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**Zhao Ziyuan**

<https://orcid.org/0000–0003–0076–9779>

applicant of the Department of Music History and Musical Ethnography  
of ONMA of A. V. Nezhdanova  
672250899@qq.com

## THE ARCHETYPE OF MASK IN THE EUROPEAN OPERA AND THEATRE TRADITION

*The purpose of the article is to determine the archetypal properties of the mask in the development of the European opera and theatrical tradition, highlighting the Italian comedy of masks as one of the most important bases for its development. The methodology of the work is determined by the unity of historical, cultural, theatrical, literary, psychological, musicological, analytical and operatic approaches that create a comprehensive interdisciplinary basis of research. The scientific novelty of the work is connected with the study and identification of the conceptual content of the mask archetype in the European opera and theatrical tradition. Conclusions. The mask as a «cultural archetype» (S. Avernitsev) grows out of the very «soil of the unconscious», the natural and cultural characteristics of the existence of a people in history. The inherent principles of a particular opera and theatrical character to choose the models of thinking and unconditional imperatives of behavior are contained in the archetype of a mask in an extremely concentrated form. The mask, mask-character, mask-image symbolically shapes the experience of playing and laughing, takes a person out of the empirical, everyday, hiding and denying his former face. The mask, thus, transcends human existence, carries in itself the possibility for a person to become another, to switch to a different kind of being, speaking in the carnival as the principle of ontological transformation of man.*

**Keywords:** archetype, cultural archetype, mask, Italian comedy of masks, opera, opera and theatrical tradition.

**Чжао Цзиуань**, здобувач кафедри історії музики та музичної етнології Одеської національної музичної академії імені А. В. Неждановій

**Архетип маски у європейській оперно-театральній традиції**

*Метою статті є прагнення визначити архетипічні властивості маски у розвитку європейської оперно-театральної традиції з виділенням італійської комедії масок як однієї з найважливіших підстав її розвитку. Методологія роботи визначається єдністю історико-культурологічного, театрознавчого, літературознавчого, психологічного, музикознавчого аналітичного й оперознавчого підходів, що створюють комплексний інтердисциплінарний базис дослідження. Наукова новизна*

пов'язана з вивченням і виділенням концептуального змісту архетипу маски у європейській оперно-театральній традиції. **Висновки.** Маска як «культурний архетип» (С. Аверніцев) виростає з самого «грунту несвідомого», природних її культурних особливостей буття народу в історії. В архетипі «маска» в гранично концентрованому вигляді присутні властиві конкретному оперно-театральному персонажу принципи вибору моделей мислення й безумовних імперативів поведінки. Маска, маска-персонаж, маска-образ символічно оформляє досвід гри й сміху, виводить людину за межі емпіричного, повсякденного, приховуючи й заперечуючи її колишню особу. Маска, таким чином, трансцендує людське буття, несе в собі можливість для людини стати іншою, перейти до іншого виду буття, виступаючи у карнавалі принципом онтологічного перетворення людини.

**Ключові слова:** архетип, культурний архетип, маска, італійська комедія масок, опера, оперно-театральна традиція.

**Чжао Цзююань**, соискатель кафедры истории музыки и музыкальной этнографии Одесской национальной музыкальной академии имени А. В. Неждановой

#### **Архетип маски в европейской оперно-театральной традиции**

Целью статьи является стремление определить архетипические свойства маски в развитии европейской оперно-театральной традиции с выделением итальянской комедии масок как одного из важнейших оснований ее развития. **Методология** работы определяется единством историко-культурологического, театроведческого, литературоведческого, психологического, музыковедческого аналитического и опероведческого подходов, создающих комплексный интердисциплинарный базис исследования. **Научная новизна** работы связана с изучением и выделением концептуального содержания архетипа маски в европейской оперно-театральной традиции. **Выводы.** Маска как «культурный архетип» (С. Аверницев) вырастает из самой «почвы бессознательного», природных и культурных особенностей бытия народа в истории. В архетипе маска в предельно концентрированном виде содержит присущие конкретному оперно-театральному персонажу принципы выбора моделей мышления и безусловных императивов поведения. Маска, маска-персонаж, маска-образ символически оформляет опыт игры и смеха, выводит человека за пределы эмпирического, повседневного, скрывая и отрицая его прежнее лицо. Маска, таким образом, трансцендирует человеческое бытие, несет в себе возможность для человека стать другим, перейти к иному виду бытия, выступая в карнавале принципом онтологического преображения человека.

