

**NATIONAL TRENDS IN THE DANCE GENRES  
OF POLISH AND CZECH OPERA OF THE PERIOD  
OF THE NATIONAL SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT**

**The purpose of the article.** The article is devoted to the consideration of the issues of manifestation of national dance trends in the opera works of the founders of the Polish and Czech national schools. The research studies the embodiment of specific features of the dance genres of the European dance culture in the operas "Halka" by S. Moniuszko and "The Sold Bride" by B. Smetana. The **methodology** lies in the use of historical, systemic and analytical approaches that allow us to consider the processes of the development of the national opera schools in the European musical culture of the middle of the XIX century. The **scientific novelty** of the work is determined by the need to identify and study the principles of the existence of dance forms in the opera context. Analysis of the structure of dance episodes of the opera works of S. Moniuszko and B. Smetana gives an opportunity to argue the application of "great dance form" concept. **Conclusions.** Each sample of a dance genre reflects the mental characteristics of the people, historically developed in the process of its formation. In the context of opera drama, national dance trends embody the mental code of a dance, which directly reflects the characteristic differences and special expressive features peculiar to the national dances of a certain ethnos.

**Keywords:** dance, opera, great dance form, mental dance code, polonaise, mazurka, polka, furiant, gallop.

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**Національні тенденції у танцювальних жанрах польської і чеської опер періоду формування національних шкіл**

**Мета роботи.** Стаття присвячена розгляду питань прояву національних танцювальних тенденцій в оперній творчості засновників польської та чеської національних шкіл. Досліджено втілення специфічних ознак танцювальних жанрів європейської танцювальної культури в операх "Галька" С. Монюшка та "Продана наречена" Б. Сметани. **Методологія дослідження** визначається використанням історичного, системного та аналітичного підходів, що дозволяють розглянути процеси формування національних оперних шкіл в європейській музичній культурі середини XIX століття. **Наукова новизна** дослідження визначається необхідністю виявлення і вивчення принципів існування танцювальних форм у контексті оперного мистецтва. Аналіз структури танцювальних епізодів в оперній творчості С. Монюшка та Б. Сметани дає можливість аргументувати застосування поняття "великої танцювальної форми". **Висновки.** Кожен зразок танцювального жанру відображає ментальні особливості народу, що історично склалися в процесі його формування. В контексті драматургії опери національні танцювальні тенденції втілюють ментальний код танцю, що безпосередньо відображає характерні відмінності та особливі експресивні риси, які є властивими національним танцям певного етносу.

**Ключові слова:** танець, опера, велика танцювальна форма, ментальний код танцю, полонез, мазурка, полька, фуриант, галоп.

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**Национальные тенденции в танцевальных жанрах польской и чешской опер периода формирования национальных школ**

**Цель работы.** Статья посвящена рассмотрению вопросов проявления национальных танцевальных тенденций в оперном творчестве основоположников польской и чешской национальных школ. Исследовано воплощение специфических признаков танцевальных жанров европейской танцевальной культуры в операх "Галька" С. Монюшко и "Проданная невеста" Б. Сметаны. **Методология исследования** определяется использованием исторического, системного и аналитического подходов, позволяющих рассмотреть процессы формирования национальных оперных школ в европейской музыкальной культуре середины XIX века. **Научная новизна** исследования определяется необходимостью выявления и изучения принципов существования танцевальных форм в контексте оперного искусства. Анализ структуры танцевальных эпизодов в оперном творчестве С. Монюшко и Б. Сметаны дает возможность аргументировать применение понятия "большой танцевальной формы". **Выводы.** Каждый образец танцевального жанра отражает ментальные особенности народа, исторически сложившиеся в процессе его формирования. В контексте драматургии оперы национальные танцевальные тенденции воплощают ментальный код танца, непосредственно отражающий характерные отличия и особые экспрессивные черты, свойственные национальным танцам определенного этноса.

**Ключевые слова:** танец, опера, большая танцевальная форма, ментальный код танца, полонез, мазурка, полька, фуриант, галоп.

