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UKRAINIAN VERTEP AS FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE UKRAINIAN OPERA ART

Ukrainian opera art is noted for its uniqueness, which reaches the depths of national history and culture. His professional development, which began in the middle of the 19th century, was reflected in pan-European traditions, but at the same time, he was inspired by his own national sources.

The first folk theater performances, accompanied by music and singing, became not only a source of entertainment for the public, but also the basis for the further formation of Ukrainian opera art. Folkloric motifs and traditions contributed to the development of storylines, development of action and musical characteristics of the characters. Another characteristic feature of Ukrainian opera art is the close connection between the plot and the musical accompaniment. From its very beginning, the Ukrainian opera theater developed mainly as a musical-dramatic theater, and this distinguished it from other European schools of opera art. Thus, Ukrainian opera art has its own, unique features, which are based on national musical and dramatic traditions.

At the early stages of the development of professional performing arts in Ukraine, vertep drama occupied a prominent place.

The ancient word "vertep" means "cave", and nowadays it refers to a specific cave - in Bethlehem, where Jesus Christ was born. The vertep is a type of puppet theater, an art form that has been known in European countries since the 16th century. Puppet art itself occupies an important place in the history of world culture. It gained popularity among the peoples of Europe, Asia, Africa and America, while in each country it reflected the national color, typical properties and features characteristic of a certain ethnic community. The general ideological motives for any puppet theater were the affirmation of justice, glorification of the victory of good over evil, glorification of the defenders of the Motherland, etc.

On the territory of Ukraine, the story of the birth of Christ was told and shown with the help of a miniature box that served as a portable stage for a puppet theater. Performances were usually created by students who, on cold winter days, traveled through cities, villages, estates and monasteries, offering their performances to the audience. It became a source of income for their education and livelihood.

The first information about the existence of nativity plays in Ukraine dates back to the middle of the 17th century, while the oldest records of nativity plays come from the end of the 18th century. The most outstanding example of a Ukrainian nativity scene was the Sokyryna nativity scene, brought to the estate of the Galagan family in the 18th century by Kyiv bursaks. The bread-and-butter host repeatedly and fondly hosted a

boisterous crowd of talented young people at his estate in the village of Sokyryntsi in the Poltava Region. In gratitude, the students left the nobleman the entire nativity scene: a chest, dolls, sheet music and words (80 pages) [1].

The study of vertep as a folk performance art is complicated by the oral form of its existence, which is a characteristic feature of the folklore tradition. Since the nativity texts were known to their performers - bursaks, traveling dyaks and singers, there was no need to record and preserve these texts in written form. It was the oral transmission from one generation of performers to another that determined the specifics of the life of nativity plays in the folk environment. It should be noted that the oral tradition of transmission lasted for a relatively short time - from the 18th century to our time, theatrical props and scripts of performances together with notes have been preserved.

Vertep is a rather complex dramaturgical phenomenon, because it combines several types of art: literature, theatrical performance and oral folk musical creativity, that is, it is a multi-genre phenomenon. Usually, vertep was performed by "educated" bursak actors, students of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, who performed performances during the Christmas holidays and recreations. A vivid example is the novel by M.V. Gogol's "Eyelash", where this work is shown [2].

In addition to vertep with dolls and the performance, a small choir and an instrumental ensemble took part in the event, which provided musical accompaniment to the events. Their music and chants played a key role in expressing the plot and characterization of the characters. In the nativity drama, the puppet theater and music merged into a single whole, helping to give the play a national flavour and deepen the emotional connection with the audience. For the most part, the performance had two actions: "religious" and "domestic".

The essence of the first act, which describes the events of the story of the extermination of the babies by Herod in Bethlehem, required the active participation of the chorus. A cappella group played an important role, commenting on the events and explaining the plot. Also, the choir formed the images of the heroes of the drama, such as Herod, the three kings, Rachel and others. However, this first act lacks the individuality of these characters, although the chorus creates their images through their singing and expressiveness. The authors of vertep mainly used the canto genre, which was widespread both in spiritual practice and in folk life of that period. Kant played a key role in nativity plays, embodying spiritual content and folk traditions, which gave them a unique color and a special emotional charge. Psalms and carols were also widely used during "voicing".

In the second act of vertep drama, small comic everyday plots unfolded, which were perceived with humour, and therefore the musical accompaniment was based on folk folklore melodies. Music (and it was already an instrumental accompaniment) also played the role of a commentator on events, but at the same time, it created individual characteristics of the characters, giving each of them their own unique musical identity [3; 4].

Elements characteristic of the second act of vertep were reflected in the work of outstanding Ukrainian opera composers, such as S.S. Hulak-Artemovskiy and M.V. Lysenko. For example, the images of the nativity Zaporozhets are reflected in the character of the Cossack Ivan Karas in the opera "Zaporozhets over the Danube". And

the comic characters of the nativity scene, which represent the new era, were reflected in "Natalka Poltavka" by M.V. Lysenko due to the appearance of Vozny and Vyborny. It should be noted that a large part of the musical material of the opera is also borrowed from vertep: it is worth mentioning "Oh, under the cherry tree", "Every garden has its own manners and rights", "Oh, don't make noise, puddle", "The winds are blowing" ...

Summarizing all of the above, it should be noted that the art of vertep laid the foundations for the formation and further development of opera in Ukraine: alternation of musical numbers with spoken dialogues, choral and solo singing, vocal and instrumental ensembles, dances, pantomime, scenography, costumes, etc.

All these components gave the first national opera performances a national color and psychological characteristics of the characters. The images and symbols that appeared in the nativity scene were so realistic that they influenced a new genre that was born during the heyday of the nativity scene - Ukrainian opera. This influence gave originality and uniqueness to the works of national opera art, making them understandable for a wide audience. Today, in the context of the reinterpretation of national artistic phenomena, we are witnessing the revival of vertep as one of the original sources of Ukrainian opera art.

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