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Berehova Olena,
Doctor of Art Criticism, professor,
professor of the «History and Music Theory» chair at the
Dnipropetrovsk Music Academy named after Mikhail Glinka
tel. (067) 795 - 13 - 84
e-mail: beregova@ukr.net
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4384-9365

Yermakova Elena,
Graduate student of the chair «Vocal-choral art» at the
Dnipropetrovsk Music Academy named after Mikhail Glinka
tel. (050) 730 - 44 - 21
e-mail: ermakowaelena9@gmail.com

INTERPRETATION
OF GENRE OF THE MARIAN ANTIPHONS
IN CONTEMPORARY UKRAINIAN MUSIC
(on the example of the cycle «Mariologia» by A. Retynsky)

The purpose of this scientific article is to learning Marian antiphons as a fundamentally important musical attribute of church liturgical spiritual practice and as an essentially specific genre of composition into the contemporary Ukrainian music on the example of the artistic work of a well-known Ukrainian composer Oleksiy Retynsky. There are methods of this signified research. The research of Marian antiphons is carried out using the methodology of historical musicology, holistic musicological analysis and musical hermeneutics. The scientific novelty of this represented investigative work is to introduce to the scientific circulation of Ukrainian musicology the cycle „Mariologia” for mixed choir and percussion instruments, by Oleksiy Retinsky (2017) and to reveal the
features of interpretation of the medieval genre by composer of modern times. **Conclusions.** The artistically musical cycle „Mariologia” of distinguished Ukrainian musician, composer Oleksiy Retynsky for mixed choir and percussion instruments is analyzed, the place and significance of the work in modern performing practice are determined. It is emphasized that contemporary Ukrainian composers and choral groups are starting to get actively interested in medieval liturgical genres, trying to interpret them in accordance with the worldview and attitude of a person of the end XX – the beginning of the XXI centuries. The specificity of the interpretation of the ancient liturgical genre of Marian antiphons in the works of modern Ukrainian composers is considered. The role and specialized place of spiritual foundations as well as the internal direction of composers in writing musical works on canonical texts is discovered. The features of the use of psalmody and Gregorian chant in the context of modern worldview are revealed.

**The key words:** antiphon, Gregorian choral, genre, liturgy, mariology, marionics.

Берегова Олена Миколаївна, доктор мистецтвознавства, професор, професор кафедри «Історія та теорія музики» Дніпропетровської академії музики ім. М. Глінки

Єрмакова Олена Андріївна, магістрант кафедри «Вокально-хорове мистецтво» Дніпропетровської академії музики ім. М. Глінки

Інтерпретація жанру Маріанських антифонів у сучасній українській музиці (на прикладі циклу «Mariologia» О. Ретинського)

Метою статті є дослідження Маріанських антифонів як важливого музичного атрибуту церковної богослужбової практики та як конкретного жанру композиторської творчості в сучасній українській музиці на прикладі твору молодого українського композитора Олексія Ретинського. **Методи.** Дослідження Маріанських антифонів проводиться з використанням методів історичного музикознавства, цілісного музикознавчого аналізу та музичної герменевтики. Особливе місце у розробці теми займає структурно-функціональний метод дослідження, на основі якого здійснюється формування висновків наукової роботи. Основою емпіричного підходу в презентованому дослідженні постають методи спостереження та узагальнення. Науковою новизною пропонованої дослідницької роботи є введення до наукового обігу сучасного
українського музикознавства циклу „Маріологія” для змішаного хору та ударних інструментів знаного українського майстра Олексія Ретинського (2017) та розкриття особливостей інтерпретації середньовічного жанру композитором новоучасного вітчизняного музичного мистецтва. Висновки. Проаналізовано цикл „Маріологія” українського музиканта, композитора Олексія Ретинського для змішаного хору та ударних інструментів. Підкреслюється, що сучасні українські композитори та хорові колективи починають активно цікавитись середньовічними літургійними жанрами, намагаючись інтерпретувати їх відповідно до світогляду та відчуттів людини кінця XX – початку XXI століть. Розглянуто специфіку трактування античного літургійного жанру маріанських антифонів у творах сучасних українських митців. Розкрито роль та спеціалізоване місце духовних основ, а також внутрішній напрям композиторів у написанні музичних творів на канонічні тексти. Розкрито характерні особливості вживання псалмодії та григоріанського співу в контексті сучасного світогляду.