The relevance of the research. Currently the tendency to create new benchmarks in the development of the European culture, and the problem of national identity and issues related to the manifestation of national characteristics in different fields of art are of key importance. In this regard, the consideration of the

question of the formation of its national style, the national composer school is an actual sphere of scientific interests in such European countries as Poland and the Czech Republic.

M. Karasovsky is the author of the first essay on the history of the Polish opera (*Rys historyczny opery polskiej*; Warsaw: M. Glücksberg, 1859). Works by B. Matseevsky and A. Walicki (monograph, 1873), collected articles (edited by I. Belza, 1952) [6], monograph by Rudzynsky [4] are dedicated to the study of the life and works of Stanislaw Moniuszko.

O. Gostinsky is the founder of the Czech musical historical science, the author of the monograph about B. Smetana, active propagandist of his works. Z. Nejedly is a Czech musicologist, literary critic, author of studies of B. Smetana operas. In the monographic work of Z. Nejedly consisting of the two-volume "The history of Opera of the National theatre" (1935) till the period of foundation of the Czechoslovak Republic, huge actual material is collected and summarized. A. Buchner – a student of Z. Nejedly, is the author of the illustrated study "Opera in Prague" (1985).

However, the problem of study of questions of the implementation of dance genres in the Polish and Czech Opera of the period of development of national schools remains very little investigated. The specified position is the relevance of this article.

The purpose of the research is to determine and consider the manifestation of national dance tendencies in the operas "Halka" by S. Moniuszko and "The Sold Bride" by B. Smetana.

Presentation of the main material. In the history of Polish and Czech music opera takes a special place.

By the middle of the XIX century, characteristic features of development of the Polish national opera school had been defined.

The appearance of the opera "Halka" by S. Moniuszko is a symbolic event in the history of the Polish musical national composer school, the first sample of the national opera style.

In the first edition of the opera (created in 1848 and performed in Vilno in the concert version), there were no popular arias, mazurkas and dances of the highlanders afterwards. On January 1, 1858 a premiere of the opera "Halka" in a new edition [3] took place on the stage of the Warsaw Opera Theater.

The most significant virtues of the opera are new images, in an artistic form reflecting the ideals of national freedom, as well as new intonation sphere and original melodic language of the whole opera. In many ways, these features are determined due to the bright, colorful, sufficiently developed dance sphere of the opera.

Dance episodes of the opera make up a great dance form, naturally entering the form of the whole opera. A great dance form is a collection of separate dance episodes distributed throughout the opera, more or less decorated, but connected together by a single principle of dramatic development.

The range of the embodiment of various dance genres in the opera is wide enough: from aristocratic, ballroom dances to flamboyant Polish folk dances.

An overture is threaded with dance rhythms and motifs, which are used in the introductory, connecting and culmination zones. At the beginning of the opera, right after the overture, polonaise sounds in a solemn, courtly style (*Allegro pomposo*). Gorgeous, sustained in classical traditions, the dance is the first episode of a great dance form. According to C. Cui, polonaise "is the best opera number in the musical sense; it is not deprived of breadth and strength, full of character, quite musical, perfectly built" [2, 157].

