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## **EXPLICATION OF THE MEANING OF THE SYMBOLIC ESSENCE OF MUSIC IN THE SACRICAL ACTIONS OF CHRISTIANITY**

The article presents an analysis of the essential role of musical art in the cult practice of Christianity. The mechanisms of influence of this type of art and its functional load that emerge as a consequence of suggestive influence in the process of sacral action in Christianity are clarified. It is substantiated that due to the musical art used in cult practice, it is possible to create abstract images of religious-mystical content, which contributes to the strengthening of mental experiences and the approach of catharsis. This sacrament finds its goal in what is beyond expression in music from a variety of musical styles and religious-sacred filling, from various times and places, in praise and prayer, and in relation to all of life. Matters like memory, health, emotion, time, harmony and spiritual solitude.

**Keywords:** musical art, sacred action, Christianity, spirituality, catharsis.

Among all the arts that Christianity uses for its suggestive purposes, music holds a special place. Musical art is an instrument of influence that reflects reality in sound artistic images and actively imparts to the psyche and emotional states of people, expresses feelings related to the idea of a generalized plan. Why is one of the places under the sun given to music? Why in the formation and strengthening of religiosity, are an emphasis on the determining role of musical art? Many research of outstanding philosophers, art critics, cultural scientists of the past and present are devoted to this problem among them Aurelius Augustinus, G. Hegel, K. Gottwald, B. Asafiev, Z. Lissa, E. Yakovlev, O. Antonova, L. Shugayeva and others.

The purpose of our study is to carry out a structural analysis of the peculiarities of the role of musical art in the process of sacral actions, as well as to outline its peculiarities and definiteness in the syncretism of the religious activities of Christian currents.

Painting and sculpture for all their usefulness and suitability for religious activities bring to the cult a significant element of "clarity", which in some cases can instill elements undesirable for the church in the moods and beliefs of the faithful. This element is absent from the sound images which in particular explains the special attention paid by theologians to the art of music. As a Church, the Religious Institute valued not only its abstractness, "spirituality" in music, but the fact that it could reveal the depths of the priesthood. In relation to the above, Pope Pius XII emphasized – "... sacred music does not sound during the liturgy; it is not added to the liturgy; it is itself a liturgy"<sup>1</sup>.

Let us say that, in general, there are deep contradictions between the ecclesiastical dogmatic definition of the tasks of sacred music and the process of functioning of musical culture in its historical development. First of all, Christian denominations, as a rule, do not consider music culture as an integral whole. They distinguish from it only some of the properties by which not only the communicative role of worship is realized but also creates a certain emotional atmosphere, the necessary psychological mood. For example, for worship, the ability of music to become a kind of "linguistic" form of communication between people is important. Music has an intonational nature like ordinary human language, but it is more emotional and accessible. It easily overcomes national barriers, especially in countries with common cultural backgrounds. At the same time, music is characterized by abstraction from everything directly-subject, maximum generalization. This feature, which is characteristic of musical art, the process of separating human experiences from their specific content and transferring them to generalized musical-figurative structures, makes it possible to create extremely abstract, imagined images, including mystical-religious ones. In combination with the elements of theatrical action, religiously filled visual arts, architecture, instrumental music and singing acquire special efficacy, contributing to the perception of relevant religious information and the formation of a certain social and psychological type of believer.

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<sup>1</sup> Антонова, О. (1977). Музыка и церковь. *Новое в жизни, науке, технике. Серия "Научный атеизм"*, 6, 18.

Moreover, church music, which is the "art of rhythm-word-intonation" containing a minimum of musical influence, has a special function. And this minimum is subordinated to the word, for the sake of a clear and emotionally intense detection of which this formula is being developed. A typical example of such music is the Gregorian chorus – the traditional pronunciation in Catholic mass of a priest "... a predetermined intonation as a kind of formula (rhythm-tone-verbal), followed by a chorus. Thus, the choir indicates a certain, predetermined way of singing"<sup>1</sup>.

