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III. TRADITIONAL CULTURE AND ITS HERITAGE: PROBLEMS OF PRESERVATION, USE AND DEVELOPMENT



TRADITIONS AND INNOVATION IN THE MUSICAL AESTHETICS OF RUSSIA IN THE 17TH CENTURY

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Summary. The article is devoted to the consideration of some important features of Russian musical aesthetics and theory in the 17th century. The author analyzes them from the point of view of the collision of innovative and traditionalist tendencies of development.

Keywords: znamenny singing; partes style; hook notation; musical notation.

In the 17th century, Russian musical-theoretical and aesthetic thought faced problems of unprecedented severity. A turning point is coming in the 500-year-old development of church singing art. Changes affected all its areas:

- a form of written fixation of music (European musical notation replaces the ancient hook notation),
- performance traditions (znamenny unison singing replaces the new partesny polyphonic choral style),
- the genre system (the canonical system of genres is being transformed by the increasingly popular cant and concerto).

Traditional – new, national – European. These oppositions are at the center of a tense controversy, reflecting the dramatic nature of the situation, when the fate of singing art was being decided along with the fate of Russian culture.

In the West at this time, too, there is a tense dialogue between «traditionalists» and «modernists». However, in Russia, behind the concepts of «old» and «new» are completely different realities compared to Western European culture. The uniqueness of the Russian situation is that here the medieval type of musical thinking (znamenny monody, early polyphony) and baroque (choral concert style) directly collide, and the stage of Renaissance counterpoint is absent.

The path of development of polyphony, which Western European art has passed in 700 years, Russia has passed in 100. The situation is similar with musical notation. In Russia, the notolinear system was opposed to the Kryukov one only in the 17th century. There was a clash of fundamentally different concepts of hearing and fixing the musical process.

If in the West the problems of the new style were discussed in an enlightened humanistic environment, then in Russia the formation of new ideas took place within the church culture and was perceived as an inoculation of a foreign, opposed to the original Russian.

Partes singing was perceived by the zealots of antiquity not just as foreign, but as heterodox, Catholic, and therefore demonic. The demonism of the new style was also seen in those influences of secular instrumental music, which, of course, were reflected in it. However, the process of secularization of Russian art turned out to be irreversible. In the musical and aesthetic treatises of the second half of the 17th century, the medieval ideal of the artist – the «holy simpleton» – was finally overthrown in favor of enlightenment, secular book education.

In theory, as in practice, in the 17th century, not just different musical and aesthetic views collide, but fundamentally different concepts of life and culture – protective in relation to the national old Russian tradition and innovative, Western, baroque.

The most conservative group of traditionalists strives to keep hook singing. For another group of figures, the crisis of singing culture and the need for reforms are obvious. The beginning of the reform was laid by Ivan Shaidur («The Legend of the Litters»), and completed in the second half of the 17th century by Alexander Mezenets («Notice of the Most Consenting Litters»). Cinabar marks and ink signs of I. Shaydur and A. Mezenets were called upon to clarify the hook notation, not replacing it with musical notation. The work of A. Mezenets was the result of the development of the Znamenny notation and the last apology for the Old Russian monody.

The future was in the new partes style. Its theorists were Ioanniky Korenev (? –1681) and Nikolai Diletsky (1630–1690). Both belong to the Latinizing direction of Moscow figures and their works («Music Grammar» by N. Diletsky and «On Music» by I. Korenev) represent the Westernizing position in Russian music theory of the 17th century. Composer's work in these treatises appears as a rationally ordered scientifically organized process of work.

The mystical sophistry of ancient Russian Znamenny singing develops into the idea of individual composer's skill, armed with rules. The idea of the mystery of art, the chosenness of the artist, is opposed by the light of reason, which opens the doors of knowledge for everyone.

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