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EROS AND ETHOS AS IMAGINATIVE DOMINANTS AND VALUE ORIENTATIONS OF MUSICAL ART

The article under consideration deals with the problem of the embodiment of the images of Eros and Ethos in music in the aspect of the cultural and creative function of musical art. Intentionally, particular characteristics of the artistic refraction of the images of Eros and Ethos is singled out in academic and popular music in the context of the production of value orientations and sense of culture. The directions of cultural studies of the images of Eros and Ethos are suggested as figurative dominants and values of musical art.

Keywords: Eros, Ethos, musical art, cultural values, academic music, pop music.

Music as a form of culture is a mechanism of reflection and production of value meanings of human being. Accordingly, it is inevitably connected with the basic foundations of human existence, ethical in nature, and, in particular, the relation to the Other, the relationship with the Other, the need to "share oneself" with the Other, in realization of one's absolute value for the Other, and also accepting oneself by this to others. Ethical - because only through the Other (Other as an occasion and cause) can realize the moral and ethic potential of a single person. And as the Other can be quite different values: from the World, Life in general – to a certain person. All these assumptions constitute the conceptual core of those phenomena that are usually defined as Love (or Eros, its particular case is one of the varieties of Love) and Ethos, which in this case is inseparable, for they are fused in their original nature.

As it is known, in ancient Greek philosophy Eros was understood universally – sensual love as well as physical attraction, but this is also love of the Beautiful. In Plato, Eros, being a heavenly powers, penetrates all things existent: relations between the sexes, religion, philosophy, artistic creativity, for its main thing is "to give birth in beauty," he is "omnipotent world power" [3, p. 65].

This semantic universalism of the concept of Eros discovers very wide possibilities for its artistic embodiment, conversion through musical expressiveness. Eternal themes and questions that excite man as a biological species, on the one hand, and as a creator of culture, on the other, have always affected music, which has the ability to respond sensitively to the innermost aspects of human existence.

This material is an attempt to outline those semantic vectors that can define the way for a cultural view of the problem of the embodiment of Eros and Ethos in music as the most

important form of creating value orientations and cultural sense, so diverse and multifaceted in their manifestations, especially today. However, for the successful implementation of this attempt, it is necessary to determine the concepts and terms that will be involved in the discussion process.

First: concepts of the academic and popular music which are understood in traditional opposition of musical and professional tradition of *vocational* education (composer's and performer's) and absence of the same. That is, it is about division of music into the one which has been created by professional composers and is performed by professional musicians, and the other which is the result of "amateur" creativity. Respectively, it is: in a quantitative sense about "minority music" and "majority music", in qualitative (in sense of audience) – music "for the elite" (exclusive music) and music "for all".

Today these borders are blurred, it is incorrect to speak about mass culture (and music in particular) as current integrative and crossculture trends in world and European cultural space have generated a situation of basic homogeneity of musical processes. Today popular music shows surprising examples of professionalism, special proficiency to the composition of the certain types of music demanded by the average listener (phenomenon of the hit) and even to produce it as a product of mass consumption (sample realization of "top" musical production – hits, the special workshop of composers creating film music in Hollywood, marketing bases of music in advertizing etc.). At the most prestigious European and American musical universities and colleges the departments at which it is possible to study skill of the sound producer and tack master – production of the original CD media the copy of which is the consumer's CD media of an audio recording (CD-disk, a vinyl record etc.) are in enormous demand.

To the contrary, those spheres of popular music, which according to their art indicators are the highest patterns of musical art as such, at least, a huge number of its representatives that are regarded (including by musicians academists) as a paragon of musical professionalism – have no professional education, and are unique examples of autodictate.

Second. The concept of a figurative dominant implies the sphere of artistic images which is quantitatively exceeding all remaining in music (in comparison with basic for art and connected to the most important subjects of human existence – Life, Death, Love etc.), and an *image* as the mechanism of the embodiment of the objective and abstract ideas in sound reality. "About Love" – the key topic of music, its "eternal theme", as well as art in

general, and in many respects its source: we know a huge number of stories about how "I fell in love – and wrote", "I feel nothing, I am not in love – I cannot write", up to the known maxims of G. Neygauz-tutor that "... when fall in love – you will visit a lesson and you will play". All this is the certificate of creative, cosmic force of Eros about which spoke ancient and which is very simplified today. B. Vysheslavtsev wrote about it that the true love transcends out of limits of a sensual tendency and searches for a completeness in the infinity. Infinity of what? Creativity. From here – the idea of ethics of the transfigured Eros, i.e. creativity ethics according to B. Vysheslavtsev [1].

