
ІСТОРИЯ ТА ТЕОРІЯ МУЗИЧНОГО МИСТЕЦТВА І КУЛЬТУРИ

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THE SACRED CANTATAS OF J. S. BACH AND MODERN ASPECTS OF THEIR RESEARCH

*The aim of the article is to identify new guidelines and directions for the study of cantata creativity of J. S. Bach. Aspects of the genre nature, typology of works are considered, examples of analysis of the composer text as a complex of expressive qualities of Bach's artistic and intonational language in the performance of interpretation are given. **The research methodology** involves the use of historical, art and cultural methods, musical performance analysis for interpretation, comparative and theoretical generalizations. **Scientific novelty** is determined by the perspective and research methodology associated with a focused study of the entire body of modern bachovedenie (study connected with Bach) with the identification of the range of expressive means used to implement the artistic image. **Conclusions.** Vocal-choral music, created in accordance with the requirements of the Protestant liturgical ritual (called Kirchenmusik, Kirchenstuck before the eighteenth century), obeying it and starting from it, in composer reading, expands the framework of concepts about creative freedom and boldness of the author's interpretation of the original Book of Genesis texts (according to F. Melancton).*

Spiritual cantata music, being a school of Bach's vocal style, sacred music with text, among other things, clarifies, sheds light on many issues of music without text: from articulation, phrasing, etc. to the principles of dramaturgy,

the highest spiritual meaning. It is also worth mentioning direct borrowings in instrumental music from cantatas, the so-called autoparods.

German ecclesiastical oratory was the cause of the emergence of examples of exalted religiosity, exaltation and intellectualism in music. Reviving the tradition of two hundred years ago, but remaining a composer of the 18th century, Johann Sebastian Bach created works filled with spirituality and mystical optimism, belonging to eternity, turned to God.

Key words: *sacred cantatas, typology of cantatas expressiveness, musical rhetoric, “Bach vocal style”, figurative vocabulary, performing analysis.*

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Сучасні аспекти дослідження духовних кантат Й. С. Баха

Метою статті є виявлення нових орієнтирів і напрямів дослідження кантатної творчості Й.С. Баха. Розглядаються аспекти жанрової природи, типології творів, наводяться приклади аналізу композиторського тексту як комплексу виразних якостей бахівської художньо-інтонаційної мови у виконанні-інтерпретації. **Методологія** дослідження передбачає застосування історичного, мистецтвознавчого та культурологічного методів, музично-виконавського аналізу для інтерпретаційно-порівняльного і теоретичного узагальнень. **Наукова новизна** визначається ракурсом і методологією дослідження, пов'язаними з цілеспрямованим вивченням всього корпусу сучасного бахведедення з виявленням кола виразних засобів, використовуваних для втілення художнього образу. **Висновки.** Вокально-хорова музика, створена відповідно до вимог протестантського богослужбового ритуалу (до XVIII ст. – *Kirchenmusik, Kirchenstuck*), підкоряючись йому і відштовхуючись від нього, в композиторському прочитанні, розсовує рамки понять про творчу свободу і сміливість авторського тлумачення Книги Буття, оригінальних духовних текстів (по Ф. Меланхтон).

Духовна кантатна музика, будучи школою бахівського вокального стилю, духовною музикою з текстом, в тому числі прояснює, проливає світло на багато питань музики без тексту: від артикуляції, фразування тощо до принципів драматургії, вищого духовного сенсу. Варто згадати також про прямі запозичення в інструментальній музиці з музики кантат, так званих автопародій.

Німецьке церковне ораторське мистецтво послужило причиною виникнення зразків піднесеної релігійності, екзальтованості і інтелектуалізму в музиці. Відроджуючи традицію двохсотлітньої давності, але залишаючись композитором XVIII століття, Йоганн Себастьян Бах написав твори, сповнені духовності і містичного оптимізму, що належать вічності, звернені до Бога.

