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Academization Forms of Popular Music

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Abstract

The paper reveals the issues of the academization of popular music in the contemporary cultural space. Already in the 19th century, there were frequent phenomena of the transformation of everyday popular genres, which, thanks to composer intervention, changed their status from applied music to presented (autonomous). In the 20th century, the transformation process has reached a new level, and today we can talk about the academization of popular music as one of the specific phenomena of the 21st century musical culture. The academization of popular music becomes possible in cases where the composition is a highly artistic work that has semantic content, expressed in the presence of several cultural codes; it has passed the test of time, thanks to which its true value was determined; the composition in the process of rethinking was adapted to the standards of academic music in terms of instrumentation, developmental techniques, and musical forms, which ultimately changed the forms of its existence and included it in modern concert academic practice. Academization is characteristic of all cultures, where academic music is part of the national cultural tradition. One of the striking examples of the academization of popular music is the treatment of contemporary Ukrainian academic composer V. Stepurko popular songs by B. Vesolovsky and A. Kos-Anatolsky of the 1930s – 1960s, which returned to the concert stage decades later not as entertaining music, but as part of the cultural heritage of the 20th century.

Keywords: Academic music, popular music, mass music, Ukrainian retro music, B. Veselovsky, A. Kos-Anatolsky, V. Stepurko.

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Introduction

In art criticism and musical practice, classical (academic) and popular (mass) music are traditionally juxtaposed. The first is characterized by artistic forms, aesthetic value, high ethical ideals, the second is mainly entertaining in nature, and its main sociocultural functions are communicative, hedonistic, adaptive, socializing, and recreational. Academic music is a self-contained artistic phenomenon, popular is applied in nature. Nevertheless, composers from time to time turn to popular genres, which in their interpretation, thanks to techniques tested in academic music, become musical classics. In instrumental music in the 19th century, such examples were, for example, the *Hungarian dances* by Johannes Brahms and the *Slavic dances* by Antonin Dvořák, in which the street dance elements were ordered by the harmony of forms and organic instrumental presentation. In the 20th century, Igor Stravinsky, Darius Milhaud, and other composers often turned to jazz music, including its elements in their compositions. Musical and rock opera arose as hybrids that combine musical dramaturgy of classical type with a new musical language based on modern harmonies and rhythms of popular music. Examples can be cited endlessly, and this indicates that there is no impassable border between academic and popular music. However, it is important to understand that the functions and purpose of classical and popular music are different, often opposite, therefore it is advisable to consider the hybrids that arise for their purpose, where the most important factor is the self-sufficiency, autonomy of music, or its applied nature. In this context, of particular interest are the arrangement by modern composers of song hits of past years, which, thanks to the composer interpretation and time distance, acquire the features of musical autonomy, characteristic of academic music.

Literature Review and Methodology

The problem of the interaction of academic and popular music is represented by extensive literature, while the focus of the researchers is mainly on works related to the academic musical tradition, in which composers used the style or techniques, characteristic of jazz or rock. In our work, we would like to highlight another aspect – the transformation of popular music samples that fell into the field of view of academic composers, when as a result of changes applied compositions turn into self-contained works of art. This process can be described as the academization of popular music. It is this term that was used in the work of the Ukrainian researcher Ivan Bobul, which indicates that the *academization* or the *new academism* of popular music includes two aspects: 1) the accumulation of musical expressive and artistic compositional experience and the creation on its basis of the musical history of the Ukrainian popular song, 2) creation an anthology of the names of prominent performers of popular music, capable of personifying song-mass images (Bobul, 2018, p. 71).

Ukrainian-Chinese researcher Li Shuai has a slightly different understanding of the academization of popular and jazz music. Jazz academization was made possible through the formation of a special educational system, where «the specifics of this process is based on the interaction of representative norms of academic and jazz music, since in organizational and teaching technique terms jazz education has been formed and functions on the ideological norms of academic music» (Li Shuai, 2019, p. 10). As we see, both researchers, under the same concept, mean quite different phenomena. Therefore, it seems appropriate to expand and clarify the understanding of the phenomenon of the academization of popular music. For this, we turn to the works of famous scientists devoted to the problems of popular and mass music.

Valentina Konen is the creator of a coherent theory of three musical layer – folklore, academic and mass music. Her book (Konen, 1994) outlines their distinguishing features, which is important for understanding the specifics of each of them. The work by V. Konen focuses on the third layer, i.e. mass music, since the first two in musicology are already fundamentally studied. The work by Anatoly Zucker, where the author in the early 1990s not only drew attention to the importance of mass genres in musical culture and the insufficient attention of modern musicologists to it, but also for the first

time raised the question of the possibility of the academization of mass music, can be considered very valuable (Zucker, 1991, pp. 4–5). One of the researcher's approaches is important for us: when he talks about the forms of interaction between academic and popular music, he notes the importance of the dramaturgic level in the synthesis process, i.e. the ability of mass music to reach a new level of musical-dramaturgic and conceptual whole (Zucker, 1991, p. 8).

