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## ФЕНОМЕНОЛОГІЯ РЕЛІГІЇ

## PHENOMENOLOGY OF RELIGION

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### THE NUMINOUS AND IT'S REVELMENT IN THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF RELIGION IN R. WAGNER'S OPERA "TANNHÄUSER"

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*The actuality of the exploration is determined of the great importance of R. Wagner heritage, the interest to which does not disappear and needs the further exploration, also in the sphere of the phaenomenology of religion. Except opera „Tannhäuser” also the tetralogy "The Ring of the Nibelung", "Lohengrin" and "Parsifal". The main problem and the level of exploration. The problem of the religious perception of the person in the worldview is one of the main tasks of the phaenomenology of religion. Is it is regarded, is moulded the synergetical effect, that shows the new points of the phaenomenon, among which is the heritage of R. Wagner. The main aim of the exploration is the analythic view on the opera by R. Wagner, the analysis of the libretto and music that are regarded as the primary source without the analysis of the numerous stage revealments and the interpretation of the musicians, but this point of view laso can be explored in the sphere of this problematics. The innovation is in the choice of the new refard of the exploration that lets to see and to understand the meaning of the numinous, that is shown by the composer. In this way the opera "Tannhäuser" is explored for the first time. The main material includes the analysis of the main cathegory the numinous, that is created by German philosopher R. Otto. In this meaning R. Otto is trying to understand the main idea of the sacred, that can't be only the ethical category. In this case the ideal materia can became art, creation of which is based on the feelings and deals with the cathegory of transcendental, spirtuality, self-confidence. The numinous feelings gives the special basics of the opera and can make an influence on the performing it on the stage. At the same time the achievements in the sphere of the analysis of the musics in the view of the religious phaenomenology develop the ideas by R. Otto, that gave an idea to use the cathegory "numinous" in the sphere of music. Conclusion. Regarding the numinous as the category of the phaenomenology of the religion and it's revealment in the opera by R. Wagner "Tannhäuser" we can make the following*

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conclusions. 1. The category of numinous has great perspectives in the musicology, because it has the opportunity to show new sides of the main ideas. 2. The use of the category „numinous” in the analysis of the operas by R. Wagner, that surely are full of the religious ideas, gives the ability to discover the new sides of revelation of ideas in operas, that are on the stage more than one and a half of century. 3. The use of it as an instrument in the analysis of the masterpieces of the category „numinous” shows new ideas in the phaenomenology of religion. 4. The perspective of the exploration may be the analysis of the other operas by R. Wagner, for example "Tristan and Isolde", tetralogy "The Ring of the Nibelung", "Lohengrin" and "Parsifal".

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**Keywords:** philosophy, phaenomenology of religion, history of music, R. Otto, numinous, R. Wagner, "Tannhäuser".

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## НУМІНОЗНЕ ЯК КАТЕГОРІЯ ФЕНОМЕНОЛОГІЇ РЕЛІГІЇ ТА ЙОГО ВТІЛЕННЯ В ОПЕРІ Р. ВАГНЕРА "ТАНГЕЙЗЕР"