Ключові слова: *духовні кантати, типологія виразності кантат, музична риторика, «бахівський вокальний стиль», фігурально лексика, виконавський аналіз.*

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Современные аспекты исследования духовных кантат И. С. Баха

Целью статьи является выявление новых ориентиров и направлений исследования кантатного творчества И.С. Баха. Рассматриваются аспекты жанровой природы, типологии произведений, приводятся примеры анализа композиторского текста как комплекса выразительных качеств баховского художественно-интонационного языка в исполнении и интерпретации. **Методология** исследования предполагает применение исторического, искусствоведческого и культурологического методов, музыкально-исполнительского анализа для интерпретационно-сравнительного и теоретического обобщений. **Научная новизна** определяется ракурсом и методологией исследования, связанными с целенаправленным изучением всего корпуса современного баховедения с выявлением круга выразительных средств, используемых для воплощения художественного образа. **Выводы.** Вокально-хоровая музыка, созданная в соответствии с требованиями протестантского богослужебного ритуала (до XVIII в. – *Kirchenmusik, Kirchenstück*), подчиняясь ему и отталкиваясь от него, в композиторском прочтении раздвигает рамки понятий о творческой свободе и смелости авторского толкования Книги Бытия, оригинальных духовных текстов (по Ф. Меланхтону).

Духовная кантатная музыка, будучи школой баховского вокального стиля, духовной музыкой с текстом, в том числе проясняет, проливает свет на многие вопросы музыки без текста: от артикуляции, фразировки и так далее до принципов драматургии, высшего духовного смысла. Стоит упомянуть также о прямых заимствованиях в инструментальной музыке из музыки кантат, так называемых автопародиях.

Немецкое церковное ораторское искусство послужило причиной возникновения образцов возвышенной религиозности, экзальтированности и интеллектуализма в музыке. Возрождая традицию двухсотлетней давности, но оставаясь композитором XVIII века, Иоганн Себастьян Бах создал произведения, исполненные духовности и мистического оптимизма, принадлежащие вечности, обращенные к Богу.

Ключевые слова: духовные кантаты, типология выразительности кантат, музыкальная риторика, «баховский вокальный стиль», фигуральная лексика, исполнительский анализ.

Relevance. Analysis of musicological studies of J. S. Bach shows how interest in the artistic objects of Bach art, attracting the attention of scientists, and the angle of view when approaching them, and scientific analysis methods, changed over time. And this is due not only to the development of scientific thought, but also to the immense content of Bach's work. At each historical stage of this work study, more and more new layers of content are revealed; new artistic means are used by the composer.

In the first half of the XIX century, 37 musical, historical and biographical works were published. They were devoted to the life and creative heritage of J.S. Bach. By the end of the XX century, the volume of foreign and domestic studies began to be counted in the thousands, which singled out this area of musicology as a separate branch – “bachovedenie”. Among foreign publications corresponding to a new level of knowledge, we note the most authoritative ones – first of all, the New Bach edition of the Neue Bach-Ausgabe (abbreviated NBA) – the edition has about 90 volumes, the publication has been carried out since 1954 by Bach-Dokumente in 3 volumes (translated into Russian); “Bach-Compendium” – a complete and very detailed academic publication – an analytical and bibliographic encyclopedia with a huge reference apparatus – in 3 volumes (edited by H. Schulz and K. Wolf), selected works of foreign musicologists and performers – A. and V. Neumannov, R. Marshall, N. Arnonkur, V. Sigmund-Schuld. Among researchers and biographers of recent years, we cite the work of conductors called D. E. Gardiner and P. Williams; books, articles on Bach topics in leading foreign universities.

The work of domestic musicologists in recent years of XX-XXI centuries are represented by anniversary editions – collections of articles “Bach and Modernity” (published by “Muzichna Ukraina”, K., 1985), “Russian Book of Bach” (edited by T. Livanov, V. Protopopov, M., 1985). The works of N. Goryukhina, N. Gerasimova-Persidskaya, T. Livanova, Y. Kholopov, M. Lobanova, M. Druskina, V. Storozhuk, T. Müller, M. Berdennikova, A. Rovenko, V. Nosina, O. Zakharova and others are widely known. In the 90s and further in the Ukrainian musicology, a significant enrichment of the bachovedenie subjects took place. The interest of new generation scientists in studying the vocal heritage of J. S. Bach – cantatas, masses, Passions and other genres of Bach vocal music – has especially increased. A study of the composer’s aesthetics, features of the author’s style, performing interpretations and other questions are developed in articles, dissertation studies, books by E. Berdennikova, E. Kholodova, V. Shirokova, N. Zabolotnaya, S. Serenko and other authors.