Central in methodological terms is the work by Tatyana Cherednichenko. The researcher identifies 4 types of musical practices – folklore, professional ritual music, professional entertaining music (minstrels), European composition or opus music (Cherednichenko, 2002, pp. 404–405). We consider two of them that are important for our study. Academic music is determined by four parameters (written – individual – theoretical – original), mass (T. Cherednichenko calls it minstrels, appealing to the musical practice of the Middle Ages) – also four, but different (oral – individual – non-theoretical – «trendy»), where the latter parameters is a variation of the same (in opposition canonical/non-canonical) (Ibid). Therefore, one of the four parameters of academic and popular music is identical (individual) or fairly close (original/«trendy»). It follows from this typology that the academization of popular music involves a change in two other parameters (oral to written, non-theoretical to theoretical), as well as a reorientation from «trendy» to original. However, rapprochement cannot be simple, and the researcher herself notes that such types of popular music as jazz and rock do not fall into the typology. T. Cherednichenko defines them as mixed forms (Cherednichenko, 2002, pp. 420–422). Therefore, simply changing these parameters does not automatically make popular music classic.

We note one more important aspect. In the work by Fedor Shak it is noted that today the division into mass and academic music is in many cases incorrect. Thus, the work of American minimalists and modern jazz style eclecticism are in many respects close and tightly interact with each other, and therefore many compositions of the academic and non-academic musical tradition «can be read as texts of elite and mass culture at the same time» (Shak, 2018, p. 313). The close interaction of elite academic and mass non-academic music today is already recognized in musicology, however, in the works of cultural scientists, such interpenetration has been noted for a long time. Chandra Mukerji and Michael Schudson's introductory article on the monograph «Rethinking popular culture: Contemporary perspectives in cultural studies» (Mukerji, Schudson, 1991), where the authors proved with numerous examples that the line between elite and popular culture is erased, has become classic. Obviously, this also applies to the music field. A significant example of postmodern music is the classical crossover genre presented by Sarah Brightman, Andrea Bocelli, Alessandro Safina, Josh Groban, and other famous artists. Today there are works exploring this genre (Taiushev, 2011; Zhurkova, 2012; Semenchenko, 2016), in which the classic crossover is considered as a phenomenon that arose at the junction of elite and mass culture: examples of crossover can be fragments of classical operas in modern arrangement and original compositions combining the stylistics of opera and popular music. However, the genre of the classic crossover is not a form of academization of popular music, but rather the opposite – it testifies to the massization of the opera tradition, where its main structural components (aria, duet, etc.) are equated with the song genre – the universal of mass music. Since the objective of our paper is somewhat different, we will try to show how the academization of popular (mass) music can occur, namely, to identify those parameters that can turn mass musical genres, primarily song genres, into examples of high academic art. To confirm the theoretical provisions, we will give examples from the works of modern Ukrainian composer Viktor Stepurko, who has repeatedly turned to transcriptions of the Ukrainian popular song.

Discussion

Academization of song genres is possible if there is a high artistic level both in the textual part and in the musical part. Since this is author's music, the poet and composer are responsible for the quality of the art product. However, it must be remembered that the quality of a popular song does

not guarantee its automatic inclusion in the category of musical classics, since the goal of mass music is different – not to shape the taste, but to meet the expectations of the maximum number of recipients. Mass music quickly becomes popular and just as quickly gives way to a new, more trendy and relevant. Therefore, the goals and objectives of the authors of academic and popular music are different. In which case, a popular hit can claim the status of a work that can become a classic? Only in the case when the composition has additional meanings, codes that are significant for a particular culture. Cultural codes can be a language (if we are talking about vocal compositions), reliance on musical folklore or an everyday urban musical tradition, etc. The combination of one or more cultural codes in the song with the skill of the poet and composer makes it a small musical masterpiece, and later on, with certain modifications, it can become part of the classical musical heritage. Let us recall the phenomenon of poetization in the 19th century of everyday dances of national origin – a waltz by Franz Schubert, a mazurka by Frederic Chopin. In the 20th century, this tradition was continued by the Argentine composer Astor Piazzolla, who transformed the tango genre, enriching it with jazz elements and methods of academic music, creating an academic genre – «new tango» («tango nuevo»). The popular folk dances in the interpretation of these composers acquired a completely new sound, becoming classic examples of musical art. It is significant that in all these cases, composers turned to dance genres, in which the national cultural code is most pronounced, thereby taking dance music of the national tradition to a new level.

