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**PECULIAEITIES OF STAGE IMPERSONATION OF OPERATIC WORK:
FROM THE OPERA TEXT TO STAGING INTERPRETATION**

The article is devoted to the issues of stage impersonation of opera text, which is based on the director's reading and interpretation of the text of the operatic work. It analyzes the works of prominent theater and opera directors, examines the relationship of plastic and musical elements in the opera.

Keywords: operatic text, directorial interpretation, operatic dramaturgy, stage dramaturgy.

The staging, director's interpretation of the classic works in connection with the theatrical tradition are addressed by a number of works written by outstanding drama and opera directors. The appearance in the theater-stage genres of some "classic and traditional" productions leads to the emergence of stereotypes. Arguing on this topic, G. Tovstonogov wrote that classical works are often overgrown with "so many comments, so many prerequisites, so many examples of that the very work we perceive in someone else's interpretation" [9, p. 80]. Accenting the acuteness of the problem, which for opera and theatrical genres is important not to a lesser extent, many theater actors and directors speak of the necessity for certain author's vision of the text, which can even be paradoxical, blasting the tradition of interpretation of the text from the inside, but in doing so, emphasizing the uniqueness of the theatrical text. In fairness it should be noted that many of the theater, especially opera directors following this path – get addicted, which leads to a significant distortion of the text of the opera and the birth of some new integrity. Despite these negative aspects, the director must be ready to "otherness of the text" [2].

Thinking about the contact of classic text and interpreting consciousness A. Efros wrote: "Interpretation can be re-thought, but one can remove it from the play – of course, the subjective factor will still remain. But it seems to be mixed with the material itself. This mixture should be explosive" [10 p. 368]. This confirms that the essence of theatrical art – not in reproducing, but in producing the meaning that performance cannot be identical to the play. Therefore, the viewer, as well as the director, has an opportunity to "realize" the work: "After reading some play you tell

yourself: I know it, I know it. And it should be: I do not know, I do not know, I do not know! And the viewers do not know. But they will know "[10, p. 12].

The problem of the relationship of music and plastic elements of scenic text is touched in their books by outstanding theater and opera director Boris Pokrovsky. In this connection he uses metaphorical expression – "directing perpendicular": "... director's parallel is close to music without ever mixing with the author's intention. While the goal of the perpendicular is to achieve the author's text, articulated action with him, to give birth to a new quality ... Success depends on the angle at which it happened the visible articulation with an audible "[6, p. 201].

According to the understanding of B. Pokrovsky, stage drama and musical dramaturgy in opera are in a relationship of parity, that is, as some equivalent objects of goal-setting. Music creates psychological subtext of scenic situation, the scenic situation also allows specifying the semantic layer of musical performance: "Serving of music to drama carries the seed of the highest power of music. Dramaturgy as well as the "directing perpendicular", starts playing the role of that mine, which helps penetrating into the mysterious and wonderful depths of the music, opening its "double bottom", finding the meaning, invisible at superficial acquaintance. It, this contact angle, can occur only in the combination of knowledge and imagination" [7, p. 196]. The specificity of opera genre Pokrovsky defines as a synthesis, which is based on the opposition "music-action" [6, p. 106-107]. Polyphonic structure of the opera performance dictates the particular stage incarnation of the work; meaning setting can not be imposed from the outside viewer, but is generated by itself: "For us, the artistic act of opera performance is the comparison, the ratio of two elements: ready sense (music) and the logic of action (theater) ... artistic-emotional act of "docking" (the ratio of the visible and audible) should take place in the auditorium ..." [6, p. 109].

Thus, the problem of the relation of the director's vision and the existing staging traditions can be interpreted as the ratio of the level of music and action in the opera. Consequently, the issues of the art of acting and musical performance of the opera text here merge with the problem of coordination and interaction between different sign systems and methods for coding within the play.

Among the systematic researches on the problem of semiotics of theatrical genres, stands out the work by Yu. Lotman "Semiotics of the scene" [5], in which the researcher is building a system of binary oppositions in the structure of the stage text. The provisions of this study are of particular importance to clarify the significance of the concept of *opera text*, which functions in its two guises – as a principle and as a form.

The complexity of understanding of the text of any theatrical genre is in the possession of the specific language in which the communication takes place between all parties of the stage dialogue. In the case of dramatic performance the participants of the dialogue should include the author, actor, director and audience. In the case of opera the task becomes much more complicated, since, on the one hand, the participants in the dialogue become more – they are joined by the conductor, orchestra, ballet, in some cases, on the other – the language of stage action is joined by a complex semiotic music system – the language of music.

Provided misunderstanding of one of the segments of the opera text, the entire text turns out to be incomprehensible, as the "only language proficiency allows art communication with the author and actors. Incomprehensible language is always weird, "[4, p. 586]. Developing the idea of an incomprehensible language, Yu. Lotman gives an example of how ancient scribes likened those speaking incomprehensible languages to the *dumb*. That is, when the language code is not clear to us, it ceases to sound at all.