The orthodoxy jealously guarded this predetermined intonation system of cult singing from any external, "secular" invasions. But the fact that music as an artistic form of the depiction of reality is not merely an emotional signal or code of some or other religiously accepted religious beliefs has been overlooked. It is guided by consciousness and is a mental activity. The formation of the melody in its emotional and semantic expression is "... the creation of human consciousness, as well as its basis – a strictly rationalistic interval system"<sup>2</sup>. It is also noteworthy that the reflection of the processes of reality in musical images is done through the study of deeply meaningful logical connections, because in the center of the whole system of musical sounds is a social person – the key and scale of comparisons, estimates, interpretations of phenomena of reality, which specifies their humanistic principle.

In order to be understandable to the general public or to be attractive, the Church is forced to turn to the figurative and artistic material that was formed in the course of the spiritual and practical activity of the masses at one or another historical stage. Getting into the sphere of ecclesiastical cult, this material is transformed, becoming a component of religious cult and acquires a new semantic orientation, ideological orientation and functions. Due to the fact that the religious feeling that leads the believer to the temple is an expression of social contradictions of the era, which are refracted due to the specific circumstances of his life, the perception of worship is deeply personal. If the transformation of artistic material into religious action is dogmatically consistent, it inevitably leads to a break with the usual language of the imagery of secular art, forming a number of "formulas" determined by liturgical action.

The aesthetic experience that comes under the influence of music is not something completely subjective. Every "I", according to Z. Lissi's fair remark, "... consists of diverse, inherited elements of society that are "no – I" and which govern our perception of a work of art. Our subjective experiences are determined by interpersonal factors ... on this basis, we are talking about a collective musical sense of the environment of a certain time"<sup>3</sup>. The multilayered musical reception (perception) is determined by the multidimensionality of its socio-historical and artistic determinants. Hence the contradiction between the perception that has historically crystallized into certain classes and the church's desire for a religious-dogmatic unification of professional music.

The Catholic Church strictly regulated the role of music in worship. This is clearly defined in the decisions of its cathedrals, the papal encyclicals and other documents of the Roman Curia and its congregations. The ideological dominance of the Church in the Middle Ages completely subordinated it to this kind of art. Music in Catholic worship was guided by the principle of "Per verbum sanctificatur cantum" – singing is consecrated through the word. It is important to note the importance of church singing as a catalyst for catharsis. The catharsis is able to awaken in a man the deepest spiritual experiences. In this regard, Aurelius Augustine remarked: "I wept moved to the bottom of my heart, hearing hymns and songs sung in Your Church, O God." [Augustine the Blessed. Confession. – Book. X. – Part 23.] It is no coincidence that there is such an attraction to the Gregorian chorus, where this principle is fully implemented and remains in Catholicism until today. In connection with the resolution on the reform of the liturgy "Motu proprio" ("On his own initiative"), Pius X in 1903 noted that for two millennia, the "supra-individual" and "eternal position of the Church had not been fully expressed in any musical form "as in Gregorian chorale"<sup>4</sup>. From the standpoint of today, it should be noted that the categorical nature of this resolution did not take into account a number of important circumstances that already diminished the possibilities of Gregorian singing. First, it is known that the choir sounded Latin, over time the content of its text became inaccessible to the mass of parishioners. In the Middle Ages, even for the Romans, Latin was already archaic. Second, despite all efforts, the Catholic Church could not preserve Gregorian singing in the form of an unchanging model of sacred music. Like any artistic phenomenon, Gregorian singing

<sup>1</sup> Асафьев, Б. (1971). *Музыкальная форма как процесс*. Ленинград: Музыка, 213.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 343.

<sup>3</sup> Lissa, Z. (1975). *Neue Aufsätze zur Musikästhetik*. Berlin: Heinrichshofen, 113.

<sup>4</sup> Антонова, О. (1985). *Католицизм и искусство. XX век*. М.: Мысль, 28.

could not be isolated from the artistic life of the era. This singing also evolved, the traditions of performance changed, the composition of the choir changed. That is the evolution of the choir indicates that religious art despite all the features of the "sacred" can also be realistic because in the creative work is always embodied sensual objective world.

