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**Transformation of folk tradition in operetta "Chornomortsy"  
by M. Lysenko and M. Starytsky as an experimental example  
of Ukrainian musical drama: genre-intonation analysis**

*The operetta "Chornomortsi" ("Black Sea residents") is one of the innovative plays of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Ukrainian musical dramaturgy. Mykola Lysenko and Mykhailo Starytsky attempted to incorporate Ukrainian worldview principles and mental archetypes into the operetta genre despite the prohibition on conceptual national genres. The purpose of this research is to study the operetta "Chornomortsi" by M. Lysenko and M. Starytsky as an experimental example of Ukrainian musical drama, which, under genre restrictions and cultural pressure, realizes the ideas of national identity through symbolism, mythologizing, song tradition and sacralized images. The synthesis of the everyday plot and the deep philosophical and ethical basis, which is revealed through musical symbolism, genre-thematic polyvalence and intonation-semantic saturation, is substantiated. The special chronotope of the fictional Black Sea coast as an artistic model of the national world, functioning according to the usual rules of Cossack life and morality, is analyzed. It is established that the main concept of the work unfolds around the idea of Cossack glory as the embodiment of dignity, love, honor, will and collective consciousness of the people. It is determined that the musical dramaturgy of the operetta is aimed at rethinking the folk tradition in the context of the genre restrictions of the era. The use of allusions to the work of Taras Shevchenko and Ivan Kotlyarevsky, the symbolization of tonal and harmonic means, the typification of characters as carriers of mental archetypes are traced. Through the analysis*

*of the overture and vocal numbers, the functioning of the leitmotifs of dishonor, repentance and rebirth, which give the operetta a philosophical content, is revealed. In the center of the plot is the collective image of the Black Sea residents (in Ukrainian: Chornomortsi) as the personification of the national spirit. It is stressed that particular attention is given to the song's function in arranging the interior dramaturgical space, detecting psychological motivations, and mythologizing reality. It has been demonstrated that "Chornomorsi" is more than just a comedy show; rather, it is a rich artistic manifesto with a strong ideological message that uses musical theater to preserve and spread Ukrainian spirituality.*

**Key words:** *operetta "Chornomortsi"; Mykola Lysenko; Mykhailo Starytsky; Ukrainian operetta; musical dramaturgy; Cossack glory; national identity; folk song; archetype; sacred chronotope; genre and intonation analysis.*

### **Statement of the problem.**

Modern Ukrainian musicology is increasingly turning to the understanding of the national cultural heritage through the prism of ideological content and symbolic content of works of the period of cultural pressure and prohibitions. In this context, the operetta "Chornomorsi" by Mykola Lysenko and Mykhailo Starytsky appears as a landmark work that, under strict genre and thematic restrictions, reveals the deep ideological imperatives of the Ukrainian people. Despite the formal genre affiliation to light comedy operetta, the work represents a complex system of national archetypes conveyed through music, word and dramaturgical structure. However, a comprehensive study of the musical dramaturgy of "Chornomortsi", in particular symbolism, tonal semantics, mythological allusions and the role of song material, still remains fragmentary in the scientific discourse. This necessitates a detailed analysis of this work not only as an artistic phenomenon of its time, but also as a conceptual code of national self-awareness.

**Recent research and publications.** Currently, the process of forming a research paradigm of the life and work of outstanding domestic personalities of the nineteenth century continues. Modern science is trying to rethink the artistic phenomena of this period, bringing to the fore the issues of national identity, which are extremely relevant for the cultural

progress of the era. Based on an analysis of M. Lysenko's folkloristic activity, L. Kokhan (2020) argues that the composer's work was greatly influenced by the study of folk music and that M. Lysenko's folkloristic activity positively impacted the development of Ukrainian theater as a musical and dramatic art form. M. Nazarenko (Назаренко, 2019) analyzes the writer's work, in particular his operetta "Chornomortsy", in the context of national ideology and imperial discourse. V. Vlasov (Власов, 2021) devoted a section to literature, theater and musical art in his textbook, where he covers the activities of M. Starytsky and M. Lysenko under censorship restrictions. K. Lisniak (Лісняк, 2021) examines the issues of authorship and plagiarism in the context of M. Starytsky's work. Many researchers (Балюк, Кузьміна, & Токміленко, 2022) note that in the context of the ban on Ukrainian historical genres, Lysenko resorted to codifying the national myth through music. O. Volosatykh (2022) demonstrated that the development of a new national professional theater for drama and music benefited from the folklore element of M. Starytsky's work. Ukrainian and foreign musicologists (Pylatiuk, 2024) represent a wide range of studies of M. Lysenko's work covering the various aspects of his creative activity in the broad context of the cultural, artistic, and socio-political life of the region and European composer schools.

As we can see, the operetta "Chornomortsy" by Mykola Lysenko and Mykhailo Starytsky remains insufficiently studied, which became the basis for choosing the topic of our research.