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Актуальність дослідження обумовлена значущістю творчості Р. Вагнера, інтерес до якої не вичерпується і потребує дедалі глибшого наукового осмислення, зокрема в аспекті феноменології релігії (окрім опери Тангейзер", це також "Лоенгрін", тетралогія "Перстень нібелунга" та "Парсифаль"). Постановка проблеми та ступінь наукової розробленості. Проблеми осмислення релігійного ставлення людини до дійсності належать до провідних завдань феноменології релігії. Якщо ж така проблематика розглядається в площині творів мистецтва, формується синергетичний ефект, який розкриває нові смисли як досліджуваного феномена, серед яких – творчість Р. Вагнера. Метою дослідження є аналітичний погляд на особливості розуміння та втілення нумінозного в опері Р. Вагнера "Тангейзер", звернення до лібрето та музики, які розглядаються як першоджерело без торкання змісту численних сценічних інтерпретацій та виконавських прочитань, хоча такий аспект також може бути вельми плідним у світлі заявленої проблематики. Наукова новизна полягає у виборі ракурсу дослідження, який дозволяє побачити та усвідомити розуміння нумінозного, репрезентоване композитором в музичному творі. В такому аспекті опера Р. Вагнера "Тангейзер" розглядається вперше. Виклад основного матеріалу включає аналіз категорії нумінозного, запропонованій німецьким філософом Р. Отто. У цьому визначенні Р. Отто намагається зрозуміти первісний сенс поняття "священне", яке не може бути зведене до етичних категорій моральності, добра, блага та інших. В цьому сенсі ідеальним матеріалом може стати мистецтво, створення та сприйняття якого базується на відчуттях, і містить трансцендентність, духовність, самодостатність. "Нумінозні відчуття" складають особливий шар змісту опери і можуть вплинути на режисерські рішення при постановці твору. Водночас, напрацювання в сфері аналізу музичних творів в аспекті феноменології релігії розвивають ідеї Р. Отто, який запропонував використання категорії "нумінозне" до аналізу музики. Conclusion. Розглянувши нумінозне як категорію феноменології релігії та його втілення в опері Р. Вагнера "Тангейзер", можемо зробити наступні висновки: 1. Категорія "нумінозне" має великі перспективи застосування в мистецтвознавстві, розкриваючи в творах мистецтва нові грані смислів. 2. Застосування категорії «нумінозне» до аналізу опер Р. Вагнера, релігійна складова змісту яких не викликає сумніву, дозволяє відкрити нові смисли творів, які йдуть на сцені понад півтора століття. 3. Застосована як інструмент аналізу творів мистецтва, категорія "нумінозне" збагачує свій зміст і в сфері власне феноменології релігії. 4. Перспективою дослідження може стати аналіз й інших опер Р. Вагнера, зокрема "Лоенгрін", "Тристан і Ізольда", тетралогія "Перстень нібелунга", "Парсифаль".

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**Ключові слова:** філософія, феноменологія релігії, історія музики, Р. Отто, нумінозне, Р. Вагнер, "Тангейзер".

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**The main problem and the level of scientific research.** The problem of the religious attitude to the reality is one of the main question of the religious

phenomenology. If this problematics is regarded in the masterpieces of art, we get very interesting and important point of research, that deals with methodes of

philosophy, religious study, art study. In this way the synergetical is being researched, as well as every study, which methods are used for this researching. Specially, if this phenomenon is of the great meaning and value for all the world. Certainly, it is heritage of R. Wagner.

The literature of the famous German composer is of thousand volumes. Every performance of his operas causes the great and active polemics, that is represented not only by conductors and musicians, as well as musicologists, philosophers, culturologists, theologians and philologists, but a great amount of so called Wagnerians, representatives in different other professions – from the physics scientists to militarists. Every new regard in the performing on stage, translation into the national language, critical regarding, discussions gives the new view on the main idea of masterpieces, also in the contexts of the philosophical aspects.

**The actuality of the research.** It is caused by the great importance of R. Wagner heritage, that is still interesting and needs the more and more deep understanding, also in the sphere of the religious phenomenology (except opera "Tannhäuser", it is also "Lohengrin" and "Parsifal", tetralogy "The Ring of Nibelung"). The required view of the research opens new abilities for the religious phenomenology, giving the opportunity to deal with observing the religious conscious, main essence and the reveal of the religiousness, given through the outlook of author of the masterpiece and its participants.

**The main aim of the exploration** is the analytical regard on the specificity of understanding and revealing the numinous on the opera by R. Wagner "Tannhäuser", also in music by R. Wagner, dealing with the main source, without a regard on the numerous stage performances and the understandings of the performers, but this view also is important in this problematics.