**Ключевые слова:** архетип, культурный архетип, маска, итальянская комедия масок, опера, оперно-театральная традиция.

**Relevance.** Opera and theatrical tradition, regarded as an integral historical and cultural phenomenon, has always occupied a special place in the cultural process as a socially significant phenomenon that can become an expression of ideas and thoughts that excite society the most. It should be noted that the frontiers of XIX–XX and XX–XXI become two periods in which significant changes in the understanding and interpretation of the opera genre occur, since it is during these periods that the opera, as well as the opera-theatrical tradition as a whole, becomes the object of directorial and staged and performing experiments, attempts to update the content of the opera performance. At the same time, it can be stated that in the modern operatic and theatrical tradition, the leading tendency is to rethink the old repertoire. Often, such a rethinking occurs at the expense of transferring the action to another epoch and another social environment, and, sometimes, a significant rethinking of the overall dramatic line, which leads far away from the original intention of the work. Such retrospective appeals to the experience of past centuries for the opera-theatrical tradition are quite frequent — the ancient, mythological, biblical themes, as well as the traditions of the folk theater, in particular the Italian comedy of masks, which received multiple interpretations in composing, theatrical, directing and performing art. Representatives of many creative professions turn to the *commedia dell'arte* traditions, highlighting the archetypical properties of the mask, considering it as the basis of their innovative research, allowing to create relevant and socially pointed works that reveal the most problematic areas of social and cultural structure.

The *purpose of the article* is to determine the archetypical properties of the mask in the development of the European opera and theatrical tradition, highlighting the Italian comedy of masks as one of the most important bases for its development. The methodology of the work is determined by the unity of historical, cultural, theatrical, literary, psychological, musicological, analytical and operatic approaches that create a comprehensive interdisciplinary basis of research. The scientific novelty of the work is connected with the study and identification of the conceptual content of the mask archetype in the European opera and theatrical tradition.

Review of literature on issues. The study of the mask archetype led to an appeal to a wide range of literature on the theatre history, without which a multilateral consideration of the interpretation of *commedia dell'arte* masks and their «heirs» in the European opera and theater tradition would be impossible. One of the first theater critics to write a study on the Italian theater of masks was K. M. Miklashevskyi, in whose work «La Commedia dell'Arte.

The theater of Italian comedians» [6] various versions of the emergence of the European professional theater and its heroes are given. This work is still one of the most important studies on the history of mask theatre. Not less significant are the books of A. K. Jivilegov [3] and M. M. Molodtsova [7], in which the components of the Italian masks, their artistic, figurative and dramatic features in the process of their evolutionary development are examined.

The presentation of the main material. The commedia dell'arte masks, born in the middle of the XVI century in Italy, were a powerful artistic stimulus for European masters of various art forms. The dance and dramatic experience of the comedy with its distinctively pronounced event-effective, playful beginning, was borrowed not only by the theater in the variety of its modifications, but also enriched the artistic-figurative dictionary of painters, writers and composers of the next centuries. As the researcher of the Italian commedia dell'arte M. Molodtsova points out, starting from the end of the XVI — early XVII centuries, after the Great Tours, the period of the Franco-Italian history of the evolution of the Italian comedy of masks begins [7]. However, with the beginning of the XIX century, this common vector loses its strength and we can state the isolation and parallel development of two main theater lines — Italian and French, each with its own specificity. From the XVII century, creative figures of various directions demonstrate fundamentally different ways of refraction of the Italian comedy images. The spectrum of content, semantic, plot and figurative interpretation of its masks in the visual arts is quite wide: it varied from direct transfer to the canvas or the engraving board of theatrical scenes and peculiarities of comedians' life to complex poetic, symbolic and philosophical concepts that were used to load characters. All this points to the special archetypal properties of the mask phenomenon and the need to study the mask archetype in the context of the European opera and theater tradition.

In the world science, the concept of «archetype» was first recorded in the texts of ancient thinkers, it found application in the works of medieval theologians, classical and non-classical philosophy. This concept is widely used in such scientific areas as linguistics, social and cultural anthropology, cultural studies, ethnography, and musicology. The study of the concept itself, the reflection about its meaning was first undertaken in the works of the Swiss scientist C. Jung. The archetypes in the works of the Swiss scientist are interpreted as «primary images», «repetitive models of experience», preserved in the collective unconscious of humanity and expressed in myths, religion, dreams, fantasies, as well as literary works.

Note that, although in most of the works devoted to the study of the concept of an archetype, there is a steady tradition to view the theory of archetypes as exclusively the work of C. G. Jung, nevertheless, it should be noted that Jung's theory was not born suddenly, «from scratch», it was preceded by a long theoretical search for thinkers of different time. As it is well known, «archetype» means a prototype, the root cause, the primary type, the prototype, the primary idea, the proto form in translation from Greek (arche — beginning and typos — sample) [5]. In this category, the concept of a typos is combined with one of the key concepts of the Milesian school philosophy, with the concept of «arche», interpreted as the origin, a certain common source and foundation of being. The main theme of early Greek philosophy was the search for a single, unchanging and indestructible in a variety of changeable, arising and destroyed. The philosophers of the Milesian school Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes and others tried to find some common source, the root cause, the main principle of being — «arche». Numerous searches for «the origin of being», «structure plan», «morphotype», «archetype», «unchanging structure» of objects led to the fact that in antiquity there is an idea of the unchanging, eternal ideal essence that exists before things (according to Plato's teachings) or in things (according to the teachings of Aristotle) and manifests itself in specific or individual differences as an ideal type, plan, norm.