***The purpose of the research*** is to explore the transformation of folk tradition in the operetta "Chornomortsy" by M. Lysenko and M. Starytsky as an experimental example of Ukrainian musical drama. The following ***tasks*** must be completed in order to accomplish this goal.

1. To examine the cultural and historical background of M. Lysenko and M. Starytsky's operetta "Chornomortsy" production.
2. To determine the features of the musical dramaturgy of the work in the conditions of genre and censorship restrictions.
3. To reveal the meaning and symbolism of the main images of the operetta through musical characteristics.

4. To investigate the role of the Cossack archetype as the defining core of the musical structure.

5. To identify the specifics of symbolization and psychologization in musical material.

6. To characterize the use of folk song motifs and their functional role in dramaturgy.

7. To determine the artistic significance of operetta as a stage in the formation of national Ukrainian musical dramaturgy.

**Research methodology.** As a research tool, genre-intonation analysis was used, which was aimed at identifying the meaningful structure of the work, its musical and dramatic features, as well as tracking the means of artistic embodiment of the Cossack archetype, which is the spiritual basis of the Ukrainian mentality. Besides, an interdisciplinary approach was used in the study of the operetta, in the synthesis of the following methods:

– musicological analysis – structural, genre, harmonic and thematic analysis of musical numbers, analysis of texture, leitmotifs, intonations and tonal symbols;

– literary analysis – comparison of the semantic load of songs with the works of T. Shevchenko and I. Kotlyarevsky, identification of ideological and semantic allusions;

– culturological approach – interpretation of the work as a carrier of mental archetypes of Ukrainian culture: Cossacks, glory, dignity, love, moral purity;

– psychoanalytic interpretation – the introduction of elements of psychologization through the internal conflicts of the characters, the musical transmission of emotional states;

– mythopoetic analysis – the creation of a symbolic artistic chronotope of the Chornomoria as an imaginary space for the sacralization of Ukrainian identity.

Thus, the research methodology is based on the synthesis of formal musicological analysis with a deep semantic and cultural-historical reading

of the operetta, which makes it possible to consider the work as a tool of national self-identification under censorship restrictions.

### **Presentation of the main material of the study.**

The operetta “Chornomortsi” became the first completed stage project of a young tandem – composer M. Lysenko and playwright M. Starytsky. The masters were looking for a way to bring Ukrainian theatrical art into the world of high ideas, universal values, and to raise the dignity of the national spiritual heritage. However, in 1872 they were forced to do it in the genre of operetta, since censorship allowed only light comedy plays in the Ukrainian language.

The development in the overture is directed from doubt, tragic expectations of the blows of fate caused by the disgraced actions of the heroes, through the process of overcoming, the struggle (the main part) for the bright and majestically beautiful, the harmonious (the side part), from the lost honor and dignity (transition-development to the coda) to the return of glory and greatness, the establishment of life balance and the restoration of worldview imperatives (coda).

In the musical dramaturgy of the operetta, one can feel the composer’s desire to sacralize the semantic concepts of the Cossack archetype in stable structural features: God, glory, will, faithful love, thought. The actions of the characters show the perniciousness of the desacralization of spiritual values, which can lead to an unhappy life, lost fate, and death. Belonging to the Cossacks, like an invisible force<sup>1</sup>, supports the life of the peasants, gives meaning to their existence, encourages them to be reasonable, philosophically treat life, and do good. In the first half of the work<sup>2</sup>, along with the exposition of the images of the Black Sea residents (in Ukrainian:

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<sup>1</sup> The first appearance of the Cossack principle is associated with the choral song of this almost subconscious “invisible force” “Hey, huk, mother, huk” (In Ukrainian: “Hey, huk, maty, huk” (Лисенко, 1956) – song No. 3 (Лисенко, 1920: 15–16)). After Marusia’s question “But where can I find Ivan?” the remark: “You can hear a song from afar.”

<sup>2</sup> In the musical dramaturgy of the operetta, there is a synthesis of three figurative and thematic spheres (archetypal – this is Cossack glory, lyrical – love, family and ceremonial – fragments of a wedding action).

Chornomortsi), there is a reflection worldview canons of the community. And Marusia is a “Cossack daughter” (Старицький, 1989: 14), who has a “Cossack soul” (ib.: 11), and Ivan, who “<...> in addition to love, you also need to gain fame! The Cossack cause is <to support...>” (ib.: 14), the centurion Tupysia and a young brother of Ivan Ilko, Natalka and Tsvirkunka, Yavdokha Drabynykha – everyone lives according to the order and custom inherited from the times of Cossack valor, valor, nobility and knightly honor. A generalized understanding of the image of the Cossacks, which is the source of existence of the Chornomortsi, their moral purity, is conveyed through the musical world of the characters’ songs.