The modern art criticism concepts often consider Music as the specific form of expression of the ontological bases of human life, including its cultural meanings and values embodied by means of musical language and figurativeness. So, in the concept of "The spiritual analysis of music" by V. Medushevsky [5] the direct output on musical ontology – i.e. on the idea of initial ability, and, above all – *desire!* for music to embody the essence of being by means of a wide arsenal of the means of expressiveness (human including). Fundamentally, it is referred to, goes about the unique mission of music as form of culture and human activities. Actually, it is rehabilitation of the earliest forms of a musicological discourse differing in integrity and universalism. Though during historical eras closer to us similar thoughts arose: "What it is music if not a course of life itself and not reflection of its secret – constant movement ... Music expresses existence of the life" (from Schelling's "Physiophilosophy"); "The sound birth defies explanation" (F. Hegel) [2].

There are two varieties of musical culture under discussion – academic (serious, professionally high, classical) and popular (easy, entertaining, mass) are organically blended in the concept of musical ontology: as their subject and an object is the person, the valuable system of his outlook and cultural and creative needs. And the theme of Love (or already – Eros) takes not the last place here. The modern culturological approaches to popular music which consider it in the direct relation to "... erotic, intimate experience in the modern societies ..." [6, p. 88] are demonstrative and symptomatic in this plan, and connect such view of "majority music" to that circumstance that "... focus on intimacy in pop music of the twentieth century was caused by the considerable changes in consumer consciousness, it proceeded, first of all, from young audience, preferentially female, looking for love and romanticism in pop music" [ibid., p. 89].

According to V. Medushevsky, three essence of a person are implemented in music – spiritual, moral and carnal (on the basis of the Christian theological concept of the person), respectively – spiritual person, moral human being and carnal person creates music and is reflected in it as in a mirror. The first (spiritual, spiritual person) – an ethical dominant of serious music and its ontological idea (according to V. Medushevsky), the second two – space of light music (according to V. Medushevsky and the prevailing number of theoretical calculations of the modern musicology). All three positions have a lot to do with Eros as well as Ethos as these two concepts are ontological receptacle which stores a diversity of manifestations of spiritual-moral-carnal, and is an existential reason for manifestation of these faces of a human essence. It is logical to ask a question: at what levels can the embodiments of Eros and Ethos in musical culture be considered? And whether there are fundamental differences between art installations of the academic and popular music at this question? The most obvious aspects of this problem will be defined.

Historical aspect. Every era highlights its key points in the interrelation of Eros and Ethos, in understanding of value of one or other for human life. Soul as the center of experiences, and especially experiences of love was realized by music not at all times. The 18th century became the beginning of new objects of music interests: "powerful invasion of the world of feelings into the world of sounds was perceived as a creative incentive, as a source of fadeless youth ..." [4, p.104-105]. Though composers of the Renaissance by means of musical expressiveness already strived for imprintment of the soul movements excited with love (so-called "excited style" of C. Gesualdo and Monteverdi's madrigals). The European aristocratic knightly culture, and the music representing it by troubadours, trouveres, minnezingers – "singers of love" – gives the whole era of the cult of Eros realized in a cult of the Paramour (which is paradoxically uniting noble and spiritual experiences and them erotic-sensual nuances).

The romantic concept of Eros puts forward understanding it as "intimate area of spirit, soul, feeling" (in Hegel's formulation) which can be the unique expression actually spiritual in art [2, p. 253]. The love was considered as true beauty of spirit and therefore the love is an "ideal of romantic art" [ibid., p. 254]. Images of Eros have made ontologic sense of romantic music, they were thought of the most adequate expression of divine in music, absolute manifestation of the divine idea of the universe as "God is Love". This idea has impregnated the huge mass of the European professional music from the end of the 18th century.

Let us consider the situation in popular music of the XX century for which a diversity of images of Eros became an ideological dominant and a conceptual core of self-expression of "the culture of the majority". It is about two mainstreams of unacademic music of previous century – rock and pop music. In both cases of "the songs about love" take the central place in the informative and thematic plan, but here the understanding of this love varies a lot. Two of these directions embodied and created two contradictory ethics, concerning love, and its especially body and sensual image. Pop music appreciated a duty, obligation, correctness and faith in the raising and improving influence of Eros, at the same time rock insisted on total freedom and honesty of personal self-expression (that, of course, was dictated by the sociocultural ideas of the modernity, sexual revolution in particular; see about it the certain chapter of the book by D. Hezmondalsh [6]).

Ethnocultural aspect. One more cutoff is variety of musical and art refractions of Eros and Ethos in different national and cultural traditions because each national pattern of the world (in G. Gachev's statement) assumes the understanding of morality, moral and Love. In musicology this theme is still not mastered, but literary studies, due to research enthusiasm of G. Gachev, realized at the end of the last century useful experience of scientific approach to national options of Eros, having published the collection of publications under the name "National Eros in Culture" (1995). In it those specific characteristics of images of Eros in literary works which are caused by mentality of these or those people (Slavic sacrifice and humility, French piquancy and refinement, Italian and Spanish passion etc.) are depicted. Similar approach can be applicable also in relation to musical culture which in each of the national options, offers "the" vision of this ontological base of human life.