Therefore, C. Jung repeatedly pointed out in his works that the theory of «original ideas» was in no way his «invention», he emphasized that he needed to turn to the concept of «archetype» to explain the complex processes occurring in man and society. The author of the theory of archetypes argued that «this name is correct and useful for our purposes, because it means that when we speak about the content of the collective unconscious, we are dealing with the most ancient, better to say, original types, that is, from time immemorial, with cash universal images» [8, p. 92]. That means that in the historically developed meaning of the concept of «archetype» Jung was attracted by universality. Using this term, he wanted to avoid any hint that it was a matter of content, and not of a hereditary, unimaginable fundamental structure.

Subsequent studies carried out in various fields of scientific knowledge based on the concept of the «archetype» of C. Jung carry out its implementation in various subject areas. At the same time, the category «archetype» is filled with the content of the scientific discipline in which it is used, as exemplified by numerous studies in such areas of humanitarian knowledge as literature, psychology, sociology, linguistics, cultural studies, musicology, etc. Thus, in modern science the concept «archetype» makes sense, on the

one hand, a broader and more multidimensional than in its initial interpretation of analytical psychology, on the other — a narrower one, adjusted within the framework of one or another scientific discipline.

Considering the mask as an archetype and identifying its properties is impossible without turning into a carnival with its elimination of subjectivity and compaction of the «I» structure, which appears in the carnival as the personification of anonymity, as indicated by Y. Kristeva [4, p. 552]. The carnival man, according to Kristeva, is impersonal, deprived of the usual boundaries of the identical, many-sided, masked. In the carnival there is no I-single, I-identical, but there are many images, masks in which it flashes, leaving its mark. So, in these masked images «I» doubles, it is being dramatized. The carnival mask destroys the ontological unity of the subject, acting as a halt in being and the possibility of a new experience of being. The mask, as Y. Kristeva presents it, is «yet-not-is-being», the mask is not being, not presence, but only a pure being possibility [4, p. 552].

As M. Bakhtin believes, in a carnival the body is devoid of the boundaries of an individual, identical, in the elements of carnival it exists as a grotesque, hyperbolic, ecstatic body: «It is never ready, not completed: it is always built, created and builds and creates another body itself; besides, the body absorbs the world and is absorbed by the world itself» [2, p. 195]. The images of ecstatic carnival bodies are found in Dante's «Inferno», where they appear as allegories of human properties, such as a liar, depicted with his head turned back, or angry, plunging knives. The ecstatic body lives on the border between the body and the body, it is the body as a metaphor, as a transformation, as an image. In this sense, the carnival person is a duality, two bodies coexist in it: one dying (the former, pre-carnival body), the other one conceived, the bear-born, the born — the carnival character. The mode of theatricality assumes that the subject itself (its body) is completely hidden behind the mask, goes into the role, in the represented character.

A mask image is a character played in a carnival, such as the figure of Harlequin or Columbine. In the game, the individual is always masked, always takes a different image, represents the other (his character), sorts, changes masks, hiding behind the mask of either a jester or death. Thus, an individual, hiding under different character masks, creates the ontological formula «the same, but always different.» Thus, in the carnival everyone is different and no one is himself.

The mask-image expresses the dynamism of being, its formation, transformation, which leads to the comprehension of the principle of carnival being — «not to be yourself». In a carnival, a person discovers his own being

at the point of non-coincidence with himself, dramatizes, loses the integral completeness in the game, ceases to coincide with himself, denying the identity of his «I», playing with the structures that previously constituted him, creating the opposite «I» — his mask-character.

Thus, the mask, concealing the former appearance of the individual, gave birth to a new state of his being, being under the sign of the mask. A mask is a way and a form of acquiring a new type of being an individual who is born in a carnival through a mask. The mask grows to the pre-carnival face, eclipses, replaces, eliminates it, indicating the absence of any original, single face; the mask-character becomes a new form of being of a person, his real face in a carnival.