Despite the different vocal numbers, there are features that give them a common flavor, ideological cohesion, and unite them into a single semantic Cossack circle. The concentration of the musical characteristics of the Cossack image as a sacred imperative can be found in the choirs of the Cossacks No. 3 (Лисенко, 1920: 15–16) and No. 8 (ib.: 24). Among them:

- the theme of the campaign, the fight against enemies;
- reliance on the genre of *duma* and song-march;
- choral presentation with elements of subvocal polyphony (“Hey, huk, maty, huk”, No. 3) (ib.: 15–16) and folk polyphony (unisons in cadences in “Cossacks whistled” (in Ukrainian: “Zasvystaly cosachenky”, No. 8) (ib.: 24);
- the key of *F minor* (a symbol of a road, a campaign, a stranger in an operetta) and *C minor* (a symbol of Cossack glory);
- intonation relief of the melody, which is transmitted to other characters (individualization of the intonations of a pure octave and a pure fourth and a pure fifth, which in other songs are associated with the images of a Cossack or a Cossack girl, an enlarged second as a sign of tragedy).

Marusia also joins this Cossack sphere (the theme of separation due to the campaign in song No. 1 in *F minor*) (ib.: 13), and Tsvirkunka with tragic “Dumka” in the same *F minor* (song No. 9 “A strong wind blows in the field”) (in Ukrainian “Stohne viter vilnyi v poli”) (ib.: 25–26) – reflection on Marusia’s reminiscences on saying goodbye to her

sweetheart<sup>3</sup>. Glory and will as indispensable components of the Cossack image are revealed in Ivan's Song No. 5 "Oh and you, Cossack" (in Ukrainian: "Oh i ty, kosache") (ib.: 18–19). The polyphonic texture, unfolding in a strophic manner, resembles a mental representation that drives the motivation and intonation of the words (as seen in melismatic chants for "will" and "Cossack glory"). Common characteristics in the Cossack realm of the piece include the symbolic keys of *E-flat major*, *C minor*, and *F minor*. In the subsequent farewell duet of Marusia and Ivan, the theme of Cossack glory continues to develop, highlighting their separation due to the campaign and the acknowledgment of divine providence over human fate: in the primary *C minor* section, there is an unexpected transition to *F minor*, featuring a distinctive reduced fifth-sixth chord that pinches a small second – an anticipation that resolves into a sixth chord doubling the expressive third degree on the phrases "God's merciful", and "Pray" (8<sup>th</sup> bar (ib.: 21)).

The optimistic and entertaining sphere of the Cossack temperament is also associated with the key of *F*, but *in a major* key. In Ilko's Song No. 7 "The Cossack is going to the Kuban" (in Ukrainian: "Yide kozak za Kuban") (ib.: 23), duet No. 10 of Ilko and Tsvirkunka "Is he really not a Cossack?" (in Ukrainian: "Chy vin spravdi ne kozak") (ib.: 27–31) the perky heroic intonations of pure octaves, fourths and fifths are reinterpreted in the dance rhythms of the "Cossack", "hopak", "blizzard", humorous lyrics and sprawling instrumental constructions between verses, when the characters dance<sup>4</sup>.

An important component of the life of Chornomortsi is family relationships. Glory and love are what a Cossack gains for a happy life. The family-ritual dramaturgical plan is demonstrated in a fragment of the wedding ceremony. With Tsvirkunka's song No. 18 "I'm going home"

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<sup>3</sup> The mourning mood is enhanced by the terrible and ambiguous image of the eagle in *B-flat minor* (recall the predatory semantics of the eagle in the myth of Prometheus).

<sup>4</sup> Natalka's song No. 2 opens the "humorous" sphere "O, nenko, nenko" (Лисенко, 1920: 14).

(in Ukrainian: “Dodomu yidu”) (ib.: 39–41), the scene of matchmaking, unraveling of the braid begins (Tsvirkunka's song No. 20 “You swim, you swim, drake” (in Ukrainian: “Ty plyvy, plyvy selezniu”) (ib., 1920: 42), the bachelorette party (the girls’ choir of friends No. 21 “Oh, mother dove, my beauty” (in Ukrainian “Oi, matinko-holubonko, roskoshe moia”) (ib.: 43–45). The prevailing *G minor*, the use of the Hutsul mode (Dorian with elevated IV and VI degrees in song No. 20 “You swim, you swim, drake” (in Ukrainian: “Ty plyvy, plyvy selezniu”) (ib.: 4), the sad mood is typical for the rites of farewell to maidenhood before marriage. The shades of lamentose melodies of the wedding ceremony are enhanced by mentions of Yivha Tsvirkunka about her unfortunate fate (Song No. 18 “I’m going home “ (in Ukrainian: “Dodomu yidu”) (ib.: 39–41). But the introduction of *G major* (the final verse of song No. 18), dance rhythms indicate an optimistic ending to matchmaking, a happy wedding. Humorous character of Yivha (song-toast (address) to her husband, “God bless my old man”) (in Ukrainian: “Pozdorov, Bozhe, moho staroho”), No. 19 (ib.: 41) and a cheerful disposition seems to dispel the vague moods that hung over Marusia, Kulyna, Kabytsia and Ivan. She, as a real folk heroine-Cossack, a Black Sea’ woman, sincerely sympathizes with Marusia’s grief (“A strong wind blows in the field”) (in Ukrainian: “Stohne viter vilnyi v poli”), No. 9 (ib.: 25–26) and Kulyna (“Oh, oh, moia nenko!”), No. 23 (ib.: 52)<sup>5</sup> and portends a happy ending-denouement, since in the Chornomoria, where everything happens according to the “glorious” Cossack customs, they will not allow the disgrace, grief and death of the Chornomortsi.