True art has always gone beyond dogmatic guidelines. The artist could not confine himself to the dead scheme. Accumulating contradictions and hopes of his time, he embodies in his works the deepest understanding of the era. These features of artistic creativity explain that masterpieces of ancient church music often carry democratic tendencies, manifesting themselves in the ecclesiastical resolution of "eternal" themes, in the introduction of secular images, intonations that give the music a realistic orientation. Each new stage of social development required the church to renew its emotional and artistic means of influencing believers. The Church, even those adjustments that made the development of music as a form of art in the artistic (and more spiritual) practice of the era, could not be ignored. That is why the religious struggle to preserve the cult status of the music was from the beginning doomed.

It is important to note that, along with church art, folk music has always existed and never ceased to develop. The church feared the popularity enjoyed by folk art. It was opposed to ecclesiastical asceticism, affirming deeply earthly ethical-aesthetic values and ideals. Therefore, the Church at all times considered it her first duty to protect the "religious purity" of art. However, under the pressure of time, the Catholic Church was forced to compromise, secretly returning to what it denied. As Catholic theologians persistently insisted on the idea of the sinfulness of sensual enjoyment of music, they were not only compelled to reckon with this "sinfulness" but also granted it the right of citizenship in the liturgy. This contradiction is determined by the difference between the nature of the influence on a person of religion and art. The emotional response of a person to art, in particular to the art of music, is always more diverse than religious. "Even if the soul is grief-stricken," says Hegel about ancient church music, "beauty and bliss remain, the sheer grandeur and activity of fantasy in spiritual self-indulgence with its desire for diversity. This is a beauty that has a sensitive appearance, so often such pleasure with the melody is reduced to a purely sensual pleasure"<sup>1</sup>. The impulse that deformed church music and transformed it into new forms was the social needs that arose in each new era in new forms of expression and that responded to the emotional order of time.

These features of artistic creativity are clearly reflected in the music of the Renaissance, presented in the fifteenth century by Dutch school. The multifaceted nature of this music has opened up opportunities for the emergence of new associations in the emancipated consciousness of the Renaissance man, which go far beyond religious beliefs. Dutch Mass completes the process of rejecting church mass from the canonical text. Content here was determined almost exclusively by musical means, which increased ambiguity, expanded the range of images. In the twentieth century, the Catholic Church very carefully turned to a choral polyphonic mass in search of increasing the effectiveness of the liturgy. Pius XII demanded in this "... an important area of great vigilance, to prevent the penetration into the church of such polyphonic music, in the eloquence, profanity, and vigilance of which the sacred words of the liturgy, which violate the efficacy of liturgy, glitter the liturgy"<sup>2</sup>. But the centuries-old process of accumulating elements of realism in its depths came to its finale and at the same time gave rise to a new quality. Now the further development of music as an artistic phenomenon could only be made outside the needs of the cult, because, while still being religious, it had ceased to be ecclesiastical in nature.

Beginning with the Council of Trent (Counter-Reformation) cathedral, the Pope and his Curia issued one after the other formidable injunctions to shield Catholic liturgical music from new trends. As an antithesis to the growing popularity of opera, the oratorio was born in the bosom of the church. However, following the logic of the genre, which is close in its drama, imagery and musical style to the opera, the oratorio quickly switches to the concert stage. In the works of J. Bach and G. Handel, it appears in the form of grand dramatic canvases filled with deep humanism, excitement about the fate of humanity, dreams of the harmony of social relations. German romanticism, despite all the hopes of Catholicism, strikes him with an unexpected blow. The struggle of romanticism against clerical-noble conservatism was especially waged in the fields of art and philosophy. Masterpieces of spiritual music created by romantics can no longer be attributed to cult music. Over the 18 centuries of its existence, it has depleted stocks of not only the moral but also the aesthetic power of influence. This was felt well, for example, by F. Schubert. It is no accident

