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МУЗИЧНА ТА ХОРЕОГРАФІЧНА ОСВІТА В КОНТЕКСТІ КУЛЬТУРНОГО РОЗВИТКУ СУСПІЛЬСТВА

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DECLAMATORINESS AS A MEANS OF VOCAL-PERFORMANCE EXPRESSIVENESS

Декламаційність як засіб вокально-виконавської виразності

Анотація. У статті розглянуто феномен декламаційності як один із провідних засобів вокально-виконавської виразності. Визначено сутність декламаційного інтонування, його форми (мовлення, речитатив, мелодекламацію) та роль у створенні художнього образу. Наголошено на поєднанні технічної майстерності, точності інтонування та художнього осмислення як умов ефективного втілення декламації у вокальному мистецтві. Розкрито семантичну функцію слова у музичному контексті, його здатність створювати емоційно-психологічний вплив на слухача. Окреслено особливості декламаційності у традиційній китайській музичній драмі, зокрема в опері Кунь та сучжоуському різновиді, що вирізняються



специфічною технікою «да-ше-тоу». Зроблено висновок, що декламація виступає універсальним засобом художньої інтерпретації, який поєднує мовлення і спів у єдину естетично-смыслову систему.

Ключові слова: декламаційність, вокально-виконавська виразність, речитатив, мелодекламація, китайська музична драма, опера Кунь, «да-ше-тоу».

Abstract. The article examines the phenomenon of declamation as one of the leading means of vocal and performing expressiveness. The essence of declamatory intonation, its main forms (speech, recitative, and melodized declamation), and its role in shaping the artistic image are defined. Emphasis is placed on the interconnection of technical mastery, accuracy of intonation, and artistic interpretation as essential factors in realizing declamation within vocal performance. The semantic function of the word in the musical context and its ability to create emotional and psychological impact on the listener are analyzed. Particular attention is given to the features of declamation in traditional Chinese musical drama, especially in Kunqu opera and its Suzhou variant, which are distinguished by the specific vocal technique known as “da-she-tou” (“long tongue”). It is concluded that declamation serves as a universal means of artistic interpretation, integrating speech and singing into a single aesthetic and semantic system.

Keywords: declamation, vocal expressiveness, recitative, melodized speech, Chinese musical drama, Kunqu opera, da-she-tou technique.

Declamation is one of the fundamental elements of vocal expressiveness. This musical-verbal phenomenon is realized in three main forms: speech proper, recitative, and melodeclamation. Each of these logo-forms possesses specific intonational and linguistic characteristics, which depend on the material and structure of the musical work, regardless of whether it concerns chamber-vocal or opera-stage genres. It is no accident that a vocalist considers perfect diction and clear articulation of the text to be one of their key achievements, as the word, inseparably linked to the melody, serves the purpose of revealing the artistic content of the work.

To successfully embody declamatory intonation in a vocal performance, the singer must individually combine three indispensable aspects: technical skill (breath control, quality of pronunciation, timbre, and evenness of voice), intonation accuracy (purity of pitch execution, correct placement of logical stresses), and artistic interpretation (highlighting dramatic, semantic, and symbolic accents, emotional coloring of the tone, use of pauses). This comprehensive approach is crucial for interpretation and allows a specific vocalist to create a unique, personal version of the work. In view of the above, it is important to emphasize that declamatory intonation in singing represents an interpretation of the musical material, which is formed under the influence of genre-stylistic features, aesthetic requirements, and the uniqueness of the performer themselves. Therefore, the study of this topic is important not only for those who are studying vocal performance, opera artists, and teachers of music schools and universities, but also for professional



actors and everyone interested in the art of expressive declamation.

Considering the aforementioned, traditional Chinese musical drama, especially its Suzhou variety, is of significant interest as an object of research. This drama is the heir to the ancient Kun Opera (Kunqu), which is based on the 'kunqiang' melodies (originating from Kunshan near Suzhou) and is a synthesis of various art forms. The characteristics of the Suzhou music-stage drama are shaped by numerous factors, including the structure of the melodies, their modal basis, rhythm, as well as their connection with body movements, actors' gestures, and the content of the characters. A full understanding of these features requires specific study.