Ambiguous in the operetta is the image of Kharko Kabytsia. He is the bearer of the conflicting “dishonored” principle, betrayed love, and

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<sup>5</sup> Song No. 9 “Stohne viter vilnyi v poli” – a thought that constitutes a reflection on Marusia’s reminiscences, and therefore sounds in her key – *F minor* (Лисенко, 1920: 25–26). The sympathy and understanding of Kulyna’s grief occurs immediately after her arioso (song No. 23) (Лисенко, 1920: 52) in its key – *B minor*, which is the key of misfortune and orphanhood. Both numbers are similar in emotional and semantic load. It is as if a response to the thoughts of the unfortunate girls, sympathy and clarification of the situation from the standpoint of folk morality, the correct “glorious” Cossack custom.

through the song you can observe the stages of his “re-education”. Portrayed by Tsvirkunka as a deceiver and heartless seducer of Kulyna, he appears as a herald of grief and separation: “Well, this is no longer Cossack!” – Ilko shouts about this (ib.: 19). And in the next musical characteristic – a frivolous song No. 11 “Oi zdorova, divchynonko, chia ty?”, the first movement of which sounds in the key of separation – *D minor*, his role is a reveller and a drunkard. In the piano part, the leitmotif of “dishonor” is contrapunctuated by an accent – a chromitized move that disturbs the diatonic balance of the song and comes into conflict with it (bars 8–12 (ib.: 32)).

At the same time, the use of the Cossack mode with high IV and VI degrees, in *D major* in the second part of the song (which had a heroic meaning in the code of the overture) reminds of the Cossack essence of Kharko, overshadowed by his sinful actions. The satirical features presented here are amplified in the second song of Kabytsia (No. 12) “Along the road, bug, bug” (in Ukrainian: “Po dorozh zhuk, zhuk” (Лисенко, 1920: 33)). The humorous, danceable, but at the same time Cossack *F major*, the dotted rhythm, which seems to reflect the drunken gait of a man who stumbles at every step, and the melody, intonation close to the song of the chosen one from “Natalka Poltavka” by I. Kotlyarevsky “Oh, under the cherry tree” (in Ukrainian: “Oi pid vyshneiu”) about an old suitor-groom, give the image even more comedy. The song “Po dorozh zhuk, zhuk” is repeated again in the third scene (song No. 24) (ib.: 33) during the appearance of Kabytsia and becomes its leitmotif.

With the development of the image of the “disgraced” Kharko Kabytsia, the contradictory features of his nature appear more and more strongly. In a frivolous song No. 15 “My father told me” (in Ukrainian “Kazav meni batko”) (ib.: 36–37), performed in *F major*, already in the introductory part, elements of imitation inherent in the Cossack “musical dictionary” appear. Melodic undertones also occur in the chorus. But here the “mischievous” chromitization of the accompaniment is still palpable, which indicates an internal mental disorder (bars 10–13 (ib.: 36)). In the instrumental conclusion, where the comic effect of the repetition of one

intonation is created (as if the tongue is braided), the melodic major gives it a special character. Approaching Marusia's door, Kabytsia wants to "wake her up with a song" (Старицький, 1989: 28). And here his musical image changes radically. He addresses the Cossack daughter with a Cossack song No. 16 "Maksym Cossack Zalizniak" (Лисенко, 1920: 37). A musical story about Cossack glory with invocation quarts at the heart of the melody combines *F major* and *D minor* colors (an unexpected end to the victorious, confident diatonic major march in *D minor*).

After Marusia's resolute refusal, Kabytsia recalls the meeting with Kulyna, the conversation with Nataalka and sings sadly "Hey, the Cossack got drunk, got drunk" (in Ukrainian: "Hei, zapyv kozak, zapyv") (song No. 17) (ib.: 38). The lonely figure of an aged Cossack who could not find personal happiness evokes sympathy and regret. This song, which became the fundamental theme of the operetta overture, ends the exposition of the Cossack principle. *F minor* with colorful colors of harmonic major during the deviation into a parallel key due to the minor subdominant, the subvocal-polyphonic texture of the introduction and conclusion, the improvisational thought type of melody at a respectful pace of unhurried reflection, the image of a horse<sup>6</sup> – a faithful companion of a lonely Cossack – create a thematic reprise, summarize the preliminary unfolding of the characteristics of the Chornomortsi – worthy descendants of the Cossacks.

