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FIDEISTIC SEMANTICS IN N.A. RIMSKY-KORSAKOV'S OPERA CREATIVITY

The purpose of article is defined as the proof of importance of fideistic semantics and a subject of a miracle in the genre nature of opera creativity and contents of the opera work. **The methodology** of work connects aesthetic, culturological and musicological methodical aspects, allows to highlight semantic approach as integrating. **The scientific novelty of a** research consists in detection of immanent factors of opera semantics in creativity of N. Rimsky-Korsakov as the caused phenomena of belief and the miracle united on the basis of images of supernatural. **Conclusions** of work allow to affirm that the subject of a miracle becomes basic and main in opera creativity of Rimsky-Korsakov, determines treatment by him not only subject prerequisites, lyrical images, but also means of musical expressiveness, musical language of the opera work – musical fideistic symbolics.

Keywords: fideistic semantics, miracle subject, lyrical figurative sphere, opera poetics, opera creativity of N. Rimsky-Korsakov, author's musical rhetoric, musical fideistic symbolics.

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Фідеїстична семантика в оперній творчості М. А. Римського-Корсакова.

Мета статті визначається як доказ важливості фідеїстичної семантики і теми дива в жанровій природі оперного творчості і змісті оперного твору. **Методологія** роботи поєднує естетичний, культурологічний і музикознавчий методичні аспекти, дозволяє виділяти семантичний підхід як інтегруючий. **Наукова новизна** дослідження полягає в виявленні іманентних чинників оперної семантики у творчості М. Римського Корсакова як обумовлених явищами віри і чуда, об'єднаних на основі образів надприродного. **Висновки** роботи дозволяють стверджувати, що тема дива стає опорною і магістральною в оперній творчості Римського-Корсакова, визначає трактування ним не тільки сюжетних передумов, ліричних образів, але і засобів музичної виразовості, музичної мови оперного твору – музичної фідеїстичної символіки.

Ключові слова: фідеїстична семантика, тема дива, лірична образна сфера, оперна поетика, оперна творчість М. Римського-Корсакова, авторська музична риторика, музична фідеїстична символіка.

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Цель статьи определяется как доказательство важности фидеистической семантики и темы чуда в жанровой природе оперного творчества и содержания оперного произведения. **Методология работы** соединяет эстетический, культурологический и музыковедческий методические аспекты, позволяет выделять семантический подход как интегрирующий. **Научная новизна** исследования заключается в обнаружении имманентных факторов оперной семантики в творчестве Н. Римского-Корсакова как обусловленных явлениями веры и чуда, объединенных на основе образов сверхприродного – сверхестественного. **Выводы** работы позволяют утверждать, что тема чуда становится опорной и магістральной в оперном творчестве Римского-Корсакова, определяет трактовку им не только сюжетных предпосылок, лирических образов, но и средств музыкальной выразительности, музыкального языка оперного произведения – музыкальной фидеистической символіки.

Ключевые слова: фидеистическая семантика, тема чуда, лирическая образная сфера, оперная поэтика, оперное творчество Н. Римского-Корсакова, авторская музыкальная риторика, музыкальная фидеистическая символіка.

The **relevance** of this article is caused to the fact that music in opera creativity connected with a mythological or fantastic legendary topic, which also contains religious plot motifs, acts as the main bearer of fideic, even the so called fascinating functions, it allows to approach the originality of the artistic and aesthetic relationship. Some common features of fideological and aesthetic relation indicate the special importance of musical

