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SEMANTICS OF THE MASK-IMAGE IN EASTERN MUSICAL AND THEATRICAL TRADITION

***Purpose of the article** is to identify the semantics of the mask-image in the eastern musical and theatrical tradition. **The methodology of the work** is determined by the unity of the semantic, historical and cultural, theater, national-style, comparative and musicological approaches, allowing to develop a single research basis. **The scientific novelty** of the work is related to the consideration of the functional and artistic aspects of the mask image in the eastern theater school as one of the main semantic foundations of national theater systems. **Conclusions.** The considered eastern art and theater systems give us reason to believe that in the eastern tradition it is customary to consider the whole complex of expressive means under the category «mask», which includes: a mask, a character's costume, special forms of intonation and gestures inherent in this particular mask, where all this is clearly canonized. A masked face, «mask-make-up», in the eastern tradition, is only a part of the «mask-image» that is created by the performer during the performance. The eastern model of the mask, unlike the western model, being historically more recent and also continuing to the present day, retains its connection with ancient rituals and is endowed with mystical content.*

***Keywords.** Mask, mask-make-up, mask-image, Noh theater, Kabuki theater, Beijing opera.*

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Семантика маски-образу у східній музично-театральній традиції

*Метою статті є виявлення семантики маски-образу у східній музично-театральній традиції. **Методологія** роботи визначається єдністю семантичного, історико-культурологічного, театрознавчого, національно-стильового, компаративного й музикознавчого підходів, що дозволяють виробити єдиний базис дослідження. **Наукова новизна** роботи пов'язана з розглядом функціонального й художнього аспектів маски-образу у східній театральній школі як однієї з головних семантичних основ національних театральних систем. **Висновки.** Розглянуті східні художньо-театральні системи дають підстави вважати, що у східній традиції під категорією «маска» треба розуміти весь комплекс виразних засобів, у який включені: маска, костюм персонажа, особливі форми інтонування й жести, властиві саме цій масці, де все це чітко канонізоване. Особа, загримована під маску, «маска-грим» у східній традиції — це тільки частина «маски-образу», яка створюється виконавцем під час спектаклю. Східна модель маски на відміну від західної моделі, будучи історично більш пізньою й до того ж триваючою до наших днів, зберігає свій зв'язок із прадавніми ритуалами, наділяється містичним змістом.*

Ключові слова: маска, маска-грим, маска-образ, театр Но, театр Кабукі, пекінська опера.

Relevance of the article. Musical and theatrical art is one of the oldest and most developed forms of art, possessing, on the one hand, general laws and similar social and communicative functions, and on the other, it is in the musical and theatrical tradition that the national setting is most prominently represented. A unique functional element of the theatrical tradition that distinguishes it from other spheres of cultural activity is the transformation of a person into another creature and the subsequent action in a transformed form on behalf of a fictional creature, as many art historians and theater experts wrote about (K. Preis, A. Avdeev, N. Evreinov etc.). Most researchers argued that it is the ability to transform that is a prerequisite for all varieties of theatrical and scenic art, from the first elementary forms of theatrical performance to the modern state of the theater, where the theater is a complex multi-level system. One of the most common auxiliary means of reincarnation throughout the development of the theater and stage tradition, which allowed to change the appearance and create a characteristic and recognizable stage image, is a mask.

The aim of the article is to identify the semantics of the mask-image in the eastern musical and theatrical tradition. **The methodology of the work** is determined by the unity of the semantic, historical and cultural, theater, na-

tional-style, comparative and musicological approaches, allowing to develop a single research basis. **The scientific novelty of the work** is related to the consideration of the functional and artistic aspects of the mask-image in the eastern theater school as one of the main semantic foundations of national theater systems.

Presenting the main material. Among the various theatrical and stage systems in which the mask-image acquires a special character, the eastern theater tradition should be singled out as a single complex with similar internal laws and artistic principles. This complex consists of such theater traditions as the Beijing musical drama, the Japanese Noh theater, the Kabuki theater, etc., in which the mask plays a crucial role and is one of the most significant elements in the structure of theatrical action, introducing a unique national and cultural flavor to it. The phenomenon of the theater mask as a cultural artifact has a direct and very strong connection with the historical, aesthetic and religious context, within which it was formed and further developed.

As in the European theater tradition, in the eastern theater the initial formation of the cultural and functional parameters of the mask-image was ritual in nature and was directly related to ritual activity. As L. Levy-Bruhl points out, a mask as a ritual object became a mechanism for transforming a person into the essence that the mask represented [4]. A similar interpretation of the functional purpose and semantic filling of the mask, which is close to ritual, is observed in the theater systems of many countries of the East, including Japan and China.