Another heroine characterized by "disgrace" and tragic loneliness, is Kulyna Kuchuhurivna. She is not a Chornomorka. Came from the city of Samara. Kabytsia initially perceives she as an appearance from the other world<sup>7</sup>. The girl is a stranger in the Cossack world of fame and love, so she expresses her feelings not in song form, like other inhabitants of the Chornomoria, but in the urban romance and arioso style.

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<sup>6</sup> The image of the horse – the only friend of the Cossack – is also heard in other songs: in Ivan's song "Oh, and you, Cossack" (No. 5) (Лисенко, 1920: 18–19), Ilko "A Cossack Rides for the Kuban" (No. 7) (Лисенко, 1920: 23).

<sup>7</sup> "Hei, maro! <...> Zhyn, satano!" – a frightened "Cossack" shouts (Старицький, 1989: 22).

Her pleading speech “Forgive me, my mommy” (in Ukrainian: “Prosty mene, moia nene”) (By the way, the song has number No. 13!) (ib.: 34–35) full of cantilena turns based on the descending filling of the ascending sixth, acquires an even more poignant character due to the emphasis on the intonation of the increased second in the vocal and instrumental parts (last bar (ib.: 34) – first bar (ib.: 35)). The key of *D minor*, which is a sign of separation in the operetta, seems to indicate the commonality of the unfortunate fate of Kabytsia and Kulyna – separated, lonely, disgraced, deprived of God’s support<sup>8</sup>.

Next dramatic aria “Oh, mother dove” (in Ukrainian: “Oi, matinko holubonko” (song No. 22) (ib.: 46–51) – the only extended solo opera number in the work<sup>9</sup>. Written in the “orphan” key of *B minor*, it begins with the descending chromatic leitmotif of “mental disorder”, “disgrace” from the overture, which also sounds in the music of Kharko Kabytsia. The fast tempo, the syncopated rhythm with short pleading intonations reproduce the effect of lack of air during sobs. And the rhythmic uniformity of constructions resembles the sounds of a supplication spell. Kulyna turns to Yavdokha Drabynykha (Marusia’s mother) in a state of affect. Intonations with chromaticisms, including small seconds, give the musical expression even more poignancy. In the middle section, short-term enlightenment (“My dear years” (in Ukrainian: “Lita moi dorohii” (ib.: 48) is in *D major*<sup>10</sup>) is replaced by a terrible reality (“I divchynu doviv, nenko, do zahynu” (ib.) – *G minor*). Hopelessness, longing, the threat of self-destruction force the poor girl to pray to Drabynykha again and again for mercy and salvation (reprise). This number – the culmination of the line

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<sup>8</sup> After the main part of the overture in *D minor*, this key appears in the song of Ivan, who sings about the threat of separation (song No. 4 “Oi zijdy, yasen misiaysiu”). Here it becomes a sign of possible irreparable grief: “<...> enemies // want to separate us” (the last bars (Лисенко, 1920: 17)) and heralds the appearance of these “evil people” – Kharko Kabytsa, for whom *D minor* is the main one.

<sup>9</sup> The form of the aria is complex three-part with an accurate reprise.

<sup>10</sup> *D major* after the overture also appeared only in the song of Kabytsa “Oi, healthy, girl” (in Ukrainian: “Oi, zdorova, divchynonka”) (No. 11) (Лисенко, 1920: 32–33).

of tragic love and “dishonor” – becomes an important turning point in the dramaturgy of the work. Just after the song “Oi, matinko holubonko” both the fate of Kulyna and the fate of Marusia change: both find happy love. A reflection on the emotional “outburst” in Kulyna’s soul was echoed by the song of Yivha Tsvirkunka No. 23 “Oh, oh, moia nenko” (ib.: 52). The musical image of Kulyna is completed by the trio No. 25 (ib.: 53–55), where her romance intonations are combined with the Cossack motifs of Kabytsia into a single melody.

In the final part, the musical dramaturgy of “Chornomortsi” is characterized by a combination of reprise of musical material with elements of synthesis of three main lines: Cossack, lyrical-tragic and family-ritual. It begins with the song of Kabytsia No. 24 (ib.: 33). After the spiritual rebirth of a man and his recognition of the unrighteousness of his actions<sup>11</sup>, there is an active tonal-harmonic, thematic, timbre unity and synthesis of intonation plans of Cossack glory and dignity, virtue, destitute love, dishonor, and family-ritual, folk. Thus, in trio No. 25 Kabytsia, Kulyna and Ilko (ib.: 53–55) the lyrical-tragic and the Cossack-humorous are combined. Wide quarto-fifth moves in *F major* at the beginning of the melody are combined with romance lyrical intonations in *D minor*, in cadence (it is in these keys that a variant of this theme sounds in the reprise of the overture to the operetta. As a result of the happy union of suffering souls, chromatic turns disappear from the texture, and the harmonious balance between the diatonism of the melody and the accompaniment is restored. In the wedding march No. 26, the affirmative *G major* – a sign of happy love and marriage – is combined with the intonations of the melodic major inherent in the melody of Kabytsia (bars 7–8 (ib.: 56))<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> “Good people! Mr. Otaman! Forgive me...” and then – a return to Cossack honor and glory in the words of the centurion Tupytsia: “And what is not a Cossack? Did I not tell you that he had a sincere soul? Well, thank you, brother, for supporting the knightly honor” (Старицький, 1989: 44).