Nowadays, the situation with musicological material, musical texts, and the dubbing of the works of the great Master has changed dramatically. If the last decade of the XX century the musical material of his spiritual cantatas in Ukraine was a narrow segment of university and private state libraries musical literature,

then modern access to materials is completely open, exhaustively complete collections of the composer's works are presented. Such, for example, is the collection of opus by J. S. Bach, digitized by the International Music Score Library ([www. Bach-digital.de](http://www.Bach-digital.de)), and All of Bach – digitized by the Dutch Bach society. On the website called, for example, Bach Cantatas Website, all the sacred and secular cantatas are contained. The most famous of them are presented on many other Internet addresses, etc.

Thus, the relevance of the topic is determined by the need for a comprehensive study and popularization of the cantata heritage of J. S. Bach in Russian and, in particular, Ukrainian musicology and performance.

Presenting the main material. In the works of the author of this article, Bach's spiritual cantatas and their performing interpretations are considered in the unity of the ritual-hymnic and concert-artistic lines of semantic content. Cantatas, as musical works, are artistically self-sufficient and constitute an antinomic unity of semantic qualities, generating a multiplicity of performing readings. Among them, taking into account the well-known opinions on the division of cantatas into groups by similar characteristics from different authors, we identified two main genre trends: passion and cant-choral, with their peculiarities in performing interpretations.

Another consideration aspect of cantatas based on hermeneutic analysis was proposed by E. Berdennikova. Exploring a large amount of sacred music, the author identified two types of cantatas: inclusive and generative (these names demonstrate the type of action of the Lutheran Choral in the cantata as a conceptual basis of the composition, respectively generalizing and cross-cutting). In her works, the musical material of spiritual works is considered in accordance with the laws of the Protestant sermon at the levels of the correlation of words, text and intonational and thematic plan of compositions. The author's attention is focused on philosophical and theological issues and their impact on the compositional and dramatic structure of the composition as an example of church and music sermon. In their interaction, they consider homilies - (statutory norms of church preaching, as the oldest form of worship) and their influence on the cantatas' musical drama, as a result of which the author comes to the conclusion that "the logic of oratory disposition is universal for Bach's spiritual genres" [1, p. 146].

E. Berdennikova explores the interaction of the leaders of the Reformation influences – Martin Luther, Erasmus of Rotterdam,

later – Philip Melancthon, their awareness of the basic principles of the “new” church (often contradictory) on the formation of various types of Protestant preaching. So in the XVI century, a sermon, according to M. Luther, should have been presented in the service in an accessible, intentionally simplified way, without frills. In his opinion, thus, religious dogmas could be most successfully assimilated by the flock. In contrast to Luther, E. Rotterdam insisted on an artfully refined, “learned” version of the sermon, built according to the laws of rhetoric. He argued that the laws of beauty in the sermon are able to more deeply affect the souls of parishioners and convey to their hearts the hidden meanings of the divine wisdom of biblical texts. Later, in the XVIII century, F. Melancthon, synthesizing the two previous principles and combining the accessibility of worship with his artistic and rhetorical design, insisted on a renaissance understanding of the preacher’s personality, close attention to his personality: “The main thing (in the sermon) that is preserved – is the role of the individual, its talent” [1, p. 6].

The Bach manifestation of individual composer’s freedom, in our opinion, in the musical embodiment of the Protestant sermon was not only a manifestation of unique talent, but a deeply felt theological conviction. As one of many confirmations: the idea of the choir “Durch Dein Gefangnis, Gottes Sohn, ...” (“Through your captivity, Son of God, freedom has come to us ...”) was very close to J. S. Bach and was often used by him in compositions.

We emphasize that the main aesthetic constant of West European baroque – “musica poetica” (a term coined by cantor Listenius in 1537) was based on the positions of musical rhetoric. The artistic laws of speech, being universal, became decisive for the musical thinking of the Baroque era (works of M. Druskin, P. Bernari, O. Zakharova, etc.). It is quite necessary in this regard that the performers and musicologists address the issues of musical rhetoric and the accompanying musical symbols, numerology, emblems, the theory of wit, etc.