Another parameter, no less important, is temporary. It is presented in two aspects. The first suggests the special significance of the temporal aspect in the life of a popular song. In mass music, such a category as trend is especially important. Trend is a variable concept, so mass music is a product that needs to be quickly realized, since its price will sharply decrease over time. Consequently, mass music is a product with a fairly short duration. The postmodern mutual enrichment of mass culture with elite achievements does not change the essence, but only briefly extends the duration of a musical product. Therefore, in the context of considering our topic, time is the factor that affects the price of musical production.

However, there is another aspect of time, and it also has axiological significance, however, in the category not prices, but values. Classical music is considered to be a classic because it has stood the test of time, which cut off everything secondary and momentary. This understanding of time is completely opposite to the first, since time in this case contributes to the value of a musical work. It is difficult enough to find a common denominator between two opposing understandings of time – momentary and eternal. However, popular music has its value from the point of view of eternity, most clearly expressed in the course of retro music, relevant 30, 40, 50 and more years ago. Here two temporal positions converge: there is a temporary gap that allows you to filter the grains from the chaff, and at the same time, music, which today is perceived as retro, was once relevant and trendy. In this context, the principle of trend return plays its role, due to which the long-forgotten melodies become relevant again. Do old songs automatically become classic? Of course not, because not only the time aspect is important, but also the artistic one. However, the mechanism of time distance plays an important role in the process of academization. In world practice, there are extremely rare cases when a popular song immediately becomes a classic pattern. Among such examples, we will name the *Bohemian Rhapsody* of the rock band *Queen*. At the time, this track was denied rotation on the radio as non-format, however, it immediately became extremely popular and today is a classic of rock music. One of the reasons for the rapid acquisition by *Bohemian Rhapsody* of the status of musical classics is the non-standard form borrowed from the music of the romantic tradition. Therefore, in addition to the temporal aspect, others play an important role in the process of the academization of popular music.

A new life of old compositions is impossible without transformation, sometimes radical, of its general sound. Changes in arrangement and instrumentation are the third aspect necessary for the

academization of popular music. In jazz music, there are directions and branches, which are characterized by an orientation toward academic musical instruments. So, in the direction called West Coast Jazz, the instruments of the symphony orchestra were used – oboe, English horn, bassoon, horn, harp, bowed string instruments. The modern practice of rock musicians' performances often presupposes an expanded sound, where a symphony orchestra is used.

If we retrospectively consider the history of popular music, then the orchestral sound for it is characteristic until the 1960s – 1970s, i.e. until the moment when the sound of popular music changed under the influence of rock. And today, vocalists perform popular songs accompanied by an orchestra – symphonic, wind, less often string. In this regard, the question arises – does the toolkit affect the process of academization of popular music? It is quite easy to answer it, if we talk about musical creativity from the 1960s – 1970s, when mass music began to actively use power tools, and the sound of the orchestra eventually became perceived as something archaic. A new type of sound significantly transformed popular music, and many of its directions are quite difficult to combine with an orchestra, such as hip-hop. Also, electronic dance music is possible only in the format in which it was originally conceived. Due to their specificity, these areas are not subject to academization in the form we are talking about. If we talk about jazz, rock and pop music, then the modern practice of using the instruments of the symphony orchestra in concert sound and in recording certainly brings the sound of popular musical directions closer to academic ones. If we talk about music until the 1960s, the time gap becomes a more significant factor in its academization.

Let us single out the fourth factor in the academization of popular music, which is borrowed from classical music, namely the presence of musical dramaturgy. In this, it differs fundamentally from the popular one, since the presence of dramaturgic development is the prerogative of academic music, which it has been forming for more than three hundred years, starting from the 17th century. Musical and rock opera are genres that combine the traditions of academic and popular music based on theatrical art. If we talk about «pure» music, then art rock is a whole direction in rock music, where musicians sought to combine the techniques of academic music with the style of rock. Progressive jazz and free jazz in their searches were guided by the forms and techniques of the musical avant-garde of the 20th century – dodecaphony, aleatoric music, sonorism. If we talk about jazz of the 21st century, then most of its modern trends, especially European ones, are no longer mass, but elitist music, which differs from the latter only in an unwritten form of fixation of musical works. The peculiarities of the musical dramaturgy of academic music (the end-to-end development, intonational connections between the parts) become a form of mass music academization.