There is a hall in the Stolnik's house on the stage. Couples are bypassing the stage, performing polonaise. Inviting orchestra exclamations sound. With two key marks, the tonal basis of the entry is A-dur, in this connection – the confirmation of the third and fifth, which persists throughout the entire orchestral entry, coloring with a thematic melody gradually moving from tonic foundations to melodization. Gradually A-dur transforms into a sense of dominance, the support for D-dur appears in the tenth bar on fortissimo. It is anticipated and surrounded by the appearance of a triotic fragmentation, tremolo of the thirty-seconds. Then the next thematic section begins, characterized by greater rhythmic-motional mobility, contrast of timbre lines, again – fanfarity, then gradual fragmentation and transformation of the rhythm formula. The appearance of double dominant in the party of the orchestra introduces the beginning of the stage action, where solo, duet, then choral parts are constantly accompanied by the rhythmic formula of polonaise. Dance rhythms penetrate into the part of Dzemba, Stolnik, all participants of the stage (including the choir), express an elevated atmosphere of preparation for the wedding action, and only occasionally coincide with the leading or accompanying line of the orchestra. The main theme is the tonality D-dur. The combination of the timbres of the orchestra, the vocal ensemble (Dzemba, Stolnik) and the choir (tenor and bass) form a unique musical synthesis. The harmonious simplicity of the scene is justified by the clarity of the dance line. The culmination zone coincides with the generalized participation of all actors of the scene, prepared by an ascending passage, aimed at the key D-dur, which holds in suspense the stage action for some time. A wavy movement is emphasized by analogies in the preparation of variant repetitions and dynamic "explosions" fortissimo. After the second wave, imitation is added, as an additional developmental principle, corresponding to the excitement of the remarks and emphasizing the joy of the event. Then the basic rhythm formula of polonaise returns, which is clearly defined in the orchestral part and only partially supported by the soloists and the choir as a refrain that creates a rondal form. The episode *Un poco piu lento* loses the features of dance, although some dance intonations are introduced into the solo-choral context. Then polonaise returns on the stage.

Thus, the introduction and the entire first scene of the opera are threaded with the stabilizing genre of polonaise. Dance is written in the form of rondo, where in the initial episodes dance rhythmic motions are actively developing, returning in the final refrain, where there is an exact orchestral repetition.

We shall note that in the aria of Stolnik (scene number five) the composer applies the rhythmic formula of polonaise again. In this case, Stolnik reproduces an old manner of dance performance: "We will prove and show how they danced in the old days".

The next episode of a great dance form is mazurka. A brisk, effective in terms of instrumentation dance completes the action. Thus, the dance scenes of the ball frame the first action of the opera.

In the third act, there is a contrasting episode of a great dance form. The scene of the mountaineers' dances is peculiar due to a completely different, original dance color. Peasant dances are written in a moving pace, they are characterized by energetic rhythms and original harmony, coming from folk instrumental performance. Genuine folk dance traditions are masterfully recreated by the composer. Against the background of the mountain scenery, the peasants dance playfully. This scene directly affects the drama of the opera: it creates a certain stop in the action, and thus contrasts with subsequent dramatic events.

The question of the formation of its national style, of the national composer school in the Czech Republic was of the same relevance in the middle of the XIX century.

The works of the composer B. Smetana became a powerful impetus for the development of the national self-affirmation of the Czech people. In the works of B. Smetana "the pictures of the history, people's life and nature of the Czech Republic revived, the rhythms of folk dances, the melodies of Czech songs fascinating by their beauty and freshness began to sound" [1, 247].

B. Smetana is the creator of the Czech national opera (in 1863 – the opera "Brandenburgers in the Czech Republic"). His comic opera "The Sold Bride" was the most popular. The composer himself notes emotionally: "The Sold Bride", perhaps, does not belong to me anymore. The people paid for it – with their love – so generously that I have already lost all right to it "[8, 98]. The opera is "full of inner freshness, a sense of joy, a dance rhythm" [8, 33].

The original version contained two actions. In the latest version of the opera, there are three actions, dances polka and furiant [5] are added. Dance episodes play a significant role in the drama of the whole opera, together they make up a great dance form.

Particular importance in the opera is acquired by the rhythms and melodic turns of the traditional Czech national dance – polka. They are audible in overture, they are used by the composer in a large folk-mass scene, which opens the first act (the chorus "How can we not have fun", written in the form of rondo) and many other opera numbers.

Vivid tempo and dance rhythm are characteristic of Kezal's part "I'm telling you, Pan Krushina" (scene 3, Allegro vivo).