It is noteworthy that Yu. Lotman in his work on semiotics of the scene almost immediately addresses by the problem of understanding the opera, giving quite a striking confirmation of the special difficulty of understanding the opera text. He writes that when L. Tolstoy was thinking about the "building of contemporary civilization", in this very building, in his view there was no place for the opera, because he rejects the "language of the opera as "unnatural", causing "opera immediately turning into nonsense" [4, p. 587]. The main reason for such a bold statement of L. Tolstoy is "that recitative is not spoken so, and in quartet standing at certain distance, waving his hands, no one expresses feelings, with foil halberds,

wearing slippers, in pairs people go nowhere except in the theater, no one is so angry, so sentimental, no one laughs, no one cries this way ... there can be no doubt" [quoted by 4, p. 587]. The above quotation confirms the idea of Yu. Lotman that if the language of the work is incomprehensible in its entirety for the listener for receiving information of the subject, the message does not reach its destination, the text is not sounding, dumb.

In the proposed system approach of Lotman, one of the important pillars of theatrical language is the specificity of the artistic scene space. Thus, in this system, the central place is occupied by the existence of the oppositions existence – non-existence and significant – non-significant. The opposition of *existence – non-existence* reveals the presence of the "fourth wall", implying a fact that since the beginning of the play the audience does not exist. This applies equally to the actors on stage (singers), and for spectators themselves in the audience (listeners). In the theater of the European tradition this moment is shown with the dive of the hall into the darkness. Such division of space is of game nature as dialogueness lies in the nature of theatrical performance.

The opposition *significant – insignificant* expresses an idea of the high degree of semantic richness of the theater scene space, which is able to impart things with additional semantic content, saturated with "additional to directly-objective function of thing senses" [4, p. 589]. At the same time such a basic element of action, as acting, in semiological respect is principally ambiguous: "For the people on the stage the event takes place, for the people in the room, event is a sign of itself. Like goods in the display case, reality is transformed into a message of reality. But the actor on stage leads dialogues in two different planes: pronounced communication links him to the other members of the action, and the unspoken silent dialogue – with the audience ... Thus, his being on the stage is essentially two-valued: it can be equally well read as a direct reality and as a reality transformed into a sign of itself "[4, p. 592].

Consequently, the opera, as well as any other stage action is implemented as a unity of the actors (in our case the singers) who act and do things, verbal-musical

texts, where the verbalized word (that is sung) and the sounding word by orchestral means of expression (ie, in the language of music) are equally involved in the stage action. The unity of the stage action should also include staging plan, which should include the particular director's interpretation, scenery, costumes, lighting and overall style of the action unfolding on the stage. Each segment of stage work should be viewed as a text device that uses different types of signs and different degrees of conditionality.

However, the fact that the stage world is significant in its nature, gives it a very important feature. The sign is inherently contradictory: it is always real and always illusory. It is real it is because the nature of the sign is material; to become a sign, that is to become a social fact, meaning must be realized in any material substance: the value – take the form of money; idea – to appear as compound phonemes or letters, to speak in the paint or marble; dignity – put on the "signs of dignity": medals or uniforms, etc. The illusion of the sign is that it always *seems*, that is, refers to something other than its appearance. It should be added that in the arts the ambiguity of the content plan increases dramatically. The contradiction between reality and the illusory forms that field of semiotic meanings in which every literary text lives. One of the features of the scenic text appears in a variety of languages used by it [5].

In the works of Aristotle sign nature of scenic action is understood as a kind of theatrical playback means of imitation of the action, not the action itself. "Imitation of action there is a story. In fact, I call legend the combination of events ... The beginning and as if the soul of tragedy – is the legend " [quoted by 3, p. 120-122.]. Yu. Lotman interpreted the term "legend" as an explanation for the transmission of meaning and definition of the essence of the tragedy as a narrative using actions and events, to which the closest in modern terminological apparatus and suitable is the concept of "plot."

Talking about the reality and the illusory character in the play, including in the opera, it should be noted unfolding on stage series of events in which the characters perform certain actions, deeds or give voice to their feelings, scenes follow each other leading all the participants from the introduction to the denouement of the action. In

other words, *inside* this world lives *a genuine and not sign life*, and each singer or an actor has to believe in the reality of the situation, seeing itself as such both on stage and its partner because without this, stage action will be destroyed. "The audience is dominated by aesthetic rather than actual experiences: seeing that one actor on stage falls dead, and the other actors, realizing the plot of the play carry out actions natural in this situation, – rush to help, call the doctors, revenge killers – the viewer behaves differently: whatever his experience, he remains motionless in the chair" [4, p. 592]. Thus, for those participating actively in the stage action the event takes place, and for listeners and viewers – the unfolding event is a sign of itself.

A particular challenge is the problem of the relation "*text-code*" within the theatrical specifics. The term "stage text" is completely justified here, as a theatrical performance meets the following criteria: 1) expression, 2) delimitation, 3) single meaning [4, p. 586]. However, the subtexts of performance (as defined by Lotman, in the scenic text can be differentiated verbal, playing and painting-music-light subtexts) have both a high degree of autonomy and unity. Autonomy and delimitation of each of the subtexts are determined by obvious differences in the method of coding, as the unity of subtexts can be achieved only on the semantic level. So, the stage, opera text is deprived of stability, because during each subsequent execution is one of the possible options for reading the author's text. Thus, the stage text should not be seen as the implementation of only possible given program, but as a manifestation of the phenomenon of playing in which the final outcome has not been fully revealed.