**The analysis of the research.** The heritage of R. Wagner is always in the view of ukrainian musicologists. Especially prominent is the research of Ukrainian musicologist Maryna Cherkashina-Gubarenko and the school of opera, founded by her, also the Wagnerian Society in Kyiv [1]. The main task of the researchers in this school is the exploration of the Wagner influence on the world musical processes. Among numerous works about R. Wagner heritage will name only those that deals only with history of music. Among them is work by O. Naumova «Mystery Theatre of Richard Wagner: "Parsifal" and its sacral dramaturgy» [2] and O. Babiy "J. W. Goethe in artistic perception and creative work of R. Wagner" [3]. As for explorations in philosophy, many works were written for the conference "Wagner and Nietzsche. 150 years of meeting" [4]. The work of H. Loos "The mystic-religious role of R. Wagner. The artist as the Deity, Genius and Hero" [4:13-17]. I. Myslovska explores the problem of music in the Nietzsche philosophy [4: 136-139]. O. Samoilenko regards the psychology of arts as the unity of the philosophical-esthetical and musicological methods of the worldview [4: 175-179]. But in spite of numerous views and explorations, in the phenomenology of religion the Wagner heritage was not regarded before.

**The innovation** is in the choice of view of the research, that gives the opportunity to see the understanding of the numinous understanding of the composer, shown in "Tannhäuser". From this point of view this opera is being researched for the first time.

**The main part of the research** we will start with the terms that will be used in a text. The meaning of the sacred (holy) is often used in many religious and philosophical sciences. The Latin word *sacrum* is polysemantic and means: 1. Sacred thing, sacred creature. 2. Sacred ritual. 3. Offering, offer. 4. Mysteries [5: 892]. The theological

understanding of sacred deals with everything that comes from God. On the point of view of the founder the phaenomenology of religion R. Otto writes: "We are prompted to it by the traditional language of edification, with its characteristic phraseology and ideas; by the learned treatment of religious themes in sermon and theological instruction; and further even by our Holy Scriptures themselves. In all these cases the 'rational' occupies the foreground, and often nothing else seems to be present at all. But this is after all to be expected. All language, in so far as it consists of words, purports to convey ideas or concepts; – that is what language means; – and the more clearly and unequivocally it does so, the better the language. And hence expositions of religious truth in language inevitably tend to stress the 'rational' attributes of God.

But though the above mistake is thus a natural one the less seriously misleading. For so far are these 'rational' attributes from exhausting the idea of deity, that they in fact imply a non-rational or supra-rational Subject of which they are predicates. They are 'essential' (and not merely 'accidental') attributes of that subject, but they are also, it is important to notice, synthetic essential attributes. That is to say, we have to predicate them of a subject which they qualify, but which its deeper essence is not, nor indeed can be, comprehended in them; which rather requires comprehension of a quite different kind. Yet, though it eludes the conceptual way of understanding, it must be in some way or other within our grasp, else absolutely nothing could be asserted of it. And even Mysticism, in speaking of it as τὸ ἄρητον, the ineffable, does not really mean to imply that absolutely nothing can be asserted of the object of the religious consciousness; otherwise, Mysticism could exist only in unbroken silence, whereas what has generally been a

characteristic of the mystics is their copious eloquence" [6: 2]. In this definition R. Otto is trying to understand the essential meaning of the definition "saint", that can not be regarded only as an ethical category of kindness, morality, welfare and other. In the attempt to find the essence, he finds the definition, that shows the meaning of saint – numinous (from the Latin numen – the divinity essence). But the most important for our research, the numinous can be only feeling (R. Otto wrote about "felt numinously"). It can not be understood rationally, it can be only felt– like everything what comes "from the spirit". R. Otto pays great attention to the content of the concept of "numinous" and its correlation with the categories of ethics and theology: 'Holiness' – 'the holy' – is a category of interpretation and valuation peculiar to the sphere of religion. It is, indeed, applied by transference to another sphere – that of Ethics – but it is not itself derived from this. While it is complex, it contains a quite specific element or 'moment' which sets it apart from 'the Rational' in the meaning we gave to that word above, and which remains inexpressible an τὸ ἄρητον, the ineffable in the sense that is completely eludes apprehensions in terms of concepts. The same thing is true (to take a quite different region of experience) of the category of the beautiful. Now these statements would be untrue from the outset if 'the holy' we merely what is meant by the word, not only in common parlance, but in philosophical, and generally even in theological usage. The fact is we have come to use the words holy, sacred (heilig) in an entirely derivative sense, quite different from that which they originally bore. We generally take 'holy' as meaning 'completely good'; it is the absolute moral attribute, denoting the consummation of moral goodness [6: 6].