In the final action, there is polka with the choir (scene 5). A bright humorous everyday picture: the people gather in the tavern, the young people are dancing. In the orchestral introduction, intonations of the main theme of polka were used. After the orchestra's performance of polka (a wide dynamic range from piano, dolce, dolcissimo to marcato, ff) the choir enters: "Come on, guys, well, girls, do not you get dizzy in the dance". This episode of a great dance form is an interesting embodiment of the stage synthesis of the choir, orchestra and traditional folk dance.

B. Smetana creates a beautiful sample of polka genre (the name of the dance comes from the Czech půl kroku – half a step).

A popular Czech public dance was widely spread in the 40s-50s of the XIX century already as a salon and ballroom dance. It is danced in pairs, the tempo is fast. The musical size is 2/4; it is characterized by the rhythmic clarity of fairly simple rotational movements. The main step was bouncing, it was split into half-steps (this name is associated with the name of the dance). Features of the composition: it is performed with movement further in a circle, turns and figured inserts.

In the second act, after the choir "Who drinks beer with us" a colorful dance – furiant follows. Its theme is the only authentic Czech folk melody used by the composer. With the help of an appeal to the folk dance genre, the composer creates a picturesque, humorous everyday picture.

A Czech folk dance – furiant (Czech furiant, lit. – snob, a proud person) is performed in pairs "in rapid movement with characteristic contrasts of two and three-tier meters, with pointed accentuation, etc." [7, 140]. Dance steps, complex twists and turns are the main movements.

The duet of Enik and Kezal is full of the bright melody of the dance character.

In the finale of the second act, themes from overtures that have a dance character are repeated.

In the third act, the composer creates a bright, colorful genre scene, using a popular version of the ballroom dances of the XIX century – a temperamental gallop.

The term "gallop" (from French Galop – lit. "race") was originally used exclusively in cavalry. The origin of the characteristic race-like movements in the dance with the same name is associated with the transformation of the round dance movements of public dances in the European countries (Germany, Hungary). In the ballrooms of France, this dance appeared at the beginning of the XIX century and it often ended the program of the dance evening. Gallop was the final part of such dances as quadrille and ecossaise. Gallop is a very spirited quick round dance in 2-4 time [9, p. 139]. The pace of the dance is fast, rapid. The basic

movements of gallop are race-like pair dance figures – pas glisse, performed forward or backward. The drawing of the dance is a pair movement in a circle. From the point of view of the development of dramaturgy in the opera "The Sold Bride", the energetic character of the gallop dance corresponds to the climax of the third act. B. Smetana creates a colorful sample of this genre variety – gallop of comedians.

Conclusions. An analysis of national trends in the dance episodes of the operas of various national schools proves that every sample of a dance genre reflects mental characteristics of the people that have historically evolved in the process of its formation. Each movement is a concentration of certain ethno-characteristic emotional-figurative information.

In this regard, it is justified to introduce a concept of "mental code of dance", which is connected with the fact that many national dances reflect the characteristic difference and special expressive features peculiar to a certain ethnic group. What distinguishes different national dance traditions? They are based on the unique original movements characteristic to a certain ethnic group and well-established dance forms (ethnic dances). "Dance Code" is special information that concentrates the deep qualities of each particular dance and passes them to the performer (and the viewer). It is expressed with the help of codified movements (pa), comprising the basis of the dance.

The prospect of the further development of the theme. National trends in the dance episodes of the operas of other national schools are no less obvious. In particular, dance genres in the opera works of the Ukrainian composers acquire great importance. It should be noted that during two hundred years of the history of the Ukrainian opera, beginning with the works of the XIX century (S. Gulak-Artemovsky, P. Sokalsky, N. Arkas, N. Lysenko) and ending with modern productions (K. Dankevich, M. Karminsky, A. Kos-Anatolsky, V. Gubarenko, etc.), dance episodes are an internal genre element, contributing to the identification of mental features in the style of the work. A great dance form is a component of many opera works of different epochs and national schools, becoming an effective means of drama for the whole opera. This, undoubtedly, confirms the relevance, universality of the proposed concepts and shows the need for further research of this issue.

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