In the Japanese Noh theater, which is also known as the theater Noh and the theater of *nogaku*, the mask is understood as a kind of ritual and magical object, which is one of the most important elements of the performance, accumulating a complex multi-level semantic system that strictly regulates the principles of the stage embodiment of a specific character and a certain spiritual state transmitted by the actor. Masks in the Japanese Noh theater appeared as generalized images of deities or demons, the ideas of which were formed as a result of centuries-old ritual and cult practices, and the actor putting on a mask did not disguise himself as a demon, but became him.

The historical development of the Noh theater model rooted in archaic Japanese culture (13 thousand years BC — early VI century AD). In the worldview of an archaic society, there were no differences between the world of gods and the world of people. Man and the deified nature and the material world coexisted as a whole, then Shintoism began to take shape — the original belief of the Japanese that the *Kami* deity lives in every natural phenomenon and in every thing. There was a need for intermediaries who communicated with the spirits of nature. In Japan, it was mainly women who were called

miko (priestess, shaman). From the rituals conducted by Miko, the Japanese literary, theatrical and musical traditions came. It is generally accepted among many scholars of *nogaku* that this theatrical art evolved from the song and dance performances of *sarugakuno-no* (literally, «professionals performing monkey games,» one of the stages of the development of *sarugaku*), originating in the performances of Chinese performers who arrived in Japan at the end of VIII century, in city squares, rural sanctuaries and temples.

As N. Anarina points out, the performers of the *sarugakuno-no* applied elements of entertaining art in their skill: acrobatics, juggling, singing and dancing. These performances were the first spectacles that were not directly related to ritual art and temple holidays. In the performing arts of *sarugakuno-no* areal, entertaining aesthetics dominated. The technique of the performers of *sarugakuno-no* was different from the technique of *trance miko*.

The synthetic technique of performers *sarugakuno-no* also formed the basis of the technique of performing art *nogaku*. It requires a trained body and skill in order to capture the interest of the audience. In addition to the rituals in *nogaku*, secular roots of spectacular art are strong [1].

The widespread use of masks in theatrical tradition in Japan, according to many researchers, began in the period of VI–VIII centuries, when this stage element began to be widely used in performances of a song-dance character. Artistic and theatrical forms in their development have not reached the level where the plot could be conveyed in the form of developed dramaturgy yet. The viewer perceived the significance of what is happening only through imaginative means of expression — choreography, pantomime, music, colorful costumes, and the mask played a leading role in understanding the meaning of the main idea of the performance. For the actor, the mask becomes the main basis for building the character of the hero, since it expressed the very essence of the character.

The main principles of *Noh* theater were formed under the powerful influence of the religious system of Buddhism. T. Grigoryeva, a researcher of Japanese traditional culture, draws parallels between the ideas of Buddhism (in particular, Zen Buddhism) and the ideas of *Noh* theater, revealing common features in the problems and aesthetics. In her opinion, both practitioners have the ultimate goal of achieving enlightenment. «The ultimate aim of the *Way-Noh* is to awaken, transform a person destined for the original Harmony» [3, p. 560].

The desire in theatrical action to convey what is above all and is inherent in the nature of things — *Makoto* (truth, sincerity), is the basis of theatrical aesthetics, formed under the influence of religious teachings. At different

times, various qualities of Makoto beauty were appreciated in art, and aesthetic categories were already formed from this, but in any case, the leading was the desire to see beauty in a simple, extremely concise image. Nothing superfluous should be present in the character's appearance — only half expression, understatement, emotional «sketch» of the mood expressed by the Noh mask. As T. Grigoryeva noted, on the one hand, you need to be able to express beauty with a hint, on the other hand, it's enough to accurately depict the most genuine in each character. External resemblance to the actor was necessary for a more accurate transformation into the presented image, for a more skillful disclosure of his flower (khan) [3].

The action in the Noh theater is born as a result of the interaction of the choir, musicians and the direct stage action of the actors — *nogakushi*. The holistic system of synthesis of arts in East and Southeast Asia is based on the musical arts (music and singing), followed by the plastic arts, then painting and sculpture, which is reflected in the artistic phenomenon of the Noh theater. Researcher of *Nogaku* E. V. Yuzhakova gives a scheme according to which art coexists in *nogaku*. She formulates five levels, five hierarchical levels. Music is placed in the center of the circuit (core) — «the spirit of Noh art, its core, «the voice of the inaudible», harmonizing all the elements through the rhythmic law of *jo-ha-kyu godan*, a style-forming beginning» [7, p. 9]. The next level is the word (as the highest manifestation is the song); further movement (as the highest manifestation — dance); sculpture and painting (dance poses, masks, costumes, props, a picture of a pine on the backdrop of the stage); architecture and art of the garden (the arrangement of the stage framing its strip of white gravel, three young pine trees)» [7, p. 9]. Thus, in the Noh theater, one of the fundamental principles of the oriental synthesis of arts («all in one, one in all») is implemented.