<sup>1</sup> Гегель, Г. (1968). *Эстетика. Москва: Искусство, 1. XVI, 216.*

<sup>2</sup> Антонова, О. (1985). *Католицизм и искусство. XX век. Москва: Мысль, 145.*

that in his masses there is no mandatory phrase in the canonical text: "Credo ... in unam Sanctam catholicam et apostolicam ecclesiam" ("I believe in a single holy Catholic apostolic Church"). Obviously, due to the absence of this part of the symbol of faith, Masses of Schubert were excluded from use in the Catholic Church<sup>1</sup>. But not only this was the reason for this attitude of the church to Schubert: in his masses "... we see a rejection of the church tradition ... Actually, the artistic moment rises here to the level of self-sufficient fact"<sup>2</sup>.

Even more skeptical of the church tradition was the work of G. Berlioz. Written by him in 1837, "Requiem" is an original work that has nothing to do with religious and religious music. The lyrical and formidable, sad and hopeful Requiem of Berlioz expresses a strong protest against the suffocating atmosphere of that time. The composer conceived Requiem as a solemn mourning ceremony celebrating the fallen heroes of the revolution, their courage, their high consciousness of civic duty. Berlioz cleanses the genre of mass, ridding it of archaic formal-dogmatic attributes and fills it with a lively feeling in its perfect artistic expression. If the Church transforms music into "stupid" from slavery and contempt<sup>3</sup>, the composer, while continuing the traditions of his great predecessors (from Bach to Beethoven), gives her true grandeur. That is the strict prescriptions of Catholicism regarding the use of sacred music for its intended purpose turned to the Church an unexpected paradox. Borrowing the traditional names of Catholic services or genres of traditional sacred music, the composers embarked on bold, creative, artistic transformations that were a direct challenge to the Church's zealots. Despite the use of traditional liturgical verbal formulas, the only creator of true high values – a human being – is sung in the newest "masses", "requiems", "choirs", etc.

The Orthodox Church uses the music of all its worship services no less extensively. But here, unlike Catholicism, it is extremely vocal and therefore coincides with church singing. Clement of Alexandria, emphasizing the importance of church music, strongly opposed the use of musical instruments in the church<sup>4</sup>. The only instrument that should sound in the temple is the human voice, since only a voice can translate the sacred word in musical sounds. Clement of Alexandria emphasized: "We have in use one tool – the word of peace; with its help we pay homage to God"<sup>5</sup>.

In Orthodoxy, church singing originated in Byzantium, but later it was influenced by local musical traditions, in particular, folk melodies, from which many were introduced to worship practices, and became part of the so-called church choir. To give the church singing some stability, since the XI century there is a banner chant, which is called the so-called banners (signs, "hooks"). Today, this chant is practiced only in Old Believers churches. But eight-voices, that is a system of eight "voices" (melodies), also borrowed from the Byzantine Church, have been rooted in the East Slavic countries. The number of voices is determined by the symbolism of the number "8", which according to Gregory the Theologian and Dionysius the Areopagite, is a symbol of eternity. The eight-voice practiced in the Eastern Church does not adhere to all the intricacies and musical forms of the Byzantine prototype, but retains its solid musical foundations, melodic and rhythmic properties. The musical characteristic of the eight-voiced was his lively, bright, joyful religious feeling without sorrow and sadness. In the history of the church singing, eight voices became the living source that initiated, in fact, all the ancient Orthodox chants. Only this can be explained by the fact that despite the richness and variety of these chants, they bear the seal of inner affinity, which is defined as a strict church style<sup>6</sup>.

As in Catholicism, all Orthodox worship is carried out in a constant scenario. This is the name in the liturgical books for a complete account of the chants and texts of all the prayers intended for the services of the changeable and unchanging, with the indication of their sequence. These include, for example, the Servant of the "Holy and Divine Liturgy", "Evening", "Early", and in Trebnik the "Act of consecrating the temple made by the Bishops", as well as prayer, funeral services, singing, consecration of buildings, etc. Despite this predetermined practice of blasphemy, it does not in any way diminish the art of vocal accompaniment of worship. What is more, regular visitors are so vocally sung as a result of the repeated repetition of songs,

<sup>1</sup> Gottwald, K. (1976). Leonard Bernstein's Messe oder die Konstruktion der Blasphemie. *Melos: neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 2, 82.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 303.