<sup>12</sup> The wedding march is a kind of response to song No. 15 “My father told me to get married” (Лисенко, 1920: 36–37). Intonation turns with a melodic major seem to throw a

After the wedding of Kabytsia and Kulyna<sup>13</sup>, attention is again focused on the fate of Marusia and Ivan. In the duet of Marusia and Tupytsia No. 27 “Oh, drink, mother, the water” (“Oi, pyi, mamu, tuiu vodu”) (ib.: 57–59) painful expectations of an unfortunate fate (romance intonations in *G minor*) seem to be “illuminated” by the mention of the dear (*B-flat major* and pure fourth and major sixth on the word “sweet” – bars 5, 13) (ib.: 58). *B-flat major* seems to be the final song (No. 31) of Yivha Tsvirkunka with choir, which mentions the happy union of Marusia and Ivan in a couple (ib.: 63–64).

The next two numbers are the wedding choir of the bridesmaids No. 28 “An ermine flew through the garden” (in Ukrainian: “Letiv hornostai cherez sad” in *G major* (ib.: 59) and the duet of Natalka and Ilko No. 30 “Oi, svat dobryi” in *C major* (ib.: 60–61) – renew cheerful wedding moods. Their sound sets off an important plot twist – the denouement. Ivan returns from the campaign. And here in the musical dramaturgy there is a final synthesis of family-ritual, lyrical and Cossack motifs (duet of Ivan and Tsvirkunka No. 30 “Oi, zarzhy, zarzhy, voronyi koniu” (ib.: 62)). The simultaneous sound of the wedding song (Dorian *G minor* with a high IV degree) and the lyrical male song are united by the motives of glorification of God and fate, which gave the young people a new meeting. Performed without instrumental accompaniment, it is perceived as a special final sign of musical dramaturgy – a symbol of the restoration of the integrity of the sacred Cossack archetype in the unity of all its principles: glorious masculine, lyrical tender feminine and the power of Divine guidance<sup>14</sup> and fate.

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semantic bridge between the wishes of the father (No. 15) and the marriage of the son (No. 26) (Лисенко, 1920: 56).

<sup>13</sup> Which means, first of all, within the framework of the symbolic system of operetta, the return of Cossack honor, glory and dignity.

<sup>14</sup> The tonal zone Sol – G – acquires additional connotations in the operetta and can symbolize the image of the Divine (G – Ge – G-lord). This symbolism is embodied only fragmentarily and does not acquire a complete leittonal meaning. It is palpable in songs

Song of Tsvirkunka with choir No. 31 “Oi nadinu cherevyky” (*B-flat major*) (ib.: 63–64) and the final three-part chorus No. 32 “Slava” (*G major – C major – G major*) (ib.: 65–67) is the summary code of the operetta. All the Chornomoria residents gather here to celebrate the happy ending of dramatic events<sup>15</sup> and remind of the main Cossack imperatives that make life on the Black Sea coast happy – glory and love.

In dramaturgy, work on two plans for the development of the plot is tangible. The first one, verbal, was focused on the censorship of that time: scenes with drunk Chornomortsi, matchmaking, and a happy resolution of a domestic conflict were supposed to get permission to stage the play. In the second – musical – with the help of folk songs and its processing, M. Lysenko creates an original artistic system, the purpose of which is to exalt the basic spiritual values of the Ukrainian people, to show the purity and nobility of ordinary people. The ideological reference point for the composer was the poetic word of T. Shevchenko. The motives of glorification of the Cossacks and Cossack glory, which acquire a complex multifaceted interpretation in the poet’s work, constitute the main core of the dramaturgy of the work, a kind of sacred imperative – the basis of being<sup>16</sup>. The Chornomortsi exist on the imaginary land of the Chornomoria according to the laws of the Cossack system, according to which thoughts and deeds must be correlated with knightly glory, honor, dignity in any manifestations of existence and life situations. The main conflict unfolds in moral terms and concerns various aspects of the Cossack glory and the conflict of the glorious and the disgraced (Kabytsia, Kulyna). Dishonor, a violation of Cossack honor and dignity, leads to a bitter fate, causing suffering, and can even cause death.

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No. 19 “Pozdorov, Bozhe, moho staroho” (*G major*) (Лисенко, 1920: 41) and No. 30 – the song of Ivan and Tsvirkunka (*G minor*) (Лисенко, 1920: 62).