The fifth factor in the academization of popular music is its existence. Popular (mass) music is of an applied nature, however, in the process of academization, the performance of song compositions focuses on the concert practice of classical music, where thoughtful listening predominates.

Finishing the theoretical part of the work, we note that the academization of mass music is a natural process, as the history of jazz and rock shows. However, the selection of musical samples, the forms, and time of academization depend on many factors, and with a commonality of common features, each case is somewhat unique. As an example, let us cite the forms of academization of Ukrainian popular music in the 1930s – 1960s in the work of the Ukrainian composer Viktor Stepurko.

V. Stepurko (born 1951) is one of the most famous Ukrainian composers performed not only at home, but also abroad. He is the author of operas, ballets, chamber, symphonic music, but first of all V. Stepurko is known for his choral works, among which the most significant are sacred. The latter are quite well studied in Ukrainian musical science (Bardashevskaya, 2016; Tkachenko, 2016), while theatrical, orchestral, chamber music rarely falls into the field of view of researchers. Among the vocal and instrumental works by V. Stepurko, a special place is played by the arrangements of choral and vocal works, among which we highlight pop songs of the 1930s – 1960s. This layer of the composer's

work is completely unrepresented in the scientific field, but it is widely known to the public: in the concert halls of Ukraine songs by Bogdan Vesolovsky and Anatoly Kos-Anatolsky of the 1930s – 1960s, arranged by V. Stepurko, are often heard, and they are already part of the Ukrainian academic musical tradition of the 21st century. Consider how the songs that were popular a few decades ago became modern Ukrainian musical classics.

V. Stepurko refers to musical samples, which are vivid examples of the song genre, which have artistic value. From a large number of songs of the 1930s – 1960s, the composer selects the compositions of two authors – Bogdan Vesolovsky (1915–1971) and Anatoly Kos-Anatolsky (1909–1983), which were very popular at one time. The fate of their music in Ukraine was different. B. Vesolovsky wrote his music in the 1930s in Lviv, which was part of Poland, and after World War II he emigrated to Canada. Due to emigration, his music was banned in the USSR, and his beautiful melodies only occasionally sounded in Ukraine until 1991, and only anonymously. A. Kos-Anatolsky after the end of World War II worked in Soviet Ukraine, and his variety art was known to the general public, but today he is remembered by lovers of Ukrainian pop retro. Academic composer V. Stepurko addresses the work of the classics of Ukrainian pop music in the mid-20th century, wanting to academize popular music and make it part of the heritage of the «high» musical tradition.

Among the great song heritage of B. Vesolovsky and A. Kos-Anatolsky, V. Stepurko chooses several songs that are closest to him: «Cornflowers» («Волошки»), «Do you know?» («Чи знаєш ти?»), «It would be not to grieve» («Було б не тужити»), «Masonry» («Кладка»), «Nights» («Ніччю»), «Quiet without words» («Тихо без слів»), «The time will come» («Прийде ще час») by B. Vesolovsky and «Starry Night» («Зоряна ніч»), «When the blue mountains fell asleep» («Коли заснули сині гори») by A. Kos-Anatolsky. These compositions use at the time trendy rhythms of tango and slow waltz. Actual in the mid-20th century dance rhythms today are perceived as retro due to the time distance, which increases the value of these works as such that have passed the test of time. These songs are quite simple: their content is love lyrics and images of nature, which is very characteristic of popular music, but at the same time non-trivial and unbanal thanks to the combination of several cultural codes in them. The main cultural code in the songs by B. Vesolovsky and A. Kos-Anatolsky is the theme of love and the theme of nature as universal and «eternal». Although pop culture often exploits these «eternal themes», however, in cases where poetic and musical images contain artistic generalizations, popular songs no longer fit into the stencils and templates of pop culture.

In the songs by B. Vesolovsky and A. Kos-Anatolsky, the main (thematic) cultural code is supplemented by the national one due to the use of the Ukrainian language, which for many reasons was not so often used in popular music of the 1930s – 1960s, and reliance on national melos, which organically combined with the rhythms of popular dances. The songs by B. Vesolovsky and A. Kos-Anatolsky, thanks to the sincerity of expression, the use of codes that are significant for world and Ukrainian culture, and which have passed the test of time, are attractive to modern man.

If we talk about the academization of popular music, the composer, while arranging, should strive to preserve the general parameters (melody, harmony, tempo, rhythm) to transform the overall sound in such a way that it matches the sound canons of classical music. So, in the 18th century, the main instruments of the orchestra were strings, wooden and percussion complemented the overall sound, in the 19th century the orchestra consisted of four full-fledged groups, including stringed, woodwind, brass and percussion instruments, where each performed a special function in colorization and dramaturgy. As for popular music, in the first half of the 20th century, jazz had a great influence on its appearance, where woodwind and brass instruments became fundamental. String instruments and piano, in popular music, have faded into the background, retaining their importance in classical and modern academic music. Therefore, it is precisely stringed instruments, a string orchestra today

that becomes a symbol of academic tradition. As for vocals, the main form in popular vocal music is solo and ensemble singing, choral sound goes by the wayside.