The study by E. Kholodova indicated that if poetry, according to the Aristotelian principle, is imitation and decoration, then the composer of the Baroque era is given the role of orator, preacher, poet, artist and even... “Sculptor” in synthesis, which corresponds to the artistic representations of this era. This statement echoes the definition of M. Lobanova: “The musical meaning in the Baroque era is directly dependent on the word, image, subordinated to the

direct transmission of affect... Music, in accordance with general cultural aspirations, gravitates to the “synthesis of arts”. Therefore, its connections with allegorical and emblematic teachings, with the theory of “wit” connecting the verbal and graphic series, establishing the laws of new artistic logic and striving for the search for increased expression, ambiguity of art, its ability to sense overload and escalation of tension ”are clear [6, p. 9]. In the works of E. Kholodova, attention is paid to the works of foreign authors in her own translations. The issues of Bach’s musical rhetoric are considered. In Bach’s works, his figurative vocabulary, the author writes: “... a logical conclusion to the history of music poetry style and the opening of a fundamentally new era in the history of musical art is the era of absolute music” [8, p. 18]. Interestingly, E. Kholodova’s observation by N. Harnoncourt regarding Bach’s intonational language that the composer “... transferred the Italian dictionary of musical speech to German, which greatly aggravated accents... and again returned the figures from instrumental to vocal” [8, p. 178], which connects the composer’s bold use of dissonant harmonies in vocal music. We emphasize that the phenomenon of Bach’s intonation thinking, his “figurative vocabulary”, based on the virtuoso use of dissonance in rhetorical figures (motifs, leaps, expression effects, etc.), corresponding to vocal embodiment, later became compared with the style of baroque art as a whole. In contemporary performance, having stood out in the concept of “Bach vocal style”, it represents a special direction: the concepts of “Bach’s vocalist” and “Bach’s orchestra” appeared.

In addition to studying the genre nature of the spiritual cantata and determining its typology of expressiveness, we give some examples of the analysis of composer text individual details as part of the performing approach.

“Rhetorical figures”, (a set of the most used of them is presented in detail in the work of O. Zakharova, [3]), were used by composers for “oratory” refinement – decorating in music and creating certain artistic states – “affects” that can excite (style “concitato”), persuade, delight, portray, express in accordance with the following principles:

– the principle of “set” of a figure (by its verbal analogy) endowed with a compositional and dramatic role, for example, “exclamatio” – “exclamation” (used by Bach in various, often contrasting versions: consonant, dissonant). This principle affirmed the importance of the figure motive;

– the principle of semantic interaction of identical figures: for example, the figure “*arpedggio*” could depict “the excitement of the sea”, but also mean “awe of the angel wings”, “awe of the believing soul” and other multiple subtexts that complement the image. When combined with similar in content, “related” figures, “hidden meaning” was born in musical synthesis, the semantic symbol is the subtext laid down by the author. This effect contributed to the “volume”, picturesqueness of the image, the ambiguity of its reading;

– the principle of imposing musical rhetorical figures of the opposite meaning, giving rise to a new, artistically complex musical image, which in itself was a discovery in the field of musical art of that time (which caused misunderstanding and sharp reproaches of contemporaries!). Phenomenological is the fact of overcoming the narrow boundaries of musical picturesqueness “*stilo rappresentativo*” (“representational style”), adopted in the early Baroque era. As a result of the “superposition” of opposing images, new qualities of expressiveness emerged with unique artistic potential. The composer brilliantly realized the opportunity to discover, show and bring to the level of awareness by means of music embodied in perfect musical – constructive forms, the idea of the infinity of higher spiritual space – a kind of “musical space”.