A mask in the space of a carnival is a way of renouncing a person from the previous experience of being associated with the space of social norms and relations. The mask-character is a true figure of otherness, an image that opposes any monologism, any experience of self-identity, expressed in social norms. The mask expresses the liberation of a person from the experience of the identical and movement towards a different way and another form of existence. A person puts on a mask in the carnival to disappear, to leave the former system of coordinates in a new state, devoid of any solid foundations and boundaries that could fix the subject and his position in the world. The mask acts as an effective principle that shapes the being of a person, allowing it to be fulfilled, be accomplished in laughter and play as modes of human expression. It is a mask, born in laughter and play, that concentrates the experience of these modes of existence, actualizing them, giving them the opportunity to manifest, come true, sound, becoming a symbolic form of their implementation.

According to M. Bakhtin, «the mask is opposed to the completed being, it is a stop, an attempt to present being as an incomplete process...». And further, describing the mask as a metamorphosis of being, Bakhtin writes: «the mask is associated with the joy of shifts and reincarnations, with cheerful relativity, and with a cheerful denial of identity and unambiguity. With the denial of blunt coincidence with himself; the mask is associated with transitions, metamorphoses, violations of natural boundaries, with changes, with a nickname (instead of a name); the mask embodies the game beginning of life» [2, p. 35].

Among the numerous commedia dell'arte heroes, one can single out a number of masks that were part of most European theater companies and later became heroes of theatrical and operatic works: Harlequin, Pulcinella, Doctor, Captain, Pantalone, Scaramouche, Tartaglia, Pedrolino, Piero,

Lovers, Columbine, Servette and others. These characters are easily recognizable, thanks to the costume, attributes, gestures and facial expressions assigned to each character, thereby creating an easily recognizable psychological portrait of the theatrical hero. The characters — servants — zani, whose characters were subjected to numerous transformations, in accordance with the time and tastes of the public, enjoyed the greatest sympathy among the audience. Among the whole group of servants, Harlequin, Pulcinella and Pierrot gathered particular love among the spectators. Their characters turned out to be so plastic that they could literally represent the entire spectrum of human types, human comedy, an ambivalent fusion of passions and vices, good and evil, clown and real, carnal and romantic, physiological and elevated impulses, laughter and tears, etc. The rest of the characters preserved their characters without changes, without developing, as a result, they gradually lost their relevance and, as a result, the public and artists lost interest in them. As for the female characters, Columbines, Harlequins, Pierrette and others, they appeared on the stage as maidservants — companions -beloved zani, among whom the most popular among composers, writers and theater directors was the image of Columbine.

An important feature of the Italian commedia dell'arte was the presence of permanent types, «masks». In this case, «mask» means not only a special device that is worn on the face (although many of the characters of the commedia dell'arte really wore such masks), but also a certain socio-psychological type: arrogant ignoramus, broken servant, amorous old man, etc. Each of these characters had a certain costume and an unchanged set of stage techniques — characteristic expressions, gestures, and poses. The actor in the commedia dell'arte played the same role all his life, the same character in the different offered circumstances. From his youth he could go on stage as an old man, Pantalone, or, to his old age, play the young and playful Brigella.

There was no rigidly fixed dramatic text in the comedy dell'arte. There were scenarios that were just a diagram of the main events. The scenario consisted only of an outline of the main events. The lack of texts led to another feature of the commedia dell'arte — improvisation. The actors had to invent the text on the move in accordance with the character and psychological characteristics of that «mask», which became their stage alter ego, and improvisation became an obligatory aspect of the commedia dell'arte functioning. The most noticeable is the influence of the Italian commedia dell'arte in operatic works, where composers turn to this original source, emphasizing the idea of carnivalization, as exemplified by S. Prokofiev's opera «Love for Three Oranges».

Conclusions. The mask as a «cultural archetype» (S. Avernitsev) grows out of the very «soil of the unconscious,» the natural and cultural characteristics of the existence of a people in history [1, p. 54]. The inherent principles of a particular opera and theatrical character to choose the models of thinking and unconditional imperatives of behavior are contained in the archetype of a mask in an extremely concentrated form. The mask, mask-character, mask-image symbolically shapes the experience of playing and laughing, takes a person out of the empirical, everyday, hiding and denying his former face. The mask, thus, transcends human existence, carries in itself the possibility for a person to become another, to switch to a different kind of being, speaking in the carnival as the principle of ontological transformation of man. At the same time, the mask gives a person a new face as a sign of a new experience of being, a carnival being. A person who has put on a mask represents the world as a space of transformations, metaphors, endless playing, becoming, which in principle does not know the end. Being in a mask is always agile, changeable, unstable, incomplete, incomplete. It always becomes, opposing any definition, escaping exposure, excluding the identity of the person hiding under the mask. The world is built up around the mask as a metamorphosis, it embodies the idea of its variability, polyphony, and diversity. The world expressed through a mask is a world of relative, unstable, mobile, devoid of any definite principles. This is the world of becoming, flickering, blinking, in which only the mask lives.

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