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Anel Aitzhanova¹

*¹Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory
Almaty, Kazakhstan*

MUSICAL ORIENTALISM IN THE CONTEXT OF VOCAL INTERPRETATION

Abstract

The article deals with the problem of interpreting vocal works of orientalist themes in the context of a general methodology. The process of interpretation is analyzed, which includes the analysis of a poetic text; the study of the historical and cultural context of the work (the creative biography of the composer, the history of the creation of the work); analysis of the musical text and its compositional features, including form, means of artistic expression; construction of an interpretation plan taking into account interpretation tools (intonation, articulation, metrorhythm, agogy), preparation of an interpretation plan with an analysis of existing audio recordings of interpretations by other performers. This article focuses on the fact that in preparing the interpretation of vocal works on Japanese themes, it is important to establish a connection with the Japanese tradition proper, which can manifest itself only on the figurative plane, but can also include compositional interaction (the use of typical modes, rhythms, quotations). This work may be useful for performers of vocal works of orientalist themes.

Keywords: interpretation of vocal works, vocal cycles on a Japanese theme, musical orientalism.

Анель Айтжанова¹

*¹Қурманғазы атындағы Қазақ Ұлттық Консерватория
Алматы, Қазақстан*

ВОКАЛДЫ ИНТЕРПРЕТАЦИЯ КОНТЕКСТІНДЕГІ МУЗЫКАЛЫҚ ОРИЕНТАЛИЗМ

Аннотация

Мақалада Шығыстану тақырыбындағы вокалды шығармаларды жалпы әдістеме тұрғысынан түсіндіру мәселесі қарастырылады. Поэтикалық мәтінді талдау; шығарманың тарихи-мәдени контекстін зерттеу (композитордың шығармашылық өмірбаяны, шығарманың құрылу тарихы); музыкалық мәтінді және оның композициялық ерекшеліктерін, оның ішінде көркемдік мәнерлілік формасын, құралдарын талдау; интерпретация құралдарын (интонация, артикуляция, метроритм, агогика) ескере отырып, интерпретация жоспарын құру, басқа орындаушылардың интерпретациясының қолданыстағы аудиожазбаларын талдай отырып, интерпретация жоспарын дайындау. Бұл мақалада жапон тақырыбындағы вокалды шығармаларды түсіндіруді дайындауда жапон дәстүрімен байланыс орнатудың маңызы зор, ол тек бейнелі жоспарда ғана көрінуі мүмкін, бірақ сонымен бірге композициялық өзара әрекеттесуді де қамтиды (типтік режимдерді, ырғақтарды, тырнақшаларды қолдану). Бұл жұмыс ориенталистік тақырыптағы вокалды шығармаларды орындаушыларға пайдалы болуы мүмкін.

Түйінді сөздер: вокалдық шығармаларды талдау, жапон тақырыбындағы вокалдық циклдар, музыкалық ориентализм.

Анель Айтжанова¹

*¹Казахская Национальная Консерватория имени Курмангазы
Алматы, Казахстан*

МУЗЫКАЛЬНЫЙ ОРИЕНТАЛИЗМ В КОНТЕКСТЕ ВОКАЛЬНОЙ ИНТЕРПРЕТАЦИИ

Аннотация

В статье рассматривается проблема интерпретации вокальных произведений ориенталистской тематики в контексте общей методологии. Проанализирован процесс интерпретации включающий в себя анализ поэтического текста; изучение историко-культурного контекста произведения (творческая биография композитора, история создания произведения); анализ музыкального текста и его композиционных особенностей, включая форму, средства художественной выразительности; построение плана интерпретации с учётом инструментов интерпретации (интонирование, артикуляция, метроритм, агогика), подготовку интерпретационного плана с анализом существующих аудиозаписей интерпретаций других исполнителей. В данной статье акцентируется внимание на том, что в подготовке интерпретации вокальных произведений на японскую тематику имеет важное значение установление связи с собственно японской традицией, которая может проявляться только на образном плане, но может включать и композиционное взаимодействие (применение типичных ладов, ритмов, цитат). Данная работа может быть полезна исполнителям вокальных произведений ориенталистской тематики.

Ключевые слова: интерпретация вокальных произведений, вокальные циклы на японскую тему, музыкальный ориентализм.