In this case the ideal material can be art, acception and creation of which is based especially on the feelings and

deals with transcendental, spirituality and self-confidence. Especially it is seen in the Wagner operas, that gives us the opportunity to regard and explore them in the phaenomenology of religion, for example in the categories "holy", "sacred", "numinous". So we should start dealing with the topic of our research – opera "Tannhäuser".

In spring 1842 turning back from Paris to Dresden, Wagner visited the Wartburg Castle – a very important place for every German [7], and after few months started working on opera, that became the fifth and was called "Tannhäuser" [8: 89]. The first performance took place on 19. October 1845 year in the Royal Saxon Theatre in Dresden. More than century it is always on stage and gives an inspiration for the performing and also for the philosophical analysis.

Creating the libretto R. Wagner was based on the few sources – novel by E. T. A. Hoffman "The Competition of Singers" [9] novel by Novalis and L. Tick "Henrich von Ofterdingen", as well as on the German legends about minnesinger Tannhäuser and saint Elizabeth. On this basics componist created his literary and music work, that shows a special unity of place and time, where are presented the sacred (Christianity) and profan (pagan) in their inner and obvious revealment. The events in opera take place in fantastic world and in the real – the valley near the Wartburg castle. Also, there is one more world – imaginational – Rome as the symbol of the City of God (Augustine the Blessed). Minnesinger Tannhäuser was by goddess Venera and got pleasure. But he wanted to return to his native land. His sorrow of the native land became stronger and stronger and he asks goddess to return him to home. He sings the hymn in toworship her and she lets him do this, although says that he would suffer in the world of people. Venera does not accept Tannhäuser's minds, telling about sufferings in the humans world. But, when Tannhäuser

told the word of Virgin Mary, the cave of Venus is destroyed. And Tannhäuser is in the valley near Wartburg castle. He sees his friends – knights – minnesingers and together with them he goes to the castle.

In the castle hold the competition of the minnesingers. Tannhäuser is singing the hymn to goddess Venus, full of passion. But all the listeners are embaressed. Elizabeth saves Tannhäusers from the death penalty. She asks the landlord for the opportunity to condemn the sin. Tannhäuser goes with the pilgrims to Rome.

In a half a year Tannhäuser is back. But Pope did not forgive him sins. Now he has the only road – to the cave of Venus. His friends can not tell him not to do this. There is a funeral of Elisabeth. Tannhäuser asks her saint soul to pray for him. The choir of pilgrims sings and tells, that due to offer of Elizabeth Tannhäuser got forgiveness of sins.

The contradiction between sacred and profan, that is the main idea of the dramatic essence of masterpiece is the idea and inspiration for the different stage interpretations, which reveals the values criteria, modern performances, that are being changed throughout of time.

In spite of that, more detalized understandings in the essence of a masterpiece gives the mind about the necessity of the definition what is sacred. This definition usage does not give any doubts, but gives the feeling of the numinous, because this cathegory goes with the feelings, that are moulded by the music intonations, givedn by the compkexes of main themes (leitmotives) symboles.