Figurative and semantic aspect. The throughline in the academic music is formed by the idea of high and sacrificial love which in due time Hegel so pathosly spoke about: "The authentic entity of love consists in refusing consciousness of itself, to forget itself in another "I" and, however, in this disappearance and oblivion for the first time to find itself and to recover self-possession" [2, p. 253]. It is confidently possible to say that it is really figurative dominant of serious music approving spiritual measurement of Eros as the universal creating force. Art of the opera gives the bright and perfect images embodying this idea. Cio-cio-san, Liu, the Snow Maiden – preferentially female images personifying the unconditional high love sacrificing itself for the sake of happiness of the Other.

So, for example, the image of the slave-girl Liu embodies the idea of moral greatness and "silent", "small" heroism of female nature in J. Puccini's *Turandot*. Unconditional love to prince Kalaf and striving for his happiness (not his!) leads little Liu to the bloody final of the life (quite in the spirit of the veristic drama). Exactly due to her deed in *Turandot* and Kalaf's relations everything goes smoothly. And the ethical appearance of generous Tatar prince Kalaf in this sense becomes not absolutely "noble" as he does not pay attention to this fact at all. Liu, considering Kalaf a sense of her life, nevertheless hides the love – she knows that the prince cannot become the slave's husband. Mild, humble, but, at the same time strong, Liu lives for others: her dedication is infinite, it is conscious and morally reasoned, and the sacrifice which she makes for the sake of beloved, is understood by her as the only option when "everybody will be happy".

The tragic story of the young Japanese Cio-Cio-san who became the wife of American Pinkerton and left by him with the little son also refracts the idea of sacrifice. Thus in this case it is modified by the maternal status of the protagonist. The image of Cio-Cio-san, despite the veristic source, is absolutely deprived of naturalistic manifestations. Its scenic appearance is not built in a support on "an emotional anguish" of the suffering heroes of veristic short stories, on the contrary – this female image is extremely improved and "accurate" in the psychological expressiveness. It is explained, of course, by another, unlike European, east appearance of the Woman who just by determination cannot be open emotionally according to etiquette norms. Thus it is possible to assume that this internal nobility and emotional and psychological tone of an image of Cio-Cio-san is caused also by the fact that in the opera it is provided not only as the loving woman but also as the mother. Suicide of the heroine is a result of realization of the helplessness and uselessness in the fate of the son, only his father can provide it the future under laws of the country. The victim of the little geisha which is externally deprived of any pathos inherently finds an enormous ethical sense - it is complete self-renunciation, total absence of egoism for the sake of the Benefit of those who are dear to her.

Character like Liu and Cio-Cio-san demonstrates amazing opportunities of music in the embodiment of ethical aspect of Eros: abilities to sacrifice for the higher justice and the benefits of others, those whom they love. Similar characters are subjects of set of the relations and representations bearing the press of moral responsibility for the acts besides socially regulated behavioural stereotypes of "civilized" society.

Image of the Snow Maiden from the opera by N. Rimsky-Korsakov – a peculiar manifesto of Christian understanding of Love. In Christianity Eros is cleaned and changes grace action, hiding sensitivity under a sensuality layer. But sensitivity to what? To spiritual in the person, opening by means of Eros. V. Medushevsky writes about it: "... It is impossible to oppose to immortal beauty of its spirit, divine love as it is shown in music, especially in the last aria of pleasure, complete unconditional love to all, though the warmest – to Mizgir!" [5, page 97]. And further the musicologist reasons on the conceptual opposition of the idea of Love embodied in an image of the Snow Maiden to that to an ideal pagan sensual erotic which is personified in images of Lelya and Tsar Berendey.

Eros as spontaneous, enthusiastic *love*, in the form of the honoring directed to a love object in excess it is embodied in classics of the academic music: Lenskiy, Richard, Tristan and Izolda, Romeo and Juliette, Siebel, Tamino ... This listing can be continued infinitely. What integrates all these images, each of which, of course, has the nuances in disclosure of the idea of Love? Already mentioned sensitivity to a spiritual entity of the experienced feeling which *hide* its sensual side. A spiritual person rises in all these cases over the carnal person. And even the sincere side (emotional experience, the broadest range of emotions) is not principal in semantic meaningfulness of these opera heroes as it is about eminency of their Spirit changed by Eros.

From the quantitative point of view, the images personifying actually passion in which the sensual side of Eros dominates will obviously concede to the first. They can try to be listed: Jose, count di Luna, Scarpia, Salome, Katerina, Gryaznoy. It is even less musical and figurative embodiments of Love as play (*ludus*), one of its varieties which were mentioned by the ancient, trying to classify it the phenomena. Even if to try to include in this case such characters as Carmen and Don Juan who, at first sight, seem as those – this assessment will be inconsistent as each of them is much more difficult and deeper than the outer side. The majority of opera images of the European musical classics – find deeply ethical sense of Love.