<sup>3</sup> Яковлев, Е. (1969). *Эстетическое сознание, искусство и религия*. Москва: Искусство, 106.

<sup>4</sup> Шугаева, Л. (2007). *Православие сектантство в Україні: особливості трансформації*. Рівне: О. М. Зень, 89.

<sup>5</sup> *Настольная книга священнослужителя* (1993). Москва: Московская Патриархия, 4, 228.

<sup>6</sup> *Настольная книга священнослужителя* (1992). Москва: Московская Патриархия, 1, 335.

thanksgiving and supplication formulas during litany and antiphon, that in many temples the need for the choir itself disappears. As for the special praises that are not sung to the eight voices, but to their own tunes, their execution usually causes a general emotional and prayerful uplift. These include "The Holy Quiet..." and Nods for the Evening, Troparion Holiday at the Great Evening, Troparion of the Feast, The Symbol of Faith at the Liturgy, The Great Epiphany for Early Service, and more.

It is necessary to point out the involvement of musical art in the practice of priesthood in Protestantism, where there is a whole repertoire of psalms for worship. Many religious poets and composers worked in this field. They created and multiplied songs and psalm songs for their fellow believers, occasionally publishing their collections, arranged according to the principle of one or another of the needs and occasions of church life. The numbering of works and their rubric by their content and purpose make it easy to use editions at congregations of believers. In addition to printed, there are many manuscript collections in the use of believers, which were copied by the believers themselves.

In Protestantism, however, there is no permanent repertoire of sacred singing, it is replenished with new creations – textual and melodic. In choir-based communities, their repertoire is almost constantly updated, and what has been performed previously has already been adopted as a part of common singing.

Protestants also in many cases accompany the singing with the playing of musical instruments. In the villages, bayan was most often used for this purpose, or even the accordion called "Heligonka" which was once very popular. However, not all communities have at least such a simple musical instrument. In the cities were popular pianos, harmonium, synthesizers.

This "synthesis" of religion and mass music has given rise to a number of pop works in which the Christian theme occupies a leading position. Touring priests appear to give churches a place to work with parishioners. For example, one of them (a former artist who became a popular theorist of modernist music in England and at the same time a religious preacher) G. Goodwin does not think of a church service without flowers, music and dance, a sharp vocabulary<sup>1</sup>. The conflict surrounding the operas "Jesus Christ is a superstar", "The Magic of God" and others, is an indication of the widespread attraction to the genre of Christian mysteries. Moreover, it should be noted that the publication of the double vinyl album in the territory of the USSR, by the above-mentioned rock opera E. L. Webber, back in 1991, should be greatly appreciated by the One Evangelical Lutheran Church. With all the contradictions of the press and clergy estimates of these phenomena, the idea remains that during such performances people become involved in the Scriptures much more than during systematic visits to Sunday services. However, such "democratization" may well undermine the Church's power and authority. Numerous experiments in updating music, as well as in liturgical experiments, do not so much refine it as they produce chaos and confusion.

Thus, in combination with elements of theatrical action, painting, architecture, musical art becomes especially effective, facilitating the perception of relevant religious information and the formation of a certain socio-psychological type of believer.

Catholicism and Orthodoxy have developed vocal (as spiritual singing) and instrumental music throughout their history. Although both denominations decided on the place and role of music and singing in their cults during the early days of their functioning, the peculiarities of their development and establishment in different areas inevitably affected the nature of religious music. At the same time, the Catholic Church, which is characterized by tendencies of modernization of the cult, was more adaptable in this area. Orthodoxy, rather, paid tribute to traditionalism, but time and socio-historical conditions and the development of professional art are gradually affecting the transformation of his cult singing. Protestantism also demonstrates the ability to modernize music as an integral element of cult action.

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