Traditionally the concept of opera is the contradiction of two worlds – the spiritual one and the material, secular world. Euach has heroes. The most complicated character is Tannhäuser, that is between the worlds and has to make a choice – Venus (the symbol of

passionous pleasure) and Elizabeth (the symbol of pure, devoted love). The musical critics emphasize the ethical sides of the choice and support their thoughts by Tannhäuser's repentance and the blossoming staff of the Pope that symbolises the forgiving of sins. Such an interpretation is possible if we use usual opposites, that are in the analysis of this opera: saintly – sin, pagan – Christian, sacred – profane, heavenly – secular. But the category of numinous should not be the ethical interpretation. The numinous can characterize feeling only, is self-confident and is free from the ethical values. It characterizes everything what comes from the spirit. From such a point of view the emotions of Tannhäuser in the cave of Venus and in the competition in Wartburg are numinous. It means that they have sacred source. So, due to this the opposites get lost and the main character is shown harmonical inside, not the person that is in constant contradiction even with himself.

The overture that is one of the highest masterpiece in the world symphonical music proves to the fact that interpretation is possible. According to the laws of the symphonical development in the immanent musical forms is shown the essence of a contradiction in the philosophical meaning. The music form of the overture is unique for the 19. Century and is the revelation of the Hegel triade (Understanding – Dialectical Reason – Speculative Reason), the combination of two contradicting meanings to the third meaning, that has traits of each of them. The scheme of it can be shown like this: A – B – A<sub>1</sub>.

B is the form of *sonata allegro*, that emphasises the intention of composer to show the unity of contradictions. The same aim is in use of the three part form, that can be regarded as – *main idea, contradiction and synthesis*. It reveals the unity of contradictions. But in musicology every conclusion is sure only when it can be proved by the

symbols-intonations, that make the basics of essence of the masterpiece and have the certain meaning. The overture to "Tannhäuser" gives a very good material for this analysis.

Let us begin with the most general meanings: the part A symbolises the world of Christianity, B – the cave of Venus, A<sub>1</sub> – the returning to the world of the Christianity but on the other level. The use of the category numinous gives the opportunity to understand the sacred meaning of both worlds, not only the world of Christianity, as can seem in the traditional perception of opera. The further interpretation of the intonational meanings gives the ability to look deeper and describe in details the impressions. The chorale of pilgrims sounds very graceful and concentrated, it is like a prayer about welfare in heaven, in the grace of God, not on earth. In it one of the greatest revelation of the numinous in the world music. R. Otto gives an example of the revelation of numinous in music of Mass in B minor (German: h-Moll-Messe). For the creation of the religious feelings R. Wagner the way of the associations: a slow sound of the chords by woodwind instruments and reminds the sound of musical organ in Catholic church. For the creation of the religious feeling R. Wagner uses the way of the associations – a slow sound of chords reminds the music in the Catholic Church. Timbre and presentation acquire the meaning of religious symbols, which are read both in the space of the temple and in the space of the scene.

After the theme of chorale, there is a theme of Tannhäuser's confession. It moves the numinous from the objective structure (the prayer of many people) to the subjective (lonely Tannhäuser). But there is no obvious contradiction between them. Analyzing the overture, B. Levik pays attention especially to the reprise and emphasises, that the figuration of violins, that are from the theme of confession, stop being

sorrowful and gives the choral shining, as a light of saints [8: 126].

Really in this part the main theme of the confession of Tanhauser is with the pilgrim's chorale, that proves to the fact, that there is unity with them, so the numinous is full of religious feeling in its highest form.

Slowly the sound gets calmer, that is more the slow movemet, that becomes further more and more calm. Seems, that it gets far and more far. So the exposition of the Christianity world is ended. The other world reveals – the pagan. Tannhäuser is waiting in the cave for the goddess of fertility, passionate love and beauty. In pagan times Venus was one of the most worshiped goddesses in the Roman pantheon. R. Otto does not say that the numinous can be also in pre-Christian religions, because it lives as the main basics, without what the religion can not be religion. So, we see not a contradiction, that is usually seen by the musicologists, but an attempt to find the inner, common basic udea of numinous. Tannhäuser worships Venus, so his feelings are close to religious feelings.