Ключові слова: антифон, григоріанський хорал, жанр, літургія, маріологія, маріоністика.

Берегова Елена Николаевна, доктор искусствоведения, професор, професор кафедри «История и теория музыки» Днепропетровской академии музыки им. М. Глинки

Ермакова Елена Андреевна, магистрант кафедры «Вокально-хоровое искусство» Днепропетровской академии музыки им. М. Глинки

Интерпретация жанра Марианских антифонов в современной украинской музыке (на примере цикла «Mariologia» А. Ретинского)

Целью статьи является исследование Марианских антифонов как важного музыкального атрибута церковной богослужебной практики, а также как конкретного жанра композиторского творчества в современной академической отечественной музыке на примере творчества известного украинского композитора Алексея Ретинского. Методы. Исследование Марианских антифонов проводится с использованием методов исторического музыковедения, целостного музыковедческого анализа, а также музыкальной герменевтики. Особенное место в разработке темы занимает структурно-функциональный метод исследования, на основе
якомого осуществляется формирование выводов научной работы. Основой эмпирического подхода в представленном исследовании являются методы наблюдения и обобщения. Научная новизна представленной исследовательской работы концентрируется во введении в научный оборот украинского музыковедения цикла «Мариология» для смешанного хора и ударных инструментов имениного украинского композитора Алексея Ретинского (2017) и раскрытием особенностей интерпретации средневекового жанра мастером современного отечественного музыкального искусства.

Выводы. Подчеркивается, что современные украинские композиторы и хоровые коллективы начинают активно интересоваться средневековыми литургическими жанрами, стараясь интерпретировать их к определённому мировоззрению и ощущениям человека конца ХХ – начала ХХІ столетий. Установлено характерологическую специфику трактовки античного литургического жанра Марианских антифонов в современных украинских произведениях. Раскрыто роль и определённое место духовных основ, а также внутреннее направление композиторов в написании музыкальных произведений на канонические тексты. Выявлено наиболее характерные особенности применения псалмодии и григорианского пения в контексте современного мировосприятия.

Ключевые слова: антифон, григорианский хорал, жанр, литургия, мариология, марионистика.

The statement of the problem. Musical Marianistics is a complex, multifaceted, and at the same time very attractive, object of study in contemporary art. Nevertheless, the total number of scientific papers devoted to this topic is still very small. Natalia Ushakova, in her work on Marian Antiphons, points out that today the concept of Marian Antiphons has not been fully understood as a closed medieval Catholic cult, and Marian motets, on the contrary, are considered exclusively as a component of polyphonic culture, without their first oldest connection a namely Gregorian chorus [7].

The relevance of this topic of the study is due of the importance of Marian antiphons, which originated within the Gregorian chant in the Middle Ages. This is an under-researched field of the Western European cultural heritage, which became the basis for the emergence of a whole layer of polyphonic motets in the work of Renaissance composers and a number of works in the modern period. Topicality of the exploration is due
to the lack of a sufficient number of works devoted to Marian issues in the musicological literature.

**The analysis of the literatures.** According to N. Ushakova [7], it is a peculiar regularity that the main mass of scientific works on Marianism belongs to foreign scientists. We believe that this can be explained by the fact that in Orthodox music there is no concept of Virgin Antiphons. The study of Marian Antiphons is conducted in different directions, mainly in line with the pan-European musical-historical process. Among the important works, we note research by N. Ushakova [7], N. Korykhalova [3], S. Savenko [6].

**The purpose** of this scientific article is to learning Marian antiphons as a fundamentally important musical attribute of church liturgical spiritual practice and as an essentially specific genre of composition into the contemporary Ukrainian music on the example of the artistic work of a well-known Ukrainian composer Oleksiy Retynsky.

**The object** of this investigation is the genre of Marian antiphons. **The subject** of represented exploration is the specific indications concerning the genre of Marian antiphons on the example of the cycle «Mariologia» by O. Retynsky.

**The basic material.** Blessed of the Virgin Mary has, over a long period of development of human civilization, had and continues to have a great importance for the development of the spiritual foundations of society. In the context of Christian culture in general and Catholic in particular, the veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary has been adamantly asserted for many centuries. Artistic Mariology, like its cult foundation, is at the crossroads of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, representing the most dynamic spiritual direction in the development of Western European Christian mentality. Marian Antiphons is one of the exemplary models of the Catholic denomination, and their evolution is the beginning of a large-scale paradigm of the Marian spiritual genres, which also incorporates a significant part of the polyphonic work of Renaissance composers, demonstrating the „second life” of those well-known antiphons. Each new stage in Marianistics is something new, more freely from the laws of the canon. At the same time, each pre-stage for the next is a canonical „tracing paper” that allows you to save the sacral core in connection with the gradual change and transformation.

