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**SEMANTICS OF THE IMAGE OF DON QUIXOTE IN THE OPERA WORKS OF
J. MASSENET**

The article considers Jules Massenet's opera "Don Quixote" from the point of view of the embodiment in it of the eternal image of Don Quixote, created by M. de Cervantes in the immortal novel "The Ingenious Hidalgo Don Quixote of La Mancha." Particular attention is paid to the disclosure of the features of the composite structure and dramaturgic lines associated with free plot handling, including with the appeal to the literary "variation" on the topic of "Don Quixote" – play by Jacques Le Lorrain "Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance." Moreover, the specifics of musical-intonation "vocabulary" of the opera hero is revealed, allowing to determine the possible way of verbal form of artistic expression of Don Quixote image.

Keywords: Don Quixote, (eternal) image, Cervantes' novel, dramaturgic lines.

The greatest novel of the Renaissance, "The Ingenious Hidalgo Don Quixote of La Mancha" excites the minds of readers all over the world for more than four centuries, and the image of its main character Don Quixote has long ago gone beyond not only literature but also art in general, elevated to the rank of psychological categories, treated as the type of thinking and behavior.

Appealing to Cervantes's novel, whatever artistic task is set, is always determined by the artist's desire to understand the diversity of the senses of this work. The novel created and creates speculations, reflection, debates, "demonstrating" the quality of dialogueness of inter-author inter-age positions, as evidenced by the thousands of written pages, the emergence of more and more new books and articles.

The research field of Don Quixote image is quite extensive. With all the differences of interpretations almost all who wrote of the Knight of La Mancha agree on the statement that he is a universal image, expressing eternal properties of the human spirit, and rightly rank him as "eternal companions" of humanity.

The plot of Cervantes' novel and the image of the main character created by him have from olden times moved to the music field, attracting the attention of composers of various historical periods and national schools. However, if there were attempts in literary studies to summarize the experience of interpreting the theme of Don Quixote (works of S. Piskunova [11,12], V. Bagno [1], and others.), in the national musicology there are no special works dedicated to this area.

The literary hero of Cervantes came to music area through the operatic genre, but then, no less successfully implemented himself in the sphere of program symphonism. This allows revealing the peculiarities of nonverbal and verbal forms of artistic expression of the Cervantes' character.

Many composers in their operatic works turned to the novel of Cervantes, among them - A. Caldara (1727, 5-act tragicomedy "Don Quixote at the Court of the Duchess"), G. A. Ristori (1727, 3-act opera "One fool will create a lot, or Don Quixote"), G. Ph. Telemann (1761, opera serenade "Don Quixote at Camacho's Wedding"), G. Paisiello (1769, comic opera in 3 acts "Don Quixote de La Mancha"), W. Kienzl (1898, "Don Quixote") and others. However, we, as an analytical material applied to the most famous opera of Don Quixote – Opera by J. Massenet.

"Don Quixote" by Massenet first appeared in 1910 on the stage of Monte Carlo and had a stunning success on the world theater scene, which is still considerable nowadays. However, many believe that the popularity of this composition was ensured by famous Russian bass F. Chaliapin, who became the first leading actor and director. It was also he whom the composer dedicated the opera.

The heroic comedy in 5 acts, as Massenet defines his opera, is based on the play written by French poet Jacques de Lorraine, "Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance" (or "Knight with a long figure"), which was shown on the French stages a few years earlier¹. This play, according to various sources, is a free adaptation of the plot of the famous novel by Cervantes.

The opera libretto was written by Henri Ken, with whom Massenet's creative collaboration lasted for many years. However, not many people were impressed by the story created in the opera by Massenet. Thus, G. Prokofiev in the "Russian Musical Newspaper" wrote about the first performance of the opera at the Bolshoi Theater with the participation of Chaliapin the following: "The story of Don Quixote, even in abbreviated, "children's" editions, which are all familiar for

¹ We did not manage to find the original text of J. de Lorraine's play

everybody, gives a lot of advantageous moments to the composer ... But Massenet's "Don Quixote" exceeded all expectations. From comic misfortunes of Don Quixote only a few touches of old-Italian buffoonery left, the serious side – the nobility and the fantastic personality of Don Quixote – turned into treacly scenes – one more absurd and boring than the other ... Ken Henri has a chance to eclipse the fame of predecessors and become a household name for rough scenic waste paper ... what extent of bad taste art can libretto reach in the pursuit of a clever and touching story "[11, p.1060-1061].