<sup>15</sup> The song of Tsvirkunka resembles the final verses characteristic of the vaudeville genre, in which the plot twists and turns are summed up.

<sup>16</sup> It was at this time that M. Lysenko was actively working on the music for “Kobzar”, and therefore carefully studied and analyzed the texts of the great poet.

While the primary narratives focus on two couples – Ivan and Marusia, and Kabytsia and Kulyna – the significance of the collective representation of the Chornomortsi as embodiments of the folk archetype of Cossack glory is the central concern for composer M. Lysenko and playwright M. Starytsky in this piece. Therefore, along with the vocal characteristics of the main characters, many songs are performed, at first glance, by secondary characters: Nataalka sings three, Ilko is involved in four numbers. Yivha Tsvirkunka is an unfortunate young woman who, however, never gets upset – a real record holder for the number of musical numbers: as many as six! Her image seems to reflect the “voice” of the people – suffering, but capable of survival thanks to a cheerful disposition, native song, dance and deep spiritual traditions.

The main moral imperatives of the Chornomortsi are typified in the images of the main characters: Marusia is faithful love and the desire to fight for personal happiness<sup>17</sup>, Ivan is the embodiment of Cossack honor, dignity and glory. Kabytsia and Kulyna, who for a while “leave” the zone of the Cossack way of life (Kabytsia because of drunkenness, the sin of adultery, Kulyna because of betrayed love), return to the river of normal life – to a glorious life on the Chornomoria by the forces of the community.

To implement a rather large-scale plan, the composer M. Lysenko had rather limited means. Therefore, he resorted to the techniques of mythologizing, symbolization, psychologization of musical material, which made it possible to give individual structures – elements of dramaturgy and stylistics – a three-dimensional ambiguous content. Mythologizing is manifested through certain techniques, namely:

– creating a special chronotope with imaginary time and space that operates only within this artistic system;

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<sup>17</sup> In this image, the influence of the image of the main character of the play "Nataalka Poltavka" by I. Kotliarevskyi is noticeable.

– sacralization of mental folk archetypes (Cossack glory – freedom – honor, mother – ancestor<sup>18</sup>, devoted love);

– appeal to the collective subconscious as the basis for the survival of the people.

The symbolization consists in the following:

– typification of artistic images – carriers of certain ideas (Marusia – faithful love, Ivan – Cossack glory, Tsvirkunka – “people’s conscience”);

– introduction of a certain significant diatonic scale (a sign of harmony, consent) and its chromaticization (invasion of an alien chaotic destructive principle);

– the use of tonal symbolism, the connection of the choice of tonalities with the intonation of the word, giving tonal spheres a pronounced semantic significance;

– the use of leitintonations with certain semantic symbolism (intervals of a pure octave, a pure fourth – motifs of a Cossack and a girl; turns of melodic major associated with the image of Kabytsia; a descending melodic course along chromaticisms with tense harmony – a sign of disorder and debauchery);

– appeal to semantic allusion (Kabytsia’s song “Po dorozhi zhuk, zhuk” is a veiled musical version of the song “Oi pid vyshneiu” by the chosen one from I. Kotlyarevsky’s opera “Natalka Poltavka”).

Elements of psychologization we find:

– In the introduction of songs of a reflective plan – “thought to thought”: songs of Tsvirkunky No. 9 “Stohne viter vilnyi v poli” (Лисенко, 1920: 25–26) on the condition of Marusia and No. 23 “Oh, oh, moia nenko” (ib.: 52) about Kulina’s mood;

– in the use of the technique of musical “anticipation of the situation”: Ivan's romance No. 4 “Oi ziidy, yasen misiatsiu” (ib.: 16–17) about the

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<sup>18</sup> There are six songs in the operetta with an appeal to the mother. In the end, it is Yavdokha Drabinykha, although she does not have vocal numbers, who decides the fate of both Marusia and Kulyna.

premonition of separation from the sweetheart because of unkind people sounds in the key of the “unkind” *Kabytsia – D minor*.

The operetta “Chornomortsi” by M. Lysenko and M. Starytsky was the first one for young masters, but a bold, significant step towards creating modern national Ukrainian musical drama.

### **Conclusion.**

1. The operetta “Chornomortsi” appeared under censorship restrictions, when the use of the Ukrainian language was allowed only in light stage genres. In response to these challenges, Lysenko and Starytsky embodied deep national ideas in the genre of operetta, covertly glorifying the ideals of Cossack glory, morality, loyalty and spiritual strength of the Ukrainian people.

2. The musical dramaturgy of the work is characterized by multi-layeredness: a combination of everyday, lyrical, tragic and heroic plans. Through the overture, vocal numbers and their tonal and harmonic structure, development from doubt and disgrace to harmony, glory and moral renewal is realized.

3. Each character has their own musical characteristic, which reflects not only their individual traits, but also deeper ideological contexts. For example, Ivan symbolizes Cossack honor, Marusia – loyalty, *Kabytsia* – the path from dishonor to purification, *Tsvirkunka* – “people’s conscience”.