V. Stepurko, for his arrangements of the songs by B. Vesolovsky and A. Kos-Anatolsky, was guided by the string composition, supplemented by percussion and piano (compositions «Do you know?», «It would be not to grieve», «Quiet without words», «The time will come» by B. Vesolovsky, «Starry Night», «When the blue mountains fell asleep» by A. Kos-Anatolsky). The updated sound made it possible to show retro songs in a new light, where they, on the one hand, retained their appearance, on the other, approached the song samples of the romantic tradition, which have long been examples of classical music. V. Stepurko used jazz band instruments (saxophones, trumpets, trombones, drums) in the arrangements of B. Vesolovsky's songs «Cornflowers», «Masonry», «Nights», however, the sound of the choir gives these arrangements an academic sound. In the European popular music of the 1930s – 1960s, the accordion and its varieties also played an important role in creating the sound. In most cases, V. Stepurko (with the exception of B. Vesolovsky's song «The time will come») refuses this timbre for the sake of avoiding popular music markers, making the most of the tools of academic music. Therefore, V. Stepurko's arrangements sound so organically in the hall at one concert with classical and modern academic music.

An important criterion for the academization of popular music is the use of musical forms and techniques for working with musical material, tested in the period 17 – 19 centuries. Vocal or choral parts in the songs by B. Vesolovsky and A. Kos-Anatolsky intended for solo performance in the arrangements of V. Stepurko sound more saturated, and the use of elements of vocal or instrumental polyphony that enrich the texture brings these compositions closer to the academic tradition.

We also note the transformation of forms in the arrangements of the composer. On the whole, V. Stepurko preserves the stanzaic form of the original, but supplements it with details, thanks to which the popular songs by B. Vesolovsky and A. Kos-Anatolsky, for their general character, approach the classical form of Lied, presented in the works by Franz Schubert, Robert Schumann, Hugo Wolf, etc. First, the composer reinforces the importance of instrumental accompaniment, which becomes almost equal to vocal, which is typical for classical composers. Of particular importance are instrumental interludes in songs, which summarize musical development. Secondly, in those cases where it is possible, V. Stepurko internally transforms the stanza form, as, for example, in the song «Starry Night» by A. Kos-Anatolsky, where formally there are signs of stanza, however, the detailed instrumental part gives the impression of end-to-end development, characteristic of complex symphonic forms. V. Stepurko in this case is not an innovator, since in the 1960s the Ukrainian composer-symphonist Borys Buyevsky in his popular songs of the 1960s – 1970s strengthened the significance of the symphony orchestra, as a result of which they became like small vocal symphonies. And it is no accident that in concerts the arrangements of the song «Starry Night» by A. Kos-Anatolsky sounds either at the end of the program, or in the conclusion of the semantic part of the concert, since the dramaturgy of the song sums up the development of the basic images of the Ukrainian retro song. Thanks to the methods of academization used by the composer V. Stepurko, the popular songs by B. Vesolovsky and A. Kos-Anatolsky of the 1930s – 1960s today have become an integral part of the Ukrainian «high» culture.

Conclusion

Popular music can become part of a «high» culture if it meets five criteria, namely, it assumes 1) semantic content and artistic value, expressed in the presence of several cultural codes; 2) temporary distance that allows you to filter one-day songs and save only highly artistic compositions of popular genres; 3) changing the general sound of the song with the help of re-instrumentation with the aim of approximating the music of academic tradition; 4) using techniques tested in classical music (the end-to-end development, polyphonization of textures, etc.) to monumentalize the song genre;

5) performance at concerts of classical and modern academic music. In the works of the famous Ukrainian composer V. Stepurko, we find classic examples of the academization of popular songs of the 1930s – 1960s. Thanks to the composer's possession of the entire arsenal of means developed in instrumental, vocal and choral academic music, his arrangements of the songs «Cornflowers», «Do you know?», «It would be not to grieve», «Masonry», «Nights», «Quiet without words», «The time will come» by B. Vesolovsky and «Starry Night», «When the blue mountains fell asleep» by A. Kos-Anatolsky, which have repeatedly sounded at concerts of academic music along with traditional academic vocal and instrumental genres – cantatas, vocal-symphonic poems, already today have become part of Ukrainian musical classics.

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