The scene parallels of the opera and the novel are obvious: the main characters of the works – Don Quixote, Sancho, and Dulcinea (their timbre roles are matched as follows: Don Quixote – bass, Sancho – baritone, Dulcinea – mezzo-soprano.). However, Dulcinea, in contrast to the works of Cervantes, where the image is fictional, appears as a real character in the opera.

The composition of the opera includes the novel battle scenes with windmills (II act, on Chapter VIII of the first volume), and a modified version of Chapter LX of the second book – the scene with the robbers (III act).

Act I gives the exposition of main characters (the events unfolding on the square in front of Dulcinea's house) and the introduction (Dulcinea promises Don Quixote her favor if he returns her necklace stolen by robbers). In acts II and III the plot develops – in search of the necklace for his beloved, Don Quixote and his squire are involved in a series of comic events. Both act IV and I are associated mainly with the image of Dulcinea; here is when the climax occurs – the Knight returns jewelry to his beloved and asks for her hand and heart, but in response receives rejection, since for Dulcinea their agreement was only a joke. Act V (the shortest, but the most dramatic one) is the second culmination of the image development of the main character and, at the same time, tragic denouement of the act: refused lover Don Quixote dies in Sancho's arms.

Unlike Cervantes's novel, at the beginning of the opera we meet the characters that did not appear in the novel – lovely Dulcinea's fans – Juan Rodriguez and Pedro Garcia. The choice of these characters' voices is peculiar and

determined, apparently, by the comedic interpretation of images – two of them are tenors, two – soprano. In the third act big role is played by the speech dialogues, since the parties of the robbers and their chieftain are speaking ones.

"Don Quixote" by Massenet is Grand opera, as indicated by the 5-act structure with lots of crowd scenes (in I, III and IV acts). However, the author's genre definition of the opera – "heroic comedy" appeals to the genre of French comic opera, which is confirmed by the appropriate semantic satirical-buffoonish interpretation of Sancho's image, comedic ensembles with the quartet of Dulcinea's fans, interlocutory parties of the robbers. Yet the dominant genre model, in our opinion, is lyric opera, because the focus of "Don Quixote" is a love story line (the conflict), the characters of the main characters are romanticized and the tragic end of the opera is quite relevant to the spirit of the genre.

In each act of the opera Don Quixote opens from different sides, showing his best qualities: generosity (appearing in the square with Sancho, Don Quixote asks his squire to give money to beggars and cripples), talent (plays the mandolin, has good saber skills), passion and devotion in love, courage and fearlessness (in the battle with giant windmills, and in the fight with the robbers) and, most importantly, manifests himself as a true Christian (his "holiness" a heart of gold, a strong belief in kindness and love conquers even the crowd of robbers and touches the heart of frivolous Dulcinea).

The vocal party of Don Quixote is very bright, it is distinguished by the intonations of heroic, courageous character, reliance on quarto-fifths intonations (even his confession in love to Dulcinea is accompanied by the leitinterval quarts reflecting his heroic essence). The sensual side of Don Quixote image reveals through lyric, song and romance nature of love theme.

For the first time we learn about Don Quixote's fascination with Dulcinea from the dialogic stage of secondary characters Rodrigo and Juan. When at the beginning of the conversation the suitors were discussing the girl's beauty, the violins were playing gently her theme from the arioso in Andante tempo, but when it comes to Don Quixote, the tempo dramatically changes to Allegro maestoso and

the orchestra in pianissimo performed the motive, the initial element of which will be the basis of the motive of the fight, based on a brief, "angular" upstream upbeat fifths course with further dotted downward movement (in this theme similarities can be seen with the main theme of Dulcinea's arioso).

Before Don Quixote's appearance active-effective fight motif sounds (will further appear in the corresponding scene), which is based on the movement of the triad sounds (VI stage in G-dur tonality).

One of the most striking moments not only of this act but also the entire opera is the famous serenade of Don Quixote "When the heaven gets dark and the stars starts shining brightly", performed under Dulcinea's balcony to the sound of mandolin (its sound is imitated by the tremolo and pizzicato of the violins, harps and celesta sounds) – this is the love theme of Don Quixote (in A-dur tonality). (It is often repeated in the opera either in the orchestra, or in the party of Don Quixote, and is found in act I, in the interlude to act III, in the very act III, and in modified form in in act IV.)

