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***Курьяк Ирина. Значение роли хора в ранней украинской опере на примере «Екатерины» Н. Аркаса.***

*Предлагаемая статья раскрывает особенности драматургии хоро-вых эпизодов ранней украинской оперы Н. Аркаса «Катерина». В частности, исследуется тематизм, определяются основные линии применения хора в разных эпизодах в зависимости от течения сюжетной линии.*

**Ключевые слова:** *ранняя украинская опера, драматургические функции хора, народно-песенный тематизм.*

***Iryna Kuryliak. The role of the chorus in the early Ukrainian opera, the opera "Kateryna" by M. Arkas is for example.***

*The suggested article reveals the peculiarities of dramatic composition of the choir episodes of the early Ukrainian opera «Kateryna» by M. Arkas. Besides, there is investigated a thematic invention, there are determined the new lines of choir application in different episodes depending on the course of a plotline.*

*The opera by M. Arkas «Kateryna», created in 1892 was the first example of Taras Shevchenko's poem, adapted for play in Ukrainian operatic art. It should be mentioned that on the artistic horizon of Ukrainian art at that time there appeared a wide range of operas: by M. Lysenko («Christmas night» 1874; «Utoplana (the Drowned Maiden)», 1883; «Chornomortsy» 1872; «Taras Bulba» 1890), by S. Hulak-Artemovskyy («Zaporozhets za Dunaem», 1862), by P. Sokalskyi («Osada Dubno», 1878.); we refer this piece of music to early Ukrainian operas. Lack of professional music education in M. Arkas, no doubt, influenced over the quality of approach to the thematic material processing. We consider that his operas are full of expressed national colouring because of his deep knowledge of folklore primary sources.*

*This is for the first time in Ukrainian music and dramatic art that in the center of the opera there appeared the topic of tragic woman destiny of an ordinary village girl. The topic of romanticism (romantic heartbreak, betrayal*

and suicide) is intensified by social conditions. Arkas succeeded in revealing a real psychological evolution of the woman character- from playful, funny young lady to betrayed passionate woman, driven to despair. There are delicately reproduced the changes of emotional state of the main character, the composer always appeals to the environment she is in. The main psychological drama of *Kateryna* is shown against the background of rural life. Here the particularly important in general dramatic composition are the crowd scenes, separate ensembles with participation of soloists and certain choric bodies. Their role and meaning depend on narrative drama moments they appear in.

The thematic material of the choir is fully based upon folk-song background. In one case, these are the folklore samples, in the other – the author's national stylish compositions. Ukrainian songs sung by the choir in the first act introduce and reveal the national colouring of the household scenes. The role of the choir is also reduced to figured tuning fork that adapts and presents the internal state of the main character. In this particular fragment of the opera there is observed the opposition of feelings and emotions of the separate character to the group. Instead of this, in the third act a small choir episode reveals the image of the other cultural center. Its main function is to strengthen the contrast between a deep psychologic drama of the main character and reserved, indifferent and cold social dawn. So, as exemplified by the opera «*Kateryna*», which is one of the early Ukrainian operas, we reveal a diversified attraction of the choir – from bright national and domestic filling to separate psychological factor, which influences over the dramaturgic development of the whole scenic act.

**Key words:** early Ukrainian opera, dramatic functions of the choir, folk-song thematic invention.