In general, the interpretation of vocal works with orientalist themes should be considered in the context of a general methodology. Particular questions will concern mainly the details of the interpretation of images. That is, the process of conveying meanings through the interpretation of the composer's text in the work of a vocalist will include the following aspects: figurative-content (including the ratio of text and music), compositional, vocal-technical. Together, they all affect the artistic result.

In the general philosophical sense, interpretation is a cognitive procedure for establishing the content of concepts or the meaning of formal elements through their application to a particular subject area [1]. Interpretation is our understanding of the meanings inherent in the message, that is, to what extent and by what parameters the performer analyzes the original composer's text and its meanings, which then conveys to the listener. The concept of meanings is always multilevel. On the one hand, there is a sense laid down by the composer; upon interpretation, performing senses arise; upon perception, they are transformed by the listener into their own. The procedure performed on a work by a performer is a special kind of message, and therefore there is a sense of different interpretations: in the performance of different vocalists, the same composer's message can acquire different semantic shades. There are no two identical interpretations.

Individualization of interpretations occurs under the influence of a number of factors. The level of understanding by the performer of the work (in historical and compositional contexts), the conditions of performance, and the individual technical capabilities of the vocalist, his physiological and mental characteristics are also important. It is also worth considering the general cultural aspect: the performance may be intended for audiences with different socio-cultural contexts. According to T.V. Lymyreva, not every performance should be considered an interpretation. *“In the historically established special professional understanding, it is customary to consider performing interpretation not any reproduction of a musical text, but a creatively independent interpretation of a musical work that reveals its* new meanings, that is, it is highly informative for the listener. The sound text of such a performance can be defined as a literary text” [2, 43].*

A key feature of vocal interpretation is the synthetic nature of this art, which combines musical and verbal meanings. Speech has semantic specificity and not only the meaning of the text is transmitted through speech, but also emotions that form speech intonation. Thanks to the musical component, the emotional side of music, as well as the emotional impact, is stronger than in ordinary speech. Singing is a synthesis of thinking and feeling. In it, the impact on the listener occurs by all means: both through the mind and through emotions. The role of the performer in this impact is exceptional: *“A musical work outstanding in its artistic merits does not guarantee an equally outstanding artistic value of its performance. This means that performance has its own*

"value system", its own semiosphere, its own sign system, which the performer uses in communication with the listener" [2, 53].

In interpretation, as in a general communicative action, there are certain aspects that should be paid attention to when analyzing and preparing an interpretation. The performer, addressing the composer, takes into account the context of his historical era and, in general, the context of the creation of this work, since this is part of the meanings that are not in the text of the work, but they are assumed "behind the scenes", since the composer is a participant in the act of communication. A holistic approach to interpretation presupposes an understanding of the composer's life situation and his position in relation to aesthetics and style.

Another semantic aspect of vocal interpretation is the meaning of the poetic text. A certain situation is constructed inside it - eventful or emotional. For example, sketches of nature, situations of a lyrical, tragic, humorous nature, recreating the key artistic image of the composition. It is determined by the composer only partially. "Unraveling" the composer's meanings, the vocalist essentially creates his own on the basis of an assumption about the feelings experienced and the content hidden between the lines.

A feature of a poetic work is its a priori semantic layering. The language of poetry is metaphorical, conducive to subjective understanding. Lyrics are not limited to poetry.

Music is a sign system in which there are certain intonations that have a direct emotional impact on the listener. Metaphor in the language of poetry is culturally conditioned, and in music cultural and universal meanings are combined. For example, if we hear a repetition, then it calms us, regardless of the conditions, and vice versa, if there is a constant update, it makes us become more active. There are common universals, but most are still culturally conditioned, which means that when analyzing a work, in addition to the meaning laid down by the composer, it is necessary to take a broader look at the cultural context, since the work belongs to a certain tradition, character, communication with the listener is assumed depending on its cultural environment.

So, the act of interpretation always presupposes the presence (real or virtual) of three communicants: composer, performer and listener. Each of them, to a different extent, owns the norms of the semiotic system of the musical and cultural tradition in which the work is composed [2, 52]. Under the meaning that is transmitted between communicants, one should understand the entire aesthetic complex aimed at influencing. For example, a song of the war years can inspire action, while Japanese lyrics, through images of nature, encourage contemplative perception.