design for them, and the specificity of the musical-figurative embodiment of the miraculous in opera creativity makes it necessary to distinguish specific fideistic semantics as leading for a number of opera composers, in particular, for N. Rimsky-Korsakov. Let us emphasize that the aesthetic always confronts, to a certain extent, the everyday, ordinary communication. By connecting with it, the fideic origin causes an *unconventional* attitude to the sign. It is even more correct to call such a beginning *a special kind of convention*, arising at a deep semantic level and determining the choice of certain objects, phenomena, relations as symbolic. As N. Mechkovskaya writes, “the origins of the nonconventional perception of the sign lie not in the initial fideism of consciousness, but in the primary syncretism of the reflection of the world in the human psyche, i.e. this is one of the fundamental features of pre-logical thinking. Such was the thinking of a primitive human. In this case, it’s not a lack of logic, this logic is just different” [6, 42]. The fideistic principle, as the sphere of the miraculous, as an appeal to the phenomenon of a miracle, seeks special ways and forms of expression. We can talk about fideistic poetics, which requires special alignment, “skillfulness” and “artificiality” of texts with fideistic functions. Part of this poetics is sacredness, as a mystery, the principle non-guessing of the fideic language, which makes it akin to aesthetically conditioned artistic symbolism. As formations ideational in natural, fideistic and aesthetic equally require symbolic stability, that is, in fixedness in certain semantic conditions, in certain semantic predictability, in a high degree of canonicity [6, 77-79].

The prerequisites for studying the phenomenon of a miracle and fideistic semantics in the context of operatic poetics are found in the articles by S. Averintsev, who considers the historical and psychological foundations of faith in unity with the symbolic needs of a human, and explains them by the unity of the spiritual and material worlds, i. e. the semantic dimensions of the culture [1, 2].

In connection with the foregoing, the **goal** of this article is defined as a proof of the importance of fideal semantics and the topic of the miracle in the genre nature of opera and the content of the opera works.

The main content of the work. In Rimsky-Korsakov’s opera poetics, the author’s understanding of the regularities of the genre form of the opera, its relation to its semantic conditions and possibilities is expressed in the stability, repeatability, autocanonicity of compositional principles both in the method of selection and placement of material, and,

above all, the musical material. For the musicological description of the poetics of the composer, such constancy of the general compositional movement that is observed throughout the fifteen operatic works serves as an argument in proving the single semantic logic of the genre.

Therefore, the fideic coloring, as a consequence of the aesthetic interpretation of the event series, gives the content of Rimsky-Korsakov's operas, above all, the motif of love, which is present in images of transformation, sacrifice and doom. Transformation as an introduction to the eternal natural beginning is found in the operas referred to as "May Night", "Snegurochka", "Sadko", "Kashchei". So, Pannochka transforms into an ethereal mermaid, Snegurochka melts like the snow, Volkhova dissipates in the morning mist and turns into a bright river, Kashcheevna becomes a weeping willow. Born by the elements, these beautiful heroes meaningfully strive for the human feeling of love, and to death leading to a return to the primordial essence. Their transformations symbolize the eternal and continuously renewed cycle of nature. Mozart's death is also perceived in the fideistic aspect, it symbolizes his "return" to the immortal world of music. In a certain respect, the madness of Marpha is also a way out of the state of doom, renunciation of the suffering and vanity of life by turning to the power of love. In "Mlada", the main character, dying, becomes a bright ghostly shadow; Yaromir's death in the final is perceived as a positive metamorphosis leading to liberation and connection with the shadow of Mlada.

The idea of leaving into non-existence as reincarnation, liberating from suffering, but granted by them, becomes through in the plot of "Kitezh". Thus, the motive of doom is transformed into the motive of election and salvation. The highest manifestation of this motive is a transformation that grants prosperity, pacification, eternal life to all participants in the action. In this aspect, the idea of salvation is most clearly revealed in the "The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh", where the transformation, reformation of the real city into the invisible, brings eternal life and eternal joy to all inhabitants of Kitezh. However, in "Servilia" the death of the main character, with a plea for universal love and forgiveness, leads to the spiritual rebirth of all the heroes of the opera, unites them with a single idea, illuminates with a new faith.

Thus, there is one more motive, connected with the fideic semantics, namely the motive of the *conciliarity, the plot equivalent of the memory phenomenon, which reveals the supporting compositional functions of the oratorical sphere* in the operas by Rimsky-

Korsakov. Conciliarity is an orthodox concept, opposing the Western notion of association, namely if conciliarity is a voluntary union by spiritual religious attraction, by the true copulation of all souls with the Uniform, then Western-type association is the mechanical subordination of the minority to the majority [4].