The ratios of the text (message) and the code is one of the key issues, as to a certain message to be sent, it must be encoded and decoded. And since the stage text, and in our case, the operatic text, as noted above, is a further structurally complicated structure, the task of understanding the text is very complicated. Stage text according Lotman includes signs of two types: a system of discrete symbols (verbal text), and a system where all of the text is difficult to built, single sign (playing, plastic part of the performance). In our case, Lotman's understanding of the stage text should be added by music text, that brings us to the fact that *operatic text* is a three-level sign device.

Thus operatic text can be represented as a ratio of signs of three types, namely:

1) The system of discrete signs (verbal-musical text, which can be represented as a unity of text of soloists, text of recitatives, choral text and *text of ensemble scenes*);

2) The musical text (note text or music scores, the text of musically shaped characteristics of the heroes, their feelings, musical comments on the developing action, the level of the musical intonation of the text);

3) The system of texts, which according to Lotman represents a single sign (playing, plastic, dramaturgical components of the opera).

The first group of characters includes all possible uses of verbal material, which is implemented in opera as the sung, vocally intoned word, even in those cases when it comes to the recitatives. The very verbal component of operatic text represents a very remarkable phenomenon. As in other scenic genres, verbal row of opera "is both real speech focused on out-theater, non-artistic conversation and reproducing this speech by means of theatrical convention (speech shows speech)" [4, p. 592-593]. In this case, the level of complexity and conditionality even higher, since it is depicted by singing. In addition, the literary text structures sounding in the opera, differ from everyday speech, it is a common condition in all stage genres, and even if in the current stage works sometimes found the use of non-fiction of direct speech, it should be treated as a special method of aesthetic decline. The said method in operatic works is almost never used, even when it comes to transferring simplified-everyday speech.

The second group of signs is represented by one of the most difficult and intractable subject areas of modern musicology – the phenomenon of the musical text. The considered above semiographic approach of Bart to studying the text was continued in numerous philological, art history, cultural studies, but the closest to them in their appropriate positions are M. Bakhtin and D. Likhachev. In musicological literature the problem of the musical text is addressed by many researchers, such as M. Aranovsky, L. Akopyan, M. Bonfeld, Yu. Gribinenko, A. Samoilenko, S. Ship.

On the text, according to M. Aranovsky, we can talk like that, "only just *happening, flowing through time*" [1, p. 24]. The work, according to M. Aronofsky, can be called "what *already exists*", what is real, and the text – "what *else exists*" or can be, that is possible. Artwork and text are separated by timing – or rather, they are in a different time: the work, already established, is in *the past*, and the text, being only created it is in *the present* and partly in the *future*. "*The work unfolds as text – the text is rolled like a work*" [1, 24 – 25]. In this case, the work appears as a phenomenon primarily spatial, and text – as a mostly temporary. Consequently, in this case, the distinction of the text and the product is a consequence of the position taken by the observer. In other words, at one corner of the observed it seems to us like *accomplished*, and then it is a *work*; at the other, we observe the process, and then it appears as *being accomplished*, and then it will be unfolding in time *text* [1, p. 27].

Textual analysis of music makes it possible to find ways to address the most difficult issues of musical semantics as it reveals the inequality of the semantic content of the music and the values of the characters that we find in a fixed musical text. The meaning upon such a consideration is not sense, as it is "not up" to its integrity, and the same cannot be defined as a sign, that is, as one possible "material form". Meaning is always on the way – from the meaning to the sign and the sign to meaning, is always *in between*. *It was on the way* that there emerges "text – *semantic fabric* – of music." The text of the music is also "whole and always "between", in between them as "of proposed by it "dialogue". Therefore, the emerging duality of musical meanings can be expressed as a series of oppositions, namely: fixedness – uncertainty, static – dynamic, readiness – uncompleteness and etc. Due to them, in music can be found mobile sides "of single and continuous sense." Hence, on the "*side of sense, musical text can be described as a plural unity, from the meanings side - as a multiplicity of single, which determines the peculiar symbolic functions of music (their nominal relativity)*" [8, p. 259-260].

In the third sign level text of the operatic text, which we mentioned according to the concept of Yu. Lotman defined as a system of texts represented as a single

meaning (playing, plastic, dramatic, operatic, staging components of the text). At this level, an opera stage production, keeping the transferring function for separate completed messages along with it appears as integrity, united structure.

Thus, the integrity of the stage production is the most difficult issue, since none of the types of "literary texts private subtexts have such a high degree of autonomy and integrity at the same time" [4, p. 596] as in operatic work. The specificity of the musical text, and more – music as a whole, is not only in possibility, but necessity of literal repetitions of various citations (literature of the twentieth century will learn from it), that do not detract own merits of musical work, but characterize the methods of the text formation in music. Musical text is characterized by very mobile structure, and as shown by the the experience of the contemporary composer's creativity, it can have a wide variety of continuations.

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