The time of the appearance of the Marian Antiphons (not earlier than the XI century), dates to the period of functioning of the Gregorian chorus, when the transition from oral music to writing took place. It is believed
that the first antiphon – „Alma redemptoris mater” and possibly the last – „Salve Regina”, were created by Herman Kontraktus (1013–1054). Other „Ave Regina caelorum” and „Regina caeli aetare” antiphons date from about the twelfth or thirteenth centuries.

Our task is to look at Marian Antiphons from two perspectives: as an attribute of liturgical practice and as a specific form of cultural creativity. With special focus the entire course of development of Marian Antiphons as a genre, in order to highlight in these historical and cultural directions the general patterns of the symbolic musical system of Marianism.

The concept of modality is widely used in this work, which carries an understanding of philosophical and theological meaning, as a specific experience of knowing the world. In this sense, the Marian Antiphons, as if in a drop of water, reflect the medieval „experience of the world” at all stages of its formation.

The modality system becomes an option for converting the content of Marian Antiphons. The single symbol (the whole semantic volume of Christian symbolism associated with the Virgin Mary), and the language of modality (the main instrument of its musical embodiment), in our view, allow us to consider the mono-mono and polyphonic versions of Marian Antiphones as the only inter-genre paradigm within which the Marian genre is not identical to itself at different stages of its development.

A similar paradigm related to the Mother of God theme also applies in the Eastern Christian direction. Marian Antiphons, like all collections of Gregorian songs, represent the sphere of professional ritual music (according to N. Myatieva) [5]. According to the author, it is one of the four main sources of music that can be characterized as written, collective, theoretical and canonical types of creativity.

The Gregorian choir is not very homogeneous in different regional traditions. N. Myatieve [5] in relation to this phenomenon deduces the concept of „canonical improvisation”, distinguishing it from the concept of „composition”. In this sense, the Marian Antiphons are no exception: being a work of the late Middle Ages, they were recorded at different times in many different countries. Graphically recorded variants of these tunes reflected the changes that at the time of their recording became effective evolution of auditory experience. The asynchrony inherent in the chronological, geographical, melodic, textured origin of the antiphons could not but reflect on the nature of their genre creation, making the Marian Antiphones the most opaque variety in the general system of Gregorian liturgical genres.
As Natalia Myatieva [5] says in her work „Composition and Interpretation: Three Slices of the Problem” – the whole set of innovations from the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century did not simplify the ontological foundations of performing interpretation. Even when the composer introduces a maximum of artistic freedom into the work, accesses an expanded „arsenal” of parameters, or fixes an opus with any kind of indeterminate notation, the performer's interpretation of the work in the scientific sense of the term can and should occur.

Our topic is related to the interpretation of the cycle, so we are interested in the work of domestic musicologists [2; 4]. In particular, in his doctoral dissertation, Viktor Moskalenko distinguishes between artistic and everyday interpretation, that is, interpretation as the process that gave rise to a new musical work, or as a result of this process. Interpretation - equals (=) – the mechanism of musical performance. Our topic is related to the interpretation of the cycle, so we are interested in the work of a domestic musicologist – Viktor Moskalenko [4]. In his dissertation, he distinguishes between artistic and everyday interpretation. That is, interpretation as a process that caused the emergence of a new piece of music, or because of this process. The author stands that the basis of meaningful musical interpretation must be his own performance image of a musical work. This enormity is achieved by connecting the professional interpreter and the intellectual resources of his thinking to the directly emotional sphere.

The Marian Antiphons Cycle for Mixed Choir and Percussion Instruments was written by Alexey Retinsky in 2017 at the request of the head of the vocal ensemble Olga Prykhodko (Kyiv) and is part of the „Mariologia” project.

