professional musical creativity, not only composer's, but also performer's.

The concept of melody as a single and general method of organizing of musical matter contributed to its degeneration into the category of melodics, which is positioned as one of the factors of musical thinking and one of the universals of the musical and creative process. O.Sheludyakova even affirms that melody was the primary, primordial way of music existence as a saying, and although for a centuries-old history of music it changed, according to the understanding of music in each of the epochs "melody exists always" [8].

The author tries to explain the fact that in both folklore and monodic epoch there exists a kind of "melodic utterance", or rather, there is a musical principle that can be interpreted as melodic, and the concepts of monody and monophony treat them as identical

and interchangeable with respect to the phenomenon of melody. It is just as difficult to agree with the last statement, as with the idea that polyphony is a polyphonic form of being of melodic material, and homophony "singled out one melodic line as the bearer of the main meaning, concentrating in it the essence of the musical utterance and removing all other voices into homogeneous accompaniment layer. It was when homophonic-harmonious thinking appeared as a way of existence of music that the melody burst free, integrating both horizontal and vertical forces of interaction in itself "[8, p. 5].

Emergence of a melodic plan of musical expressiveness marks a definite and rather late stage in the development of the means of musical expression as an already autonomous artistic and specific sphere. The melody as a specifically musical phenomenon can be judged when, firstly, the music has already been autonomized from the word and ritual action; Secondly, the artistic and communicative functions of musical sounding (impact) were determined; Thirdly, the intra-musical criteria for differentiating techniques based on their figurative significance were formed. In general, it can be argued that the melodic sphere of music reaches artistic maturity when the structure and semantics of music as a text (textual levels of musical creativity) are determined.

The textual approach found in the work of A. Samoylenko allows us to add melodic category to melody, melody, and melodic concepts as expressing the properties and qualities of musical intonation, allowing us to distinguish stable types of musical semantics [5].

From this point of view, the leading genre-semantic dominants of music arise in connection with the textological tendencies of music, such as oratorio, motor and melodic, and the author points out that these tendencies were formed in accordance with the historical development of the main genre spheres of music (vocal-choral, instrumental-symphonic and chamber), and their interaction is provided by those forms that occupy a transitional transitive position, including operatic ones.

Thus, a rapprochement of melodiousness with the chamber tendency is revealed, from the priority of genre feature that transforms into a qualitative stylistic index. There is an idea that the separation of melodiousness and melodic thinking is the epiphenomenon of the style self-definition of music, that is, the emphasis on the style of the musical sound and meaning (the musical text) as a separate value vector of the self-movement of music. In this case, it is correct to assume that the phenomenon of individualized and characteristic melody accompanies the formation and isolation of individual style, style as a personal factor of

musical art – hence, style as a phenomenon of composer's poetics.

As the musicologist writes, "... in chamber music" is expressed unconsciousness of isolation, individuality of a person, his uniqueness, but also his loneliness, as well as the conditionality of overcoming the boundaries of personal individuation as the part of "the other", at the same time the importance of such participation through conscious effort as the only possibility to reduce the disunity of people. The idea of personal value is coordinated in this case with ideas about the psychological thesaurus of a person; the boundaries between man and the world are taken deep into the personal consciousness "[5, p. 309].

The sphere of melodiousness reveals a complex composition, because it includes stylistic figures of madrigalisms, ariosity, songwriting, romance, recitative, declamatory, nocturne, many other generalized and individualized specifically musical intonational syntagmas, including a special sonorous melos. Its distinctive feature is vocal-voice intonation, and not communal-choral, as in the oratorio textual sphere, but an individualized solo, freer and more easily absorbing instrumental turns. It has a reliance on the horizontal (the subordination of vertical patterns), isolation of the elements of the theme – melodies, increase of discreteness in order to increase the expressiveness of the intonation horizon, the accuracy of the melodic relief, growing out of its "points", independence, separation of each moment of tone articulation, the predominance of the lyrical beginning as in connection with the sensual "objectivity" of the musical sound, and in connection with the individuation of this feeling, with the appeal to the personal "ego" at the same time as the author's "ego".

According to the musicologist, the levels and groups of text formulas of music as a single text space are comparable with generic genre "themes" – epic, dramatic (tragic), lyrical. For each of these themes mentioned are peculiar their compositional "subjects" and intonational "images". Their interaction in the process of historical evolution of music enhances the transitional properties of the musical text and contributes to the emergence of a vast field of polystylistic, respectively polysemantic musical figures (often authorized) that can be considered as "intertextual".

It is in this intertextual meaning that operatic melos enters the memory of culture. It becomes the basis for the development of professional European musical creativity and the distinctive feature of the musical syntax of the New Time, conditioned by the interest in the psychological sphere of human existence. The opera melody integrates the intonations of solo musical "utterances", simultaneously divides and typifies their figurative meanings in

accordance with the plot-scenic position and the appointment of the opera characters. Its common content factors are movement – as a reproduction of the dynamics of the relationships of actors – and experience – as a process of understanding these relationships. Thus, the opera melody marks the temporal beginning, is a temporal formation, takes place in a certain compositional time and coordinates its essential supporting moments.