The love arioso of Knight de La Mancha is interrupted by the appearance of Juan, "Who is singing so sadly here?" on the theme of love theme of the main character, which now transfers into the orchestra. The music is gradually dramatized and the intense recitative dialogue of Juan and Don Quixote is growing into their battle on swords on the fight theme. Here in the orchestra Dulcinea's theme can be found – the musical "confirmation" of the characters' quarrel cause.

Never bringing the fight to its logical conclusion, Don Quixote again picks up the mandolin and continues singing his serenade; Dulcinea joins him, "finishing" his dialogues. They both "talk" about love. Using in this short in length fragment, consisting of a few phrases, the same musical vocabulary in the parties of the characters, Massenet demonstrates that Dulcinea like did Don Quixote, is also longing for personal happiness.

The next fight on swords of Juan and Don Quixote is already separated by Dulcinea herself, the appearance of whom is marked by her coquettish arioso "I love when the knights are prideful" (it starts a large dialogic scene of Don Quixote

and Dulcinea). Here again the external, demonstrative modus of the heroine is switched. The musical material of Don Quixote retains its romantic "touch" through introducing in the orchestra party of intonation elements of love theme that sound in his words, "... I will give everything for you, I am ready to conquer the whole world." On the other hand, in the knight's image heroism is underlined, associated with the fight theme (for example, the words "Oh, if I had known before! I'll go tomorrow, I will go!").

The second act is dedicated mainly to the disclosure of Sancho Panza's image: during the act he is trying to convince his master that Dulcinea is laughing at him, but he was not listening. Don Quixote is presented here at the beginning of the act: he writes a love poem in honor of his ladylove (extremely simple, repetitive melodic on staccato, "appearing" with the dialogue of the oboe, resembling a children's song, moreover, the the protagonist sings the song passages on the syllables "la , la, la").

However, the second act is the culmination of the comic line associated with the protagonist's madness. On the horizon the outline of windmills is shown – this is the beginning of the final scene of the second act: Don Quixote, mistaking them for giants, pounces the wings of the mills and hangs, stuck in one of them; calls Sancho for help. This episode with remark "vigorously" is characterized by the vocal theme of Don Quixote, heroic character, with frequent pausing, built on the broad interval strokes (from a quart to a seventh) on the words "Giant! Giant! Big giant!" The energetic rhythm imitates horse race.

The third act is presented as the richest in terms of changing attitudes and the crossing of dramaturgic lines. The plot depicts the following: Don Quixote believes to have found the footprints leading into the den of robbers, Sancho begs him to return, but Don Quixote is adamant; with nightfall Sancho fell sleep, and Don Quixote is standing on guard when suddenly the robbers appear. Massenet here gives not only the development of the main love line of the opera (after all Don Quixote makes his journey in the name of love), but also outlines such types of conflict, as moral and ethical (in this act it is conceived and receives its

denouement) associated with the collision of lifestyles of the robbers and the very knight. We agree with the opinion of Yu. Kremlev that in this act Massenet "masterfully combines the humorous, scary and touching ... Quiet footsteps of robbers in the dark – pizzicato of the strings, Scherzo of the bandits defeated Don Quixote, his prayer to the sounds of the organ ..." [5, . 206-207].

After the twilight scene *Molto lento* episode stands out on the love theme of Don Quixote, but now in D-dur tonality and more gently, against the background of harps arpeggio, the violin theme runs on *ppp* (on the words "When the stars appear"). After the dialogue of bandits and their chief, comes their song "Oh, he is thin, thin as a mortal sin!", with abrupt syllables, often paused, replaced with second annoying singing of the last syllable of the phrase.

In response, sounds a theme of choral composition in the party of Don Quixote ("My God, please accept my soul") in the organ (chordal) accompaniment (es-moll tonality). By this musical feature Massenet confirms the Christian roots of the knight image, the more so in the next, IV act Sancho openly compares him to Christ.

Further, Don Quixote's dialogues come back to more peculiar of him heroic direction: "I am a knight. This is my answer" (the organ accompaniment is removed and the string group accompanying his party, re-enters, music line is built on the dotted descending fourths). The culmination and at the same time, the denouement of the conflict types marked by us in this act is the episode of *Largo religioso* "Lay hands on us, give us forgiveness" on *ppp*: the party of the bandits chanting on the sound of *g*, is accompanied by the orchestra by the choral theme of Don Quixote.