It is not possible to reconstruct the process of interpretation from a specific artistic text (for example, audio recordings). The only reliable way to understand it is a description of the creative process made by the performer himself. Nevertheless, certain methods of performing work on the text of a work have developed, including the study of the composer's creative biography, the history of the genre, the process of creating a work, its compositional features and existing interpretations. Both in the analysis of other people's interpretations, and in the preparation of his own, the performer should rely on the parameters with which he directly works on a literary text. The exponent of the sense of the performer is the area where he can allow performing freedom. Although a literary text is always perceived as a whole and continuum, it can be represented as a sum of events of different parameters. As T.V. Lymareva, "*Human consciousness inevitably divides the continuum of the vocal performance message (artistic text) into significant elements (differential features), which can be called sound codes. Such elements (codes) are the word and the properties of the sound itself. Consequently, even a single singing tone (if we consider it as a sign) is syncretic, has a complex structure, not to mention the whole work of vocal and performing art*" [2, 55].

Interpretation parameters are mostly studied on the example of piano art. Aleksev and Dyatlov pay attention to such parameters of the performance text as amenable to analysis: intonation, dynamics, agogics, timbre, phrasing [3]. All of them are the subject of the work of the performer [4].

Dyatlov divides "interpretation tools" into **two groups**: those associated with the problems of pronouncing sound (intonation and articulation) and with the time coordinate of the unfolding musical fabric (metrorhythm and agogy). [3, p. 12] If we extrapolate his ideas to vocal art,

intonation should include the manner of sound extraction, the balance of resonances (head, chest), as well as connectivity in the connection of nearby sounds. That is, this category will include all sound-pitch and timbre aspects. Using an analogy, vocal intonation can be called the process of "performing the pronunciation of sound, filling it with meaning and content" [3, 12].

Unlike instrumental music, vocal **articulation** is a very specific, measurable parameter. It should be understood as the pronunciation of vowels and consonants, and giving the vocal text articulateness (separation of words and phrases). If, for example, in piano music articulation depends only on the moment the sound is taken, in vocal music all the time the sound of a single note, syllable or word must be consciously articulated. Microarticulation work contributes to the construction of a more diverse sound perspective.

The specifics of the organization of musical time in vocal music include its connection with the poetic text, which forms the **vocal metrorhythm**. The combination of stressed and unstressed syllables corresponds, as a rule, to strong and weak beats. An "internal hierarchy of pulsations is formed, in which different levels are subordinate to each other" [3, 13]. The ratio of poetic and musical meter is not always straightforward. The process of "deciphering" metrorhythmic intonation is described by Ruchyevskaya. According to her, *in the original poetic speech there are always many options for rhythm, the ratio of accents, pauses, tempos, thanks to which many options for speech pronunciation of any phrase are possible. The totality of all pronunciation options is determined by the general concept of speech rhythm. If the phrase of a vocal melody along with the text can not only be sung, but also pronounced at the tempo and rhythm proposed by the composer, then some variant of the speech rhythm is fixed in it. Outside of a vocal melody with a specific text, the connection of a similar rhythmic pattern with a speech prototype manifests itself weaker or disappears altogether. The most vivid associations with speech intonation call for the embodiment of the asymmetric rhythm of prose speech* [5].

Agogics plays an important role in creating the emotional plan of the composition. Dyatlov classifies such techniques as agogic as acceleration, deceleration, delay in resolution or individual tone, fermata, caesura, pause. All these techniques are designed to organize the living breathing of the musical fabric, similar to the living breathing of human speech [3, 13]. In vocal music, the concept of breathing has immediacy and specificity. Agogics is directly related to singing breathing.

Korykhalova notes that " *the more accurately the composer fixes dynamics, agogics, piano pedalization, phrasing, the less freedom remains for the performer* " [6], although even in the most detailed text a share of interpretative freedom is assumed, since interpretation tools are not amenable to detailed fixation. The performing task of influencing the listener allows for a rather free interpretation of the composer's text.

The ubiquitous distribution of sound recording has brought to life a trend towards the unification of interpretation, as *Lymyreva writes about*. Korykhalova regards it as negative. The performer must show freedom, but still must be guided in these manifestations by the aesthetic norms adopted for performance, adhering to the general outline prescribed by the composer, the performer must show his individuality and the meanings that he lays in his artistic text, convey to the listener. That is, in interpretation as an act of communication, the balance between the composer's and performing text is extremely important [6; 2].