One example of the special expressiveness of the episodes of special expressiveness generated by the combination of musical rhetorical figures that are opposite in artistic and figurative content is Choir No. 9 “*Sei nun wieder zufrieden*” (with the theme of the choir by George Neumark “*Wer nun lieben Gott lasst walten*”) from the choral Cantatas BWV No. 21 “*Ich hatte viel Bekkumernis*” (“I suffered a lot”). In No. 9 “*Cruz-Gloria*” – topos, two contrasting, opposite in content topics mixed in polyphonic movement are combined. This compositional technique implements the “principle of one-time contrast” (according to T. Livanova) known in musicology literature (see the works of N. Goryukhina, V. Protopopov, etc.). The combination of transcendental topics – Cruz (Cross, Suffering, Death) – catabasis and Gloria (Glories, Resurrection, Crowns) – anabasis in a parallel, one-time movement-contrast, is endowed with the power of semantic paradox. We read in the work of N. Goryukhina: “The combination of “momentary”, present and past in “*Passion*” is similar to the combination of planar and three-dimensional images. Thus, the composer reaches not only the depth of the image, but also the

combination of time, which has become one of the hallmarks of twentieth-century music, for example, in the Fifteenth Symphony of D. Shostakovich or the “War Requiem” of B. Britten [2, p. 30]. At the same time, in these topics there is a mixing of tension, “erasing the edges” of drama between them, balancing their antinomy, supplemented by an “objectively” sounding Choral (in the tenor part). E. Nazaikinskyi points out that “... the contrast that arises between the intensity of the feeling expressed in the musical work and the restraint of its external manifestations is one-time. It is clear from the term itself that it implies the simultaneous deployment of opposing principles in a single time. A contrast of this kind is directly related to the sphere of mental states, and not to the colliding theater characters, that means, it refers to the lyrics, and not to the drama” [7, p. 208]. Interesting is also the fact that No. 9 is located in the climax of the “golden section” of the whole composition. A moving, non-ceremonial pace, determined, like many masters of that era, by the correspondence of the phrase duration to one vocal-performing breath. This subtle detail, which is sometimes invisible to the musicological “eye”, is extremely important for performers in clarifying the sensation of the movement of musical time, which determines the artistic processes and logic of the composition. Two opposite principles, coexisting in parallel, do not conflict, but they interact, like the dual foundations of the World Order. In turn, the musical context of the “happening” is complex: its sphere is symbolized by the “intersections” of polyphonic contour lines, by the stresses of the changing verticals, asserting themselves in cadences. The choral, introduced into the texture with a syncopated technique (from 15 tons), personifies the factor of timeless objective Principle.

It is necessary to mention one of the main expressive components of No. 9 is the three-part tempo. Compared to the natural, intrinsic to man sensation of the duality of life rhythms (for example, steps, breathing, etc.), three-duality has the power of “shifting” emphasis. There arises a unique quality of hearing, defined by hearing, of tangible freedom, going beyond the framework, additional energy with which a strong share strives for its analogue, as if “stepping over” the beat – a kind of extension of the framework of the “human”. Returning to the pre-Bach time – the time of uncensored notation, when music science was directly linked to theological postulates, we recall that the three-part meter was given the features of the perfect (divine, symbol of the Trinity). The division of the

brevis into three or two lobes was called, respectively: three-dual – “tempus perfectum” (“perfect time, divine”) and two-parted – “tempus imperfectum” (“time imperfect, human”).

Obviously, Bach deliberately creates a musical continuum in which he works almost hypnotically, comforting, inspiring hope of an exalted, lyrical and dramatic experience in the tempo of three-duality of “perfect time”, at the same time making you feel the opposite feelings: in them the suffering and joy of Consolation seem to intertwine in balance with the Truth of being abiding in Eternity.

Conclusions. Vocal and choral music, created in accordance with the requirements of the Protestant liturgical ritual (called the Kirchenmusik, Kirchenstück before the eighteenth century), obeying it and starting from it, in composer reading, expands the framework of concepts of creative freedom and boldness of the author’s interpretation of the original Book of Genesis texts (according to F. Melancton).

Spiritual cantata music, being a school of Bach’s vocal style, sacred music with text, among other things, clarifies, sheds light on many issues of music without text: from articulation, phrasing, etc. to the principles of dramaturgy, the highest spiritual meaning. It is also worth mentioning direct borrowings in instrumental music from cantatas, the so-called auto-parodies.

German ecclesiastical oratory led to the emergence of patterns of exalted religiosity, exaltation and intellectualism in music. Reviving the tradition of two hundred years ago, but remaining a composer of the 18th century, Johann Sebastian Bach created works filled with spirituality and mystical optimism, belonging to eternity, turned to God.

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