But it was rather difficult to get to the theater's exquisite performances, since it was intended for the higher aristocracy, which provoked the emergence in the Japanese culture of the theater more accessible to the masses — the Kabuki theater. In addition to the opportunity to attend the performances of the Kabuki theater by representatives of the lower class, the performances themselves were of a more meaningful character. The emergence of one of the medieval genres of Japanese theater art Kabuki has an exact dating — 1603, and the name itself was given by the public, since at that time the word «*kabuki*» meant something outlandish, extravagant. Subsequently, the name of the theater was chosen by the homonymous spelling *ka* (song), *bu* (dance) and *ki* (mastery) with hieroglyphs, which leads to the interpretation of the Kabuki theater as a demonstration of «the skill of singing and dancing».

Despite the great democracy in comparison with the Noh theater, the rules of Kabuki are not less strict, and following the ritual and theatrical canon was rigorous. Although there were no masks in the full sense of the word at the Kabuki theater, their functions were taken over by a special make-up that was superimposed on the faces of the actors, which made facial expressions extremely inactive. Therefore, the actor's face in the Kabuki theater is perceived as equivalent to a mask and appears to be an element of ritual theatrical action that meets the canons of a single aesthetic concept and presentation style.

It is also noteworthy that the tendency to turn the performer's face into a mask was already outlined in the theater. But actors who played without a «mask-object» on their faces turned the face into a motionless mask. It happened like this: the performers kept their expression invariably simple, without changing it in any way. On the one hand, the face was supposed to be completely simple, not tense, but on the other hand, motionless, demonstrating detachment and immersion in a certain meditative state.

Each role in the Japanese theater of Kabuki corresponds to a certain mask-like make-up «Kumadori», which is canonical and over the past centuries also turned into a real skillful craft, as well as a strictly prescribed manner of performance and vocal intonation. Music in the representations of the Kabuki theater is in many ways similar to those principles that existed in the Noh theater.

The specificity of Chinese theater models is that they are closely associated with rituals, both cult and state, not only by their primitive nature, but also in connection with their worldview and social concept. The ritual in China was understood as the ordering of everything in the world, this is its main difference from other eastern rituals. Taoist rituals and a complex, elaborate court ritual system were oriented towards achieving harmony between the world and man. Music in China, as well as in India, is highly revered and considered an art that originated in the world of the gods. «Music is the harmony of Heaven and Earth. A ritual is an order (sequence) of Heaven and Earth, therefore hundreds of things are transformed <...>. Music is a great beginning, a ritual is a life affirmation of things, therefore ritual and music follow each other» [6, p. 48]. Perhaps that is why in the Chinese traditional theater model, music and singing prevailed over movements and gestures (unlike India). «Music is the soul of the actor's art. Melody and rhythm, like a tense nerve, permeating the stage action, lead to the unity of the variety of acting expressive means» [5, p. 149].

The Chinese classical theater also has its own special, extremely accurately developed artistic and theatrical theory, according to which, in the strict framework of traditional symbolism, make-up is performed having an exact system of conditional image. Make-up is a «hualien» mask that is not worn, but applied directly to the face. Note that this particular tradition of using the make-up mask in the Beijing opera is continued in the theatrical tradition of Kabuki.

According to Chinese art and theater theory, there are eight categories of psychological types: nobility, baseness, wealth, poverty, stupidity, insanity, illness and intoxication. To express these types, the actor has four expressive means at his disposal: sight, look, voice, gesture, or movement. To express the nobility there is recommended: a positive look, a direct look, a deep voice and hard steps. To express baseness: insinuating voice, slanting eyes, wide shoulders, quick gait, etc. The same strict regulation there is in make-up. In the Chinese classical theater, the whole variety of roles comes down to five types of stage characters: the positive character is «shen», the heroine — «dan», a negative or warlike hero — «jing», a comedian — «chow» and secondary persons — «mo». These types are divided into classes and doubled by dividing them into military and civilian [5].