The first part of act IV is dedicated to disclosing the image of Dulcinea, who, dropping the mask of coquetry, reveals her emotional experiences, because she had never known true love (see. *arioso-serenade c-moll* "When love is gone").

Don Quixote returns to her with the necklace. Just as promised, he asks Dulcinea's hand. But the hero scares the girl with his perseverance and incomprehensible to her "supernatural" love. She confesses that she is created

entirely for another life and altogether is not the ideal she seems to Don Quixote. Guests laugh at the knight.

The musical material in this scene is quite diverse and the heroism of Don Quixote is almost not expressed. In general, in the fourth act he shows lyrical side of his nature. Only at the beginning of the protagonist's appearance on the stage the orchestra plays the motif of the fight, as a reminder of the events which the knight faced (and also in the name of love).

The central scene in the fourth act is the one of Don Quixote and Dulcinea's explanations (*Lento cantabile espressivo*), starting with the arioso of the heroine, "Yes, I understand you": all the orchestral fabric is pervaded by significantly transformed love theme of Don Quixote (Massenet retains only its *As-dur* tonality and the initial downward quart intonation), after which on the same modified topic the duet of main characters sounds. The intonational commonality of their parties (arioso) indicates empathy, which Dulcinea starts feeling to Don Quixote.

The last act, in our view, is one of the most mentally challenging in the whole opera and represents the tragic outcome of the story of the La Mancha knight. Massenet in a very subtle and true way conveys the inner state of the hero. Following the introductory powerful downward unisons of the woodwinds and the horns quiet string unisons sound, of which theme the strict polyphonic type "detached" music is developed. The party of Don Quixote is of recitative-declamatory character, once rhythmized, then excited, built on small phrases, interrupted by pauses (expressing weakness and loss of vitality) and shouts of Sancho. The knight, feeling the approach of death, remembers of the promise given to Sancho and says: "Take the island that has always been with me. I give it to you. Look how blue the waves are splashing on the sand ..." So, Don Quixote gives the island of dreams to his faithful friend...

Behind the scenes, accompanied by an ensemble of violin, viola and harp sounds an excerpt from Dulcinea's song "Love has come to an end" from act IV. The knight's death with the name of the beloved on his lips is a dramatic denouement of the opera's main dramaturgic line: hearing the sound of the beloved

voice, Don Quixote dies. It is noteworthy, however, that the tonal plan of this act is changing, moving from minor sphere to major tonality: g-moll – Es-dur – e-moll – E-dur – Ges-dur – F-dur (ends on the tonic triad).

Major colored finale of the opera acknowledges, in our opinion, the idea that the physical death for Don Quixote becomes a transition to another world as the acquisition of immortality, purification, release from sufferings. Don Quixote's death can be characterized by Goethe's words: "Everyone will happily lose themselves to find themselves in the infinite." From now on, Don Quixote, endowed with the quality of eternity, is granted to the world.

Thus, the end of the opera about Don Quixote with dramatic climax, balanced ethically oriented orchestral epilogue, creates a special, post-tragic effect.

Summing up, it should be noted that J. Massenet managed to create a bright, distinctive musical interpretation of Don Quixote image. While the composer allows freedom in operating the storylines of the novel, the ideological and thematic parallels with the work of Cervantes are obvious. Thus, among the protagonists, constituting the obligatory pair Don Quixote – Sancho Panza (with the image of which mainly the sphere of the comic is associated) and Dulcinea, who, finding "flesh and blood", is revealed as a semantically complex character (Dulcinea, a beauty-coquette, at the feet of whom are a lot of men, also wants to experience the feeling of true love).

The dramaturgic stages of the primary love line development in the opera composition by J. Massenet are marked with particular clarity of expression. The psychologization of the images of Don Quixote and Sancho, and Dulcinea raise this work to a higher level of semantic perception.

The substantial capacity of Don Quixote story created by Cervantes has created and continues creating many art interpretations of the novel text and its protagonist. The eternal image of the knight of La Mancha occupies a prominent place in the music art, where it becomes the object of not only various genre and inter-genre readings, but also significantly differing interpretations of the work of the same genre-specific mode.

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