Momentality and length are the antinomical properties of the melodic structure, which are in some ways controversial: the more "intonational moments" of the melodic formation of the opera image, the more important is their development, repetition and variant fixation in the general structure of the operatic image as its musical and semantic equivalent, the more active is their entry in the general musical-dramatic context of the opera.

O. Sheludyakova rightly notes that the peak of melodic thinking becomes the late Romantic style. Equally important is its intention to compare the concepts of melody and theme when considering the form-building functions of melodic material. The given author creates a kind of anthology of melody definitions, which makes it possible to discover their common feature: the recognition in the melody, first of all, of the linear (horizontal) sequence of musical tones that achieves structural and semantic conjugation as a special (individual and single) "utterance" [8]. Thus let us note that the textured monophony, usually attributed to the melody, is not an unshakable condition, as the melodic contour can diversify in various ways vertically, grow with echoes and counterpoints, without losing the importance of the relief and unique intonational event. Moreover, the melodic plan of the opera includes both texture-harmonic and timbre-register characteristics, from vocal voices (recall that from Greek *melodia* is a song, singing) is transmitted by instrumental, "charges" the latter with its *positive intonational energy* (see.: [4]).

The semantic functions of the melody are due to its address, in all meanings and genre positions, to that higher state of positive resonance of man with the world, which is defined as the state of love. "Music gives way only to love, but love is a melody ...": this poetic line by A. Pushkin can serve as an introductory postulate for the musicological study of operatic melos.

Zheng Jing's research allows us to state that the singling out of the melodic paradigm, the development of a particular melodic style in the operatic work of the composers of the romantic era is conditioned by the operatic specification of the theme of love. Due to the embodiment of this theme as the leading and uniting all plot twists of opera action, the

opera melody turns out to be "the main solo musical characteristic associated with the accumulation of various semantic properties and the dialogization of stylistic material" [7, p. 37].

The Chinese musicologist, mastering the European opera tradition, suggests using the concept of "melody theme", noting that the melodic thematic characteristic of the image of the opera main character represents the individualized side of this image as well as its generalized meaning. Although the semantic model of the opera as a whole is broader and more diverse than the figurative and semantic confinement of the melody theme, the conceptual orientation of the opera design, its ideological concretization entirely depends on the individual interpretation of the "melodic image" of the main character (several leading characters, but with a functional advantage of one of them) [7, p. 149-150].

According to her observation, firstly, the theme of love is realized in opera and in the effective-personal plane, and as musical-melodic, expressed by means of musical stylistics, and in its second form it directly embodies the image of an operatic character, connecting to it all means of intonational context. "In connection with the development of the theme of love in opera, the subject of action is the voice of a person – his ability to individually operate freely with his own voice, as well as individual timbre roles, specific timbre qualities of actors who oppose the general timbre choral or orchestral side of the opera" [7, p. 163].

Secondly, the author reveals the special significance of the lyrical principle, the ways of lyrical comprehension in the formation of the musical language of the opera and in the entire organizational system of operatic poetics. In her opinion, it is the predominance of the lyric that manifests itself in the leading meaning of the vocal-melodic themes of the opera, determines its stylistic terms, among which the recital and hymnism are polar [7, p. 165].

Turning to the analysis of specific operatic works, Zheng Jing finds in the operas of P.Tchaikovsky the interaction of generalizing, positive melodic constructions of the synthetic intonation type, and detailed local intonational formulas, "state motives", called to activate the action, becoming melodic signs of the psychological state of opera character and specific communicative characteristics.

Particular attention is paid to the leitmotif system of opera text, thanks to which the melody theme is able to act not only as a semantic component of the opera work, but also as a separate representative, which, more often acquires personalized features.

The melodic material of the opera reveals the immanent aesthetic and dramatic patterns associated with the interaction of the verbal and musical factors of the operatic speech of the characters: "The loss of melodic beauty, rigidity, stiffness, recitative restraint, on the one hand, as the last boundary of the verbal individualization of the character's voice, and the range of development of the melodic (melodious) theme, with all the signs of lyrical melos and with the advantage of a hymnal origin, on the other, symbolizing the triumph of love and its belonging to the whole world – such are the concepts of love, recreating its main antinomy in D. Puccini's operas *La Boheme* and P. Tchaikovsky "The Queen of Spades" (partly – "Eugene Onegin" and "Mazepa"). Depending on which of these concepts becomes final, the opera acquires a lyric-tragedy or lyric-epic genre mood. Note that such a polarization – conceptualization occurs in those operatic works, which, according to the style guidelines of the authors, develop a tragic interpretative trend of the theme of love.

Thus also in operas with an epic interpretive tendency, the main musical-thematic concept of love, that is, a direct musical "explanation in love," is related to the stylistic sphere of hymnism enriched with song, arioso vocal melodic phrases, and other stylistic epiphenomena" [7, p. 153-154].