The idea of conciliarity is expressed already in the first opera by Rimsky-Korsakov in the scene of the veche, it is personified in the image of the wise and just tsar Berendey, literally musically incarnates in the hymn to Jarilo the Sun, in the music of scenes of the Sadko's squad and Prince Vsevolod ("Kitez"), in the leitens of the great and small Kitez. In the last opera, a single cathedral, hiding and saving all, becomes nature, therefore, the semantics of conciliarity spiritualizes, elevates the musical themes of nature (forest desert). It should be noted that the ideas of conciliarity, doom and salvation, transformations that determine Romsky's opera poetry, are leading in the cultural concepts of Russian philosophers of the late XIX - early XX centuries, in particular V. Soloviev, N. Berdyaev, the Trubetskoy family and others, are associated with an attempt to build a single prognostic model of Russian culture as a carrier of special spirituality, which gives them the importance of structural grounds for a new artistic myth-making.

We can say that all the works by Rimsky-Korsakov, from "Pskovityanka" to "Kitez", is a way of development of a fideistic topic and musical poetics of a miracle, allowing the composer to create a unique model of operatic semantics. The operatic poetics of Rimsky-Korsakov is an example of a systematic logical unity of all works in a given genre, rare in the world art practice, when all the compositional components are aimed at revealing the spiritual unity of a human for all time in his search for truth. The thing that is called the motive of the hero's behavior, the psychological implication of his actions, turns out to be a very wide phenomenon, not so much an individualizing character but allowing to see and understand the states and aspirations common to the human consciousness. The motives that drive the heroes of operas are not accidental, they correspond to those antinomies of being, which the composer reveals as a common bi-worldness of life. Thus, they acquire a special semantic significance, reflect the value representations that were basic for both Rimsky-Korsakov and Russian culture of the period. Some of the motives, for example, the motive of doom, are bifurcated as the being itself, others, for example, the motives of sacrifice and transformation, mean the attempt to overcome the bi-worldness of human existence.

Simultaneously with its breadth, the named motives, as stimuli for the action, of the formation of images, acquire greater concreteness thanks to their personification. In other words, they are perceived not so much as the relation of one hero to another, but rather as his essential definition, as confirmation of the main character of the hero. For example, Fevronia is embraced with compassion and high Christian love for Kuterma, not because this is her personal attitude towards him, but because she is the bearer of the gift of forgiving love. The misfortune of Griazny is not determined by his egoistic love for Marpha, by, on the contrary, his feelings for Martha are absorbed by the fateful darkness of his soul as the main state inherent to him. Heroes for Rimsky-Korsakov from the very beginning are the bearers of a certain type of feelings, which they also disclose in their relationship. Therefore, it is very important for the composer to deeply develop the character of this feeling, to give him a value definition. Therefore, the named ones, as well as some other motives, can act as artistic symbols with a very broad semantic basis.

The value-religious, generalized spiritual understanding of the motivating plot-event and musical-dramatic forces leads to the convergence of the fideic and lyrical principles, in fact, to their identification, which becomes a special authorial feature of the opera aesthetics of Rimsky-Korsakov. This attitude to the lyric is especially noticeable when comparing the methods of N. Rimsky-Korsakov and P. Tchaikovsky. If Tchaikovsky turns to modernity as an area closest to the feeling of the composer himself, allowing him to be identified in the author's experience with the feelings of his heroes, thus introducing something autobiographical into the artistic model, then Rimsky-Korsakov goes deep into the centuries, into the metaphysical space of history, revealing categories and values premature for the human consciousness, thus objectifying the experience as a transpersonal, disintegrating with it. Most noticeably, this fundamental, in our opinion, distinction of the operatic poetics of the above-mentioned composers, the difference that can be used as the basis of the typological characteristics of the European opera as a whole is expressed precisely in relation to the topic of love.