Popular music is short of it, instead there is a wide range of experiences of love feeling: from sincere and emotional to sensual-carnal. The variety song, to a lesser extent – the author's song and what is defined as "pop-music" today abound with the open, "eternal" plots relevant for each person: unfortunate love, treason, passion, separation, end of love, etc. Gradation of sincere experiences and sensual passions – are enormous, the art level of the

poetic text and, as a result, a musical image – are primitive in comparison with the academic music. In the forefront – the human soul either suffering, or staying at pleasure peak. To a large extent, common denominator of pop music – total absorption in sincere human life, obsession with feelings and sensitivity. Feeling of what? Emotions and a body which are so sharply experienced by Eros. And here – the fair note of V. Medushevsky: "the lyrics without spirit would become a platform" [5, p. 385].

And then the performance aspect becomes logical. The conventionality and spirituality of the musical-scenic (visual-sound) expression, pushing aside the naturalism of emotional reactions and corporality as non-essential components of the musical-artistic image, are predominantly characteristic of the academic musical and performing tradition (opera, first of all). On the idea of *pre*-presentation of the spiritual essence, transforming the literal and realistic musical image, a tradition of European performing skills was built. The musical and performing heights in this tradition are associated precisely with the ability to "lift" the musical expression and musical expressiveness over the ordinary human notions of life and its various manifestations, including Love, to elevate the very idea of this side of human existence to its ethical meaning. The main instrument for influencing the listener here is natural: an individual performing technique based on the mastering of a musical instrument (any musical or his own voice) and acting (if it concerns vocal art). And such a performance of "music about Love" (opera aria or vocal cycle, or a piano piece) does not need additional means of expressiveness, since the artistic fullness of the poetic text and especially the music already imbues the *spirituality* of the performing expression.

And on the contrary, much simpler poetic texts and music about Love in pop music, today reaching absurdity in their primitivism, provoke an absolutely opposite principle of performing expression, which actively uses the "additional" lever of influence on the listener – the visual one, and which becomes basic. The idea of corporality is concentrated in the concept of the external appearance of the performer – striking and often defiantly carnal, offered as an image of sexuality. The visual side of the performing expression, accentuating attention to the external (the body as a performance), pushes the "inner" aside – actually the music (musical expressiveness as meaning). It was such a concept of Eros that gave rise to the phenomenon of "Singing panties", behind which there is not only the name of the Ukrainian female pop group, but the very principle of the performing form of the whole stream of top-of-the-line musical products of modernity (both foreign and national).

Of course, it is impossible to reduce popular music to "pop music": along with this extreme form, there are other directions (variety and author song) that offer a completely different version of the performing embodiment of the images of Eros. In this version, the visual factor is not so significant, and the actual musical expressive, realized in the performing skills of the singer, is the basis of artistic expression (French chanson, classics of Soviet pop songs, bardic songs etc.). In the depths of non-academic musical art, unique examples of performing concepts are known, in which the external and internal, spectacular and performing skills are organically combined, the body and voice, spiritual, moral and physical – that unity that adequately and fully embodies the universal sense of Eros (phenomenon of Freddie Mercury).

Summarizing all these arguments, it is worth noting the following.

Eros and Ethos are inseparable in their ontological basis, constitute the figurative and semantic sphere of musical culture that is obvious in its significance. They are imprinted in the richest variety of musical and artistic incarnations, in music serious and light, in music for the elite and "for all". This is the "eternal theme" of music, as of art in general, as of human existence in general. Undoubtedly, this figurative dominant of musical art requires special study, which is probably only waiting for its researcher. And if, in relation to academic music, this topic is indirectly very often touched on by musicologists and culturologists, popular music is practically left "overside" of research interest, since it is often regarded as not fully valuable in the artistic sense. But, as you know, it is the popular culture, the space of mass consciousness, that most quickly and accurately grasps those value meanings that are most relevant at this or that stage of human history. And although according to V. Medzushevsky's categorical opinion "... to study the sinister means to maintain its false authority ... and insist on the extra-value ..." [5, p. 383], it is worth realizing the fact that the discrepancy of popular music with high artistic standards of academic art has not only a negative sense of its "inferiority". The ease and accessibility that reaches primitivism (especially today) confronts the researcher with very difficult tasks of discovering a "deep" meaning in easily accessible art material that exists in the space of culture simply by other laws than by serious music. And for someone there is nothing more serious than a simple "love song", which one hears on the radio or TV, and which is heard by thousands like him. And all because each of these thousands in more than a simple melody

recognizes their emotional unrest, their emotions, their life experience, their own image of Eros.

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