Using examples from Chinese traditional art, this article focuses on universal performance aspects, namely, the interpretative features of declamation. This topic is extremely relevant and contains elements common to the artistic traditions of various countries. The analysis is based on recent works, particularly the publications of Guo Qianping (2019) and F.-H. Neumann (1962), who explored different types of operatic recitative. Especially valuable is the dissertation work and accompanying articles by Guo Qianping, as she highlights important factors of this performance technique, which "contributes to the depiction of a person from an aesthetic and psychological point of view" (Guo Qianping, 2019: 3). The author rightly notes that declamation has differences that depend on the genre (chamber or operatic), as well as on the stylistic and compositional-stylistic features of the work. However, its key function is that in any artistic context, declamation acts as a "semantic mediator" (Guo Qianping, 2019: 177), endowed with specific functions and characteristics. It is this semantic dialogue between the verbal and musical forms of declamation that creates special variations of the word and ways of its intonation.

According to Guo Qianping, when the declamatory presentation of music unites with "direct" vocal speech, they together create the strongest "lines of force" in the semantic field of the operatic text. The word must correspond to the goals of the image: to reflect the inner world of the character, their emotions, to psychologically fully react to stage events, while evoking a certain emotional-psychological response that ensures the suggestive effect of the artistic action (Guo Qianping, 2019: 5). This personal, deeply individual element distinguishes declamation from similar forms of recitative, although a complete delineation between declamatory and recitative intonation does not occur either in opera or in dramatic art.

The verbal-musical aspects of declamatory intonation have an inherent capacity for diverse interpretations during vocal performance. Declamation is based on the power of word expressiveness and is perceived by the listener or spectator on three levels: 1) auditory – we hear the intonational variety of the melodic speech; 2) cognitive – we comprehend the logical content of the proclaimed text; 3) psycho-emotional – we use imagination and fantasy to empathize with the moods and emotions of the characters. According to these levels, the groups of means used for declamatory intonation and the treatment of expressive speech are also formed. At the same time, the fundamental basis of interpretation in vocal art is the voice itself



as a physical object: it not only serves as the material carrier of speech sounds but also remains the main means for transmitting musical content, as its sonic capabilities are practically limitless. In view of this, the importance of breathing for clear word pronunciation and the key role of diction in the process of vocal intonation cannot be overstated. In this context, it is worth mentioning a specific technique that arose in the Suzhou music-stage drama, known as "da-she-tou" (大舌头, which literally means "big/long tongue"). Although the role of breathing in this sonic manner is still insufficiently studied, it is, without a doubt, one of the most outstanding technical and expressive properties of the Suzhou musical drama. It should also be emphasized that in the part of the performer-declamator, transitions constantly occur between speech, recitative, and purely singing constructions. The masterful combination of singing and declamation is a necessary skill for any vocalist, which determines the relevance of an in-depth study of this issue.

Conclusions. As a result of the analysis, it is confirmed that declamatory intonation is a fundamental musical-verbal phenomenon of vocal expressiveness, realized in the forms of speech, recitative, and melodeclamation, and is a key means of interpreting artistic content, which is formed under the influence of genre-stylistic features and the uniqueness of the performer. Its successful realization requires a complex combination of technical skill, intonation accuracy, and artistic interpretation, as declamation acts as a "semantic mediator" which, through the personal component, creates the "lines of force" of the text's semantic field and ensures a suggestive effect, with its perception being multi-level. The study of this issue is relevant for vocalists and actors, with traditional Chinese musical drama (Kun Opera) and its unique "da-she-tou" technique being of particular interest and requiring further study. The prospects for further research in this area lie in detailed exploration of various methods of declamatory intonation as a means of interpretation and the identification of specific techniques for corresponding sound production in the field of vocal performance, which seems possible based on the study of concrete examples of the musical drama genre, including the traditional Chinese.

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