Consequently, in operatic melos there is a kind of "horizontal polystylistics" or horizontal alignment and the antithesis of contrasting stylistic complexes, which serves to reveal the "psychological polyphony" of the leading operatic images. At the same time operatic melody does not simplify – does not flatten – dramatic difficulties, contradictions in the musical fate of the operatic character, but imposes the functions of their explanation and resolution.

"The musical sound takes on the functions of a poetic generalization, free from the semantic regulations of the word, which leads to an increase in the role of the symphonic side of the opera. On the other hand, melodic musical material promotes an exalted poetization of the character of the actor, providing for the opposite possibility – a movement towards a prosaic decline, in the case of dominance of verbal and speech material, recitative intonations, up to half-singing-half-conversation or "meagre" speech [7, p. 158].

Opera melody concentrates and peculiarly sublimates the semantic modes of verbal communication. Relying on some cultural and social-psychological work [1-3; 9], there have been selected those that are most significant for the intonational content of the musical text of the opera and its performance presentation:

- purity of intonation – the accuracy of tonal positions and their temporal rhythmic correlation, the distinctness of verbal articulation – contributes to the greatest degree to "aesthetic benevolence", imaginative clarity and "intelligibility" of the created sound image;

- dynamic flexibility – a variety of timbre gradations of voice and agogical nuances, freedom and a measure of loudness – contribute to the possession of time and space of sound as a process of articulation of musical meaning;

- objectness – awareness and intellectual inclusion – ensure the level and nature of the personification of the musical image, the depth of penetration into it;

- finally, empathy and suggestiveness – feeling and the ability to reproduce the experience shown in the sound – create the emotional power of artistic persuasion.

In connection with the suggestive properties of operatic melos, which are common to the verbal and musical levels of artistic communication, the notions of "*melodic of the voice*", *emotional expression and intentionality* are distinguished.

So, the first is characterized by the fact that the melodic voice contributes to better penetration into the consciousness and subconsciousness of the listener, allows to establish the initial contact in the process of communication; The second is expressed in a stronger emotional coloration which causes empathy expressed by the feelings expressed and the emergence of emotions, equivalent to the "tone of emotions" of the addressee of the artistic dialogue; The third leads to the fact that the perception of listeners acquires a particularly effective character, since "in the speaker's voice there appeared a certain coloring, a timbre that is subconsciously perceived as a semantic indication, concretization-actualization of a possible relation, experience and / or act" [9].

The intensity of an opera melody is its ability to generate "musical-sound gestures" as its own psychological objectivity. According to O. Katayeva, "sound gestures related to the melody of sounding speech, reduce the verbal text, replacing words and including in dialogue some or other additional meanings. Acting as an independent replica or included in a statement consisting of verbal and non-verbal elements, the sound gesture reveals the richest resources purely informative as well as expressive "[3].

Thus, the characteristics of opera melody as an artistic and communicative phenomenon regarding the psychological possibilities of the musical formation of the human voice can be defined as personification-characterization, reflexivity and semioticity – psychological objectivity and weight. It is aimed at actualization of the personal lyrical

aspect of the musical image as an experience of human sympathy overcoming psychological contradictions and providing a semantic unity of artistic experience.

REFERENCES:

1. Asaf'ev B. Muzykal'naja forma kak process. Kn. 1–2 / B. Asaf'ev. – L. : Muzgiz, Leningr. otd-nie, 1963. – 378 s.
2. Asaf'ev B. Rechevaja intonacija / B. Asaf'ev. – M. ; L., 1965.
3. Kataeva O. Kommunikativnye osnovy melodiki golosa lichnosti [Jelektronnyj resurs] / O. V. Kataeva, O. V. Romah. – Rezhim dostupa : <http://www.analiculturolog.ru/journal/archive/item/622-communicative-framework-melodic-voice-personality.html>
4. Kurt Je. Romanticheskaja garmonija i ee krizis v «Tristane» Vagnera / Je. Kurt ; per. s nem. G. Balter ; predisl. i komment. M. Jetingera. – M. : Muzyka, 1975. – 551 s.
5. Samojlenko A. Dialog kak muzykal'no-kul'turologicheskij fenomen: metodologicheskie aspekty sovremennogo muzykoznanija : diss. ... dokt. iskusstv. / A. I. Samojlenko. – Odessa, 2002. – 426 s.
6. Tjulin Ju. Muzykal'naja forma : [učebnik dlja muz. uchilishh] / [obshh. red. prof. Ju. N. Tjulina]. – M. : Muzyka, 1974. – 359 s.
7. Chzhen Czin. Tema ljubvi kak jesteticheskaja i muzykal'no-intonacionnaja paradigma opernogo zhanra : dis. ... kand. iskusstvovedenija ; spec. 17.00.03 – muzykal'noe iskusstvo. – Odessa, 2013. – 184 s.
8. Sheludjakova O. Fenomen melodiki v muzyke pozdnego romantizma : dis. ... d-ra iskusstvovedenija : 17.00.02 / Oksana Evgen'evna Sheludjakova. – Ekaterinburg, 2006. – 710 s.
9. Jeffektivnaja komunikacija: istorija, teorija, praktika : slovar'-spravochnik. – M., 2005. – 960 s.