But there are changes – the theme of pilgrim's choir is again. In the dynamic reprise (the musical revealment of the philosophical category of synthesis). The chorale sounds not in three-beat meter but in four-beat meter. From one point of view it gives the calm feeling, from another – reminds of the common between the choir and hymn to Vernuhs, where Tannhäuser worships the goddess. The theme of the confession in together with a chorale theme again and becomes mighty and powerful, with a wind musical instruments and ends the overture with immense shining" – wrote B. Levik [8: 129].

Another facet of the category of numinous demonstration is Wolfram's song, sounding an hour at Wartburg (2nd stage of the opera). At the heart of this stage is the legendary competition that took place in the thirteenth century

under the Landgrave of Thuringia Germany. He encouraged the development of poetry and music, invited to his court famous poets Minnesingers, including Walter von der Vogelweide, Wolfram von Eschenbach, Heinrich von Welfe, Heinrich von Ofterdingen, Reinmar von Zwetter. Until this day, a beautiful hall of minnesingers of the world-famous palace has been preserved. Walter von der Vogelweide, Wolfram von Eschenbach, Heinrich von Ofterdingen are the heroes of Wagner's opera. The poetry of German Minnesingers is one of the artistic phenomena that has a worldview, because the twelfth century has made a significant contribution to the development of European culture, offering new ideas about beauty, in particular – the beauty of love for the Lady and for life itself. In the poetry of the Minnesingers embodied a new ethic of love, based on ardent and selfless service to God, the suzerain, the Lady. Service was the basis of the ethical canon (Shalaginov), but the Minnesingers themselves experienced it as a sacrifice, passion and sincerity. This experience of high love is one of the facets of numinous feeling and can be considered as one of its manifestations.

For minneingers, love is the bliss of two hearts. One heart of love can not hold. The heroines of their songs were not only noble ladies who made the Knights suffer. They sang to those who valued cordiality, sincerity, and loyalty in love. For minnesingers, High love (Minne) is the foundation of life. It is a life-giving force that holds the world to itself, and a weapon against evil. Seeing his lady for the first time, the Knight feels the bliss of life and asks the Lord to unite those who keep love in their hearts. The motives of love and love in the poetry of the minnesingers are often intertwined. R. Wagner deliberately separates them. Knight Wolfram is the singer of Minne (When I cast my eye around this noble circle, what a sublime spectacle makes my heart glow! So many heroes, valiant, upright and

judicious, a forest of proud oaks, magnificent, fresh and green. And ladies I behold, charming and virtuous, a richly-perfumed garland of lovely blooms. My glance becomes enraptured at the sight, my song mute in face of such radiant loveliness); Tannhauser – sensual love (To thee, goddess of love, shall my song ring out! Now let thy praise be sung aloud by me! Thy honeyed fascination is fount of all beauty, and every sweet wonder stems from thee! That man who has held thee locked in passionate embrace, knows what love is, and he alone. Poor creatures, who have never enjoyed her love, fare hence, fare hence into the Venusberg!). From the point of view of ethics in minnesing, Tannhauser commits a crime that requires punishment by death. However, the numinous category does not contain ethical components, but only includes a sense of what comes from God and the Spirit.

So we see that the numinous feelings take a special place in the structure of opera and may influence the concept of the performance on stage. Although, the achievement in the analysis of the masterpieces in the sphere of religious phaenomenology develop the ideas of R. Otto, that gave an example of use the definition of numinous in the musicological analysis, but presented only one way of such interpretation.

**Conclusion.** Regarding the numinous as a category of the phaenomenology of religion and its revelation in the opera by R. Wagner "Tannhäuser" we can make the following conclusions: 1. The category of numinous has a big perspectives in future in musicology use, showing in the masterpieces new sides of essence. 2. The use of category "numinous" in the analysis of operas by R. Wagner, that surely has the religious meaning, gives the opportunity to discover new essences of the masterpieces, which are on the stage more than one and a half century. 3. The category "numinous", used as the mean of research gives new understanding in the phaenomenology of religion. 4. The

further exploration plan can become the analysis of other operas by R. Wagner, for example "Lohengrin", "Tristan and Isolde", tetralogy "The Ring of Nibelung", "Parsifal".

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