The treatise «Mirror of the Enlightened Spirit» lists in detail the emotions that the main characters of the Beijing opera can experience. The performer conveys the feelings of heroes by all means of stage expressiveness. Juan Fan-Cho describes the canon of stage movements, facial expressions, voices and poses to convey each of the emotional states. To convey the feelings of the heroes more fully, the performer complements the singing with movements and gestures. «Each time, the expression of various emotional states should be supported by a gesture» [5, p. 165].

Chinese performers have a basic stance from which they begin movement. The main thing in it is a straight back and straight legs. This rack requires a good stretch and a strong muscle frame, which are formed by the artist since childhood. Training usually begins at the age of eight. The basic stand helps the performer to get away from everyday behavior in the embodiment of the canonical image. There are two main styles of performing movements: soft, smooth, feminine — yin, and sharp, strong, pathetic, heroic, courageous — yang. In the embodiment of the image, the artist has both styles, but one of them should be manifested more clearly in the implementation of movements and gestures.

Movements and gestures in the Chinese theater model contain aesthetic and sacred functions. The base rack is straight and upward, but the move-

ments of the performers are arched. The main misanscenic drawing in the Beijing Opera is movement in a circle. Thus, the idea expresses the idea of merging the Earth, Heaven and man: «The square platform is the Earth; stage movement along oval trajectories — is the Heaven; a man-actor acts according to the laws of the surrounding world and the laws of religious ritual, designed to streamline and harmonize the relationship of the earthly and heavenly» [5].

The asymmetry and symmetry of the coloring play an important role, the first being characteristic of negative types, the second — of positive ones. The make-up is more or less uniform for the roles of «sheng», «dan» and «chow», where weak make-up and solid colors appear, with the exception of «chow», the obligatory coloring for which is the presence of a white «butterfly» on the bridge of the nose. For the roles of «mo» and especially «jing», the combination of colors is complex and significant. The main colors for the role of «jing» are black, white and red, and complementary gold, silver, purple, green, yellow and blue. Usually a known combination of colors expresses a conditional psychological complex. For example, white and red colors in their pure state give a positive characteristic, but as soon as black tones are added to the white background and white tones are added to the red background, the characteristic becomes negative.

As many scholars of Beijing opera traditions, including T. Budaev, point out, the origins of Chinese theater music go back to folklore and the forms of traditional professional music. The performances of most types of shitsui are the collective work of several generations of actors, musicians, playwrights, whose names, as a rule, were not preserved or were little known to the public. In theatrical music, numerous variants of folk songs, narrative chants, instrumental tunes, passing a long process of development and transformation, gradually formed integral melodic systems with specific intonational-rhythmic features that are quite easily distinguishable by ear [2, p. 24]. Each type of musical drama absorbed the music of its region, and therefore each type of shitsui, including the Beijing Opera, is characterized by an individual intonation basis. The amazing variety of types of shitsui, both existing over several centuries and arising only a hundred years ago, reflect the versatility of Chinese theater art.

Conclusions. The considered eastern art and theater systems give us reason to believe that in the eastern tradition it is customary to consider the whole complex of expressive means under the category «mask», which includes the following: a mask, a character's costume, special forms of intonation and gestures inherent in this particular mask, where all this is clearly

canonized. A masked face, «mask-make-up», in the eastern tradition, is only a part of the «mask-image» that is created by the performer during the performance. The eastern model of the mask, unlike the western model, being historically more recent and also continuing to the present day, retains its connection with ancient rituals and is endowed with mystical content. Mystical content is understood as penetration into the innermost meaning of things and is achieved as a result of merging with it, tuning to one common wave. The mask becomes a window into the innermost and unknown as a certain foreign sign, although it does not name it specifically, but alludes to mystery and hidden meanings. The phenomenon of the mask is interpreted as a way by which the actor approaches the secrets of being, penetrates into its essential depths. Using the mask, more content than usual is embedded, it helps the viewer and the actor himself to reach the verbal layers of the created image. Spiritual experience can be explained only through a symbolic language, which is the existence of a mask in eastern traditions. A mask is a symbol where color, shape and movement are clearly regulated.

It is not uncommon for a mask in the eastern theatrical tradition to be created with the help of make-up or when make-up takes the form of a mask that has strictly canonized forms, the conditional and symbolic character of the image, while in the European tradition that is not given the dominant value. The existence of a mask in an eastern theater, we can say, finds its continuation in the body and figure of the actor, it is superimposed not only on the actor's face, but as if on the whole body and as a result combines in a syncretic unity with his play, becoming at the same time a mask-image, which is the totality of all the expressive means of the actor and constitutes the visual-verbal shell of the image created by the actor in the stage space.

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