Rimsky-Korsakov has his own way of identifying with "what is happening" in the opera, namely his method of entering the material; in the artistic work there is always a special "author's place", the so-called "semantic umbilical cord", which connects the author's understanding with the interpretive logic of the composition. Rimsky is a mediator, he takes on marginal functions, therefore, those characters that create marginal zones of

figurative interaction inside the plot are closest to him. It is no accident that they are bearers of artistic relations, creators-poets, musicians, heroes, having an increased sensitivity to the imaginary, invisible, to the being of the spiritually-semantic substance. The ability to experience involvement in the latter becomes the core of the lyric for this composer. Love in the operas by Rimsky appears as a plot epiphenomenon, a sub-motive accompanying the disclosure of the psychology of the hero in connection with the meta-plot of the miracle. If for Tchaikovsky love is a drama of personal formation, an individual and individualized feeling, then for Rimsky-Korsakov this is a natural property, a condition inherent in the world, the thing that unites, makes people look alike (whereas in Tchaikovsky it is more likely, passion separating people). Thus, in the understanding of Rimsky-Korsakov, *love is a metahistorical, spiritual dominant*. In this aspect his aesthetic representations overlap with Feuerbach's definition of love: "In love, the self-awareness of individuality turns into the self-awareness of the perfection of the generation" [233, 137]. Feuerbach connects the discussion of love with the discussion of the nature of Christian morality and certain categories of Christianity, while simultaneously approaching pantheistic views of the world in consideration of a human essence as one and infinite, universal and diverse in its being.

The musical language of operas serves for clarification, specification, artistic completeness of fideic symbols. The musical side of Rimsky-Korsakov's operas can be called the leading means, the main jib for interpreting the main motives-symbols. In their row there is the symbolism of time and space, which, at first glance, seems to be a background mean, but in the general genre-composition context it turns into the highest and the ultimate sign of the Game as the demiurgic natural-elemental beginning of history, plunging separate human fates into a cycle of significant events.

Fantastic heroes, such as Pannochka, the daughter of Spring and Frost, Volkhova, the Swan Princess, in their strive for sacrificial love, acquire a human "voice". Their "magic" is transmitted through enlarged and reduced harmonies, chromatic frets, "harmonic motifs" (Rimsky-Korsakov's term), melodies of vocal-instrumental type, virtuous coloratures, whimsical rhythmic with syncopation, and some others. However, in the final stages of the "transformation" in their toles, the cantiliated arioso-song intonations become predominate (in the farewell duet of Pannochka and Levko, in the melting scene of Snegurochka, in the lullaby of Volkhova, in the episode of turning Kashcheevna into a weeping willow). All the

above-named heroines represent miraculously transformed natural forces, the sphere of the natural-fantastic.

Thus, nature in Rimsky-Korsakov's opera poetics is also "bi-worldly" fideic; on the one hand, it is part of the people's way of life, a positive, man-making beginning; on the other hand it is characterized as an area of unusual, wonderful, surprising and even frightening. In the second, fideistic, marvelous, meaning, the natural images make the composer look for unusual expressive techniques, update the musical language, introduce a dissonant harmonic sphere, throw together two diatonic systems, create areas of "autonomous instability", namely unsatisfied functional gravitations, that is, to create the "harmonious evil against which he so rebelled, revealing unresolved and unprepared dissonances, "incorrect" functional sequences of consonances in the works by Wagner and Musorgsky [7]. At the same time, the composer strives for a stable interpretation of the new methods being introduced, for the consistency of their semantic functions in different compositional contexts, and for their symbolic filling. This area of the musical language of the operas by Rimsky-Korsakov creates his brightest new authorial rhetoric (along with the themes of the natural-human sphere), first of all, by projecting harmonic innovations into the melodic sphere. In other words, the melodic horizontal is determined by the vertical harmonious "profile" (it harmonizes), which significantly distinguishes the melodic innovation of Rimsky from the melodic discoveries of Musorgsky: the latter was not only always guided by the vocal-speech material, but also subordinated the harmonic structure to the melodic conjugation of intonations (melodized harmony).

It is the new rhetorical formulas that allow the composer to musically express the transition from the miraculous to the disastrous, as well as to show the salutary rebirth. For example, the arpeggiated move on the sounds of a reduced seventh chord in a high register, in parts of a harp or strings, indicates of the appearance of Pannochka, Volkhov, the Swan Princess, the shadow of Princess Mlada in the dreams of Yaromir. The same harmony in the low register, reinforced by the tremolating sound, becomes a threatening sign. Thus, in the operas "Pskovityanka" and "The Noblewoman Vera Sheloga", similar scenic situations (scenes in the forest) are emphasized through the prolonged use of the reduced seventh cord on the same words: "A thick forest: birches and aspens..." This the same consonance becomes especially gloomy in the scene of a thunderstorm in "Pskovityanka". A chain of reduced seventh chords appears in part of Oksana, admiring the starry sky, on the words "Uh,

scary ...” The sequence of the reduced seventh chords at the distance of tritone is used in “terrible sequences” in “The Nights Before Christmas”.