All deviations in rhythm, dynamics, and tempo that are acceptable in the performance text compared to the composer's text appear because the performer recreates a certain emotional image. Conventionally, through a deviation in dynamics and rhythm, it is possible to convey different shades of an emotional state, and which ones are already difficult to predict in advance, since they depend on the context. Considering the composer's and performing artistic texts as isomorphic, Lymyreva T.V. emphasizes that isomorphism is not isolated, and the meanings in the vocalist's artistic text are made up of emotional habits, the intonational nature of speech, and cultural tradition (crying, laughter, love yearning, resentment). There are also meanings inherent in the text, all this affects the final literary text and everything is analyzed in a complex [2, 59].

In interpretation, the performer can vary between the timbre and articulatory sides, make vocal speech closer to speech, or direct effort towards timbre beauty (singing formants). The ideal

option is a balance where the listener captures the meaning and at the same time preserves the timbre originality of the performer's voice. Timbre can be used as a means of artistic expression: where sound is more important than meaning, move towards the beauty of resonance, where meaning is more important than sound, on the contrary, deliberately muffle the timbre of the voice so that the text becomes more understandable.

The specificity of Orientalist vocal compositions lies, first of all, in the poetic text. To its specific meaning, symbolism is always added, which is inherent, for example, in Japanese culture, meanings hidden behind metaphors, which can be interpreted in different ways. That is, in the poetic text of most "Japanese" vocal cycles there is a conceptual meaning that is not explicitly expressed, but it is understandable during analysis, there are also meanings that arise due to the composer's interpretation of this text. Another purely musical concept arises (musical-conceptual meaning). The perception of such meanings by the listener directly depends on his cultural reserve. Understanding the latter can help the soloist in preparing the audience, preliminary clarification of the figurative content.

The performer can evoke an emotional response to the meaning of the text and emotional empathy (emotional and informational part). The acting skills of the vocalist are important here. To evoke an emotional response in the listener, the performer himself must experience these emotions, their depth very much depends on the understanding of all contexts.

As Bochkarev notes, *“in the process of empathy, identification is carried out – the experience of one's identity with a perceived, imagined, imaginary object and its infection with feelings, experiences. The manifestation of identification is introjection (“acceptance” of other people's attitudes, transferring another “I” into one's “I”) and projection (attributing one's attitudes, emotions to other people, transferring one's “I” to the “I” of another)* [7, 100].

Thus, the interpretation process includes the following steps:

1. analysis of poetic text;
2. the study of the historical and cultural context of the work (the creative biography of the composer, the history of the creation of the work);
3. analysis of the musical text and its compositional features, including form, means of artistic expression;
4. construction of an interpretation plan taking into account interpretation tools (intonation, articulation, metrorhythm, agogics).

In addition, it is possible to prepare an interpretation plan with an analysis of existing audio recordings of interpretations by other performers. Essential in preparing the interpretation of vocal works on Japanese themes will be establishing a connection with the Japanese tradition itself, which can only manifest itself on the figurative plane, but can also include compositional interaction (the use of typical modes, rhythms, quotations). How to write Nasser Eddin Buattura, L.S. Maikovskaya: *«Genuine artistry of musical performance presupposes a deep knowledge of the fundamentals of artistic perception, not to mention basic ideas regarding the expressive and procedural aspects of artistic interpretation, providing access to an adequate understanding of the “encoded” in sheet music signs copyright intent*» [8, 217].

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About the author:

Aitzhanova Anel Daurenovna - 2nd year undergraduate student of the specialty "Vocal Art" at the Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory; scientific adviser – Valeriya Nedlina, PhD, associate professor.

Автор туралы мәлімет:

Айтжанова Анель Дауреновна – Құрманғазы атындағы Қазақ ұлттық консерваториясының "Вокалдық өнер" мамандығының 2 курс магистранты; ғылыми жетекшісі – Недлина Валерия Ефимовна, өнертану кандидаты, доцент.

Сведения об авторе:

Айтжанова Анель Дауреновна – магистрант 2 курса специальности «Вокальное искусство» Казахской национальной консерватории имени Курмангазы; научный руководитель – Недлина Валерия Ефимовна, кандидат искусствоведения, доцент.