The basic idea of the project was to combine ancient Latin texts (traditional liturgical texts of Gregorian chants known as Marian Antiphons) with the language of new music - a kind of realization of the spiritual tradition with its rethinking. „The joy of working on Marian Antiphones was that I, as a gardener, had only to create the necessary conditions for the future of the tree, almost unknowingly watching it grow independently. Everything else has taken over the fertile basis of the Latin prayer texts, ready to give the seed-sound dead at any moment, then to be born”

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7 From the interview of Alexey Retinsky, which he gave on his Facebook page (12.17.2018).
This cycle can be called „rhetorical music”. The combination of the two main elements of the character of this cycle – „absurdity” and „gregoriosity” – not only shapes the stylistics of all five parts, but is also the impetus for a corresponding performance interpretation of the work.

The cycle consists of five parts:

1. Alma Redemptoris Mater.
2. Ave Regina (Rejoice Queen).
3. Alleluia (Hallelujah).
4. Regina coeli.
5. Salve Regina.

Here, the term „choral writing” is interpreted as a set of techniques used by the composer to convey an artistic image. The usual techniques of musical expressiveness seem too narrow for contemporary choral (ensemble) music. In accordance with the principle of separation of parties, new principles of performance are being formed regarding a new (impossible for classical and romantic music) type of ensemble. One of the trends in contemporary music, including choral, associated with the use of stylistic models of previous eras, including music of the „Dodochan” period. Style models, unlike their original sources, exist in the context of contemporary musical thinking, engaging with it in a certain dialogue.

This cycle is based on a melismatic type of intonation, where a single composition of text (words) is sung an unspecified number of tones. The general form of each part can be divided into three sections. The overall logic of melodic movement is reminiscent of waves. The longest-sung phrases are most often concentrated in the middle sections, which gives the parts stability.

The composer discovers a consistent innovation in the field of melodic and melodic sphere through the combination of archaic styles and principles of modern composer's thinking. In particular, the work uses diatonic frets. Modes, which are the basis of strict style, are characterized by the absence of frets and constant intonation support. This testifies to the modality of sound organization.

Simple-style melodies are characterized by intonational and rhythmic suddenness: ragged movement prevails; intervals greater than the quint; jumps are not necessarily counterbalanced by the opposite melodic movement; the downward movement of the melody is almost always counterbalanced by the upward movement and the upward movement by
the downward movement. Rhythmic sharpness is ensured by the presence of sharp rhythmic changes, a sharp transition from long durations to smaller ones. The basis of each part is an asymmetric system that does not have a single center (tonic) that would close the melodic movement. Periodically, in the course of the melodic unfolding of voices, in the process of sounding a work, more or less consonant chords sound chaotically, but neither do they acquire the functions of a tonic. The modest solution thus reproduces the idea of endless melodic movement.

The cycle is called very vivid and at the same time „wicker” as sprouts of creepers – „as if the Virgin Mary had fallen into a rainforest”. And the birth of sounds and their deaths are so closely related that there is no room for tragedy. There is nothing but indifferent contemplation of eternity.

Contemporary Ukrainian composers continue the tradition of writing canonical music. Like that Alexey Retinsky is try to manifest in some way this canonicality, which is expressed in the syllabic creation of a musical outline. They don’t just broaden the boundaries of sound perception, they also combine them with the philosophy of modern musical thinking and provide a more comprehensive construction of melodic formulas. Surprisingly, each of the composers turned to the timbre dramaturgy that unites them, as well as what sets them apart – each of them in his own way experimenting and using human voices. We combine it with the fact that all four composers have a European composition of musical thinking of the present, that is, when the genre can be interpreted in a different way, not in the way it was interpreted before. As a result, composers may not even consider taking into account certain rules at any stage of writing a creation.

Conclusions. Marian antiphons in the treatment of contemporary Ukrainian composer such as A. Retinsky is a mirror-symmetrical cycle of four antiphons, where the extreme parts are larger and have the same construction with the general melodic formulas. Medium antiphons are more concise, with mirror text and melodic repetitions. This syllabic version of the Marian Antiphons demonstrates a connection with the word, which is more important in the sacred sense, since the Holy Word is the primary one for the Christian worldview. The Mariologia cycle for mixed choir and percussion instruments demonstrates the composer quest for timbre dramaturgy, which is made up of human voices and percussion instruments.

Each new version of the Marian Antiphon transformation reinterprets the canon and demonstrates the emergence of a new genre of heritage. It
can be assumed that the interpretation of Marian antiphons by contemporary composers is the „third life” of the ancient liturgical genre.

The prospects of this investigation is implementation has got results into contemporary research works, wich dedicated to questions about modern spiritual academic music.

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