4. The glorification of the Cossacks permeates the entire work, both conceptually and musically. Through the images of heroes, song intonations, choral scenes, genre stylizations, an imaginary picture of the Cossack world is conveyed, living in the hearts of ordinary people of the Chornomoria as a spiritual guide.

5. The work is full of symbolism – from tonalities to melodic turns. For example, *F minor* embodies road and longing, *C minor* – Cossack glory, chromaticisms – inner disorder. The songs not only reveal the characters, but also convey the inner state of the characters, their struggle and transformation.

6. The folk song is the basis of the musical structure of the work. Through the processing and adaptation of songs, Lysenko forms a holistic musical language of operetta, in which moral values, everyday tradition and national identity are encoded.

7. “Chornomortsi” is not just a stage work, but a significant step in the formation of national musical drama. Despite the genre lightness, the operetta carries a deep ideological content, which confirms its importance as a spiritual and aesthetic phenomenon of Ukrainian culture.

**Prospects for further research.** It is necessary to further study the musical text of the operetta with the involvement of musical material, analysis of musical numbers from the standpoint of modern musicological methodology, especially with an emphasis on tonal and harmonic symbols and intonation semantics. The interpretation of the operetta for new productions, adaptations and intermediate reading of the work through the prism of the present is promising for research.

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## **Трансформація народної традиції в опереті «Чорноморці» М. Лисенка та М. Старицького як експериментальний зразок української музичної драматургії: жанрово-інтонаційний аналіз**

**Постановка проблеми.** З погляду музичної драматургії в опереті «Чорноморці» композитору М. Лисенку та драматургу М. Старицькому за умов заборони концептуальних національних жанрів удалося втілити ментальні архетипи та філософські ідеали українців. Основним ідейним імперативом у творі постає уславлення часу козаччини як морального ідеалу, відповідного поглядам великого українського Пророка – Т. Шевченка. Головна ідея оперети передається певними засобами музичної драматургії. Її основою є психологічна характерність тематизму й семантичний полілог із фольклорними образами, а також смислова поліфонія й тонально-гармонічна та жанрова символіка. Це зумовлює необхідність детального аналізу твору не лише як мистецького явища свого часу, а й як концептуального коду національного самоусвідомлення.

**Метою статті** є дослідження оперети «Чорноморці» Миколи Лисенка та Михайла Старицького як зразка нової української музичної драматургії, що через символіку, міфологізацію, сакралізовані образи й пісенну традицію реалізує ідеї національної ідентичності в умовах культурного тиску та жанрових обмежень.

**Методологія дослідження.** До вивчення обраної теми застосовано комплексний підхід, що базується на загальнонаукових (аналіз, синтез, узагальнення), спеціально-історичних (історико-біографічний та проблемно-хронологічний), музикознавчих та логічних методах систематизації матеріалу. Разом

із цим, використано практичні (описові), а також міждисциплінарні та культурологічний підходи.

**Наукова новизна дослідження** полягає в міждисциплінарному аналізі, глибокій семантичній інтерпретації музики, драматургії та наративу, які виводять твір із площини побутового жанру у сферу національного художнього міфу. Уперше увагу акцентовано на міфологізації художнього хронотопу, де уявна земля Чорноморія функціонує як символ українського світогляду з опорою на архетипи козацької доблесті, любові та слави. Оперету «Чорноморці» М. Лисенка та М. Старицького уперше проаналізовано в контексті періоду становлення української музичної драматургії.

**Результати дослідження.** Розкрито змістово-сміслову структуру музичної драматургії. Музика оперети виконує не лише супровідну функцію, а є ключовим носієм сакрального змісту (через символіку тональностей, інтервалів), психологічного стану героїв (через інтонації, гармонії, ритми) та національної ідентичності (через використання народних жанрів – дум, маршів, весільних пісень). Узагальнено типові образи персонажів як носіїв архетипів. Дійові особи символізують певні риси: Іван виступає як уособлення козацької честі й звитяги; Маруся – вірності й духовної сили; Цвіркунка – народної мудрості й гумору; Кабиця і Кулина – «знеславлених» душі, які проходять шлях очищення й повернення до громади.

**Висновки.** Микола Лисенко та Михайло Старицький своїм твором довели, що оперета може бути не просто комедійною виставою, а й ідеологічно насиченим мистецьким маніфестом, спрямованим на збереження та демонстрацію української духовності засобами музичного театру. За допомогою жанру оперети було здійснено спробу створення сучасної української музичної драми відповідно до народних традицій і водночас у дусі модерного мислення.

**Ключові слова:** Микола Лисенко; Михайло Старицький; українська оперета; оперета «Чорноморці»; музична драматургія; козацька слава; національна ідентичність; народна пісня; архетип; сакральний хронотоп; жанрово-інтонаційний аналіз.

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