Natural fantastic can become dangerous for a human if he decides to suddenly invade this sphere. An example of this is the scene with the “tritone rod” in the reserve forest from the opera “Snegurochka” in which Leshy frightens Mizgir. In this episode, Rimsky-Korsakov aggravates, hyperbolizes harmonic means by imposing two enlarged triads located at a distance of the whole tone, which are simultaneously a tonic of a twice enlarged fret. Fascinating, fatal character can acquire an integral fret sequence (Kashchey’s leitmotif, the appearance of Malyuta at the end of the third act of “The Tsar’s Brode”). The gamut of “tone-half-tone”, which is the leitmotif of the underwater kingdom, applied in the part of the King of the Sea, in the lullaby of Volkhova as a sign of the miraculous, becomes a sign of danger in the picture of the descent of Sadko to the bottom of the sea, dramatized in “The Battle of Kerzhenets”.

Thus, depending on the general scenic situation, authorial rhetoric techniques (the use of a reduced seventh chord, tritone, tone integrity, fret harmonic sophistication, autonomous dissonance, harmony-melody), being always indicative of the unusual, can acquire a negative character.

Dissonant fret harmonic sphere, elimination of functional logic, tritone signs, harmonic nature of melodic intonation are accompanied by the plot motive of doom. However, it can be associated with both positive sacrificial heroes and negative characters. Therefore, the above-mentioned methods are in two different semantic positions, depending on the figurative purpose and genre genesis. Characters subject to selfish love are endowed with musical characteristics derived from traditional European operatic rhetoric, born by the need for increased dramatic expression and images of a “malefactor”, i.e. slightly exaggerated, more aphoristic in its interpretation by Rimsky-Korsakov (Grozny, Matuta, Voyslava, Gryaznoy, Lyubasha, Yadviga, Egnatiy). This is, first of all, chromaticization, “snaking” intonations, tremolo, single-voice recitative in the low register, amplification of the speech beginning, intense intonation of increased and reduced intervals, melodic tritone passages, harmony of the tritone and the reduced seventh chord.

The game variable of time-space, as well as the game with the value-complete, absolutely “ready”, located in the island position, self-sufficient, therefore epically determined past (in Bakhtin’s terminology) relies on the emancipation of time and space as

artistic phenomena, that is, their presentation as “depicted”, expressed by artistic and compositional means. According to D. Likhachev, “the actual and depicted time are the essential aspects of the artistic whole work ...”; this author also notes that “... in close contact with the problem of the depiction of time there is also the problem of depicting timeless and “eternal”... [5, 212, 217, 234].

“The Play of Times” in Rimsky-Korsakov’s operas arises as a game of musical-style borders within the genre. Combination of the value-completed epic time and the acuteness of the experience of the present moment occurs not only in the time sequence of the opera, diachronously, but also in the spatial texture vertical, reflecting the filling of the scenic space, simultaneously - by “harmonic complications”, inclusion of “autonomous harmonic logic”, complexes of the dissonant diatonic and “foreign chromatic” [7], creating the effect of “musical miracle”.

Therefore, the **scientific novelty** of our research is to discover the immanent factors of operatic semantics in the creative work by N. Rimsky-Korsakov as conditioned by the phenomena of faith and miracle united on the basis of the images of the supernatural, namely the numinous, generating its own musical symbolism, capable of acting as a musical-symbolic substitute for the phenomenon of a miracle.

The **conclusions** of the work allow us to assert that the topic of the miracle becomes the supporting and the main in the operatic creative work of Rimsky-Korsakov, it determines the interpretation of not only the plot prerequisites, lyrical images, but also the means of musical expressiveness, the musical language of the operatic work, namely the musical fideic symbolism.

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