European genre: intonation, poetic, melodic, tonal, which enriched undoubtedly the genre of the «vocal cycle» as a whole.

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China and Russia – «The Great Silk Road» - the interpenetration of cultures in composing in the 21st century

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Аннотация

Статья посвящена состоявшейся в 2018 году в Китае премьере симфонического произведения российского композитора Виктора Плешака «Дунь Хуан». В этой связи рассматривается проблема взаимопроникновения культур на основе их интеграции и стремления к мирному сотрудничеству. Подчеркивается актуальность такого рода культурных инициатив между странами. Отмечаются особенности музыкального языка данной симфонии: введение в классический состав симфонического оркестра китайских народных инструментов (пипа, эрху, шен). Как особенность музыкального языка симфонии отмечена способность российского композитора проникнуть в суть характерных ладов китайской музыки и создать крупное симфоническое произведение с национальным колоритом при отсутствии прямого цитирования китайских народных мелодий.

Ключевые слова. Симфония, культура, пентатоника, инструменты, мелодия, колорит.

Abstract

The article is devoted to the premiere of the symphonic work of the Russian composer Viktor Pleshak "Dun Huang" held in China in 2018. In this regard, the problem of interpenetration of cultures on the basis of their integration and striving for peaceful cooperation is considered. The urgency of such cultural initiatives between countries is emphasized. The features of the musical language of this symphony are noted: the introduction of Chinese folk instruments (pipa, erhu, shen) into the classical composition of the symphony orchestra. As a feature of the musical language of the symphony, the ability of the Russian composer to penetrate into the essence of the characteristic modes of Chinese music and create a large symphonic work with a national flavor in the absence of direct quotation of Chinese folk melodies is noted.

Keywords: Symphony, culture, pentatonic scale, instruments, melody, color, vocals, work, performance

Introduction

Globalization and integration which take place in the modern world cause «counter»-processes of musical cultures, and they are very remote in their main parameters. It's known that the Chinese civilization is one of the oldest in the world. «According to scientists and researchers, China had already possessed a highly developed culture - science, literature and art, 2000 years before the start of European civilization. Typography from boards was invented a thousand years earlier in China than Europe. The Chinese gave the world paper, gunpowder, compass, etc. The Chinese philosophy of music, primarily Confucian, was the philosophical basis for the development of music in the entire Far East» [6, p. 21].

National uniqueness, isolation, «codification», «rare conservatism» and an endless variety of musical forms characterize the music of China, the distant past and present.

In the 21st century, the culture and music of China seek for integration, for the study of European experience. This is evidenced by one of the most interesting actions that took place in modern China in the city of Dunhuan, where in 121 BC. the first trade caravan went from to Europe. It was the beginning of the Great Silk Road between China and the Mediterranean. The Great Silk Road had existed for several millennia in antiquity and in the Middle Ages. It was the only caravan road that passed through the large areas of Eurasia.

Pic. 1 Customs point on the Great Silk Road near of Dunhuang [1].

By the 15th century, as a result of the Great Geographical Discoveries (Marco Polo, Carpini, Rubruk), the Great Silk Road almost ceased to exist, because seaborne trade became economically more profitable and safe. Nevertheless, the Great Silk Road have played an important role in the development of economic, cultural, diplomatic ties between Europe and China. The historical significance of the Great Silk Road is that there was a tendency for the convergence of cultures in the process of intensive, peaceful, trade relations. Currently, the

history of the Great Silk Road can be viewed as an actual experience of mutually beneficial trade and peaceful cultural communication between peoples [1].

This concept was adhered to by the leaders of the Gansu province and the city of Dunhuang, from where the first caravan of the Silk Road moved several millennia ago. In 2018, this city supposed to host the Third International Forum of the Silk Road Countries under the slogan «One Belt - One Road». According to the organizers' plan, a major symphonic composition had to crown the cultural program of the forum. It took several years to prepare this large-scale project. Among the preparatory activities was the casting of composers.

In Chinese music, painting, filmography, there are enough writing devoted to the theme of the Silk Road, but the organizers of the forum were interested in the view of a foreign composer. Notice, that Russian music is fonded in China, primarily Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov, as well as Russian songs - folk and Soviet. For project implementation, the organizers of the forum began to look for a Russian composer who works with folklore material and develops the traditions of Russian epic symphony [4, p. 3]. The casting was won by composer Viktor Viktorovich Pleshak (born 1946), St. Petersburg, Russia. In 2017, V.V. Pleshak received a special order from the leadership of the Danxu province and the city of Dunhuang to write a symphonic work dedicated to the Great Silk Road.

A few words about the composer. Viktor Vasilievich Pleshak is a native of St. Petersburg. He was a graduate of the famous Choral School named after M.I. Glinka at Capella (1964) and the composition department of the Leningrad State Conservatory named after M.I. ON. Rimsky-Korsakov (1981). Today Viktor Vasilyevich Pleshak is the author of numerous pieces of music in different genres: both operas and musicals, cantatas and oratorios, and compositions of small forms: romances, songs, piano miniatures and ensembles. In the creative biography of the composer there is the creation of music for radio plays, radio broadcasts, feature films and documentaries, suites for the orchestra of Russian folk instruments. He has written music for circus performances and for the Chinese circus in particular. V.V. Pleshak is known as a successful songwriter. Many of the composer's songs, of which he has more than 900, received the widest popularity and «went to the people»: «Unique Petersburg», «Leningradki», «Favorite Team» («Zenith, Zenith») and many others. Military sailors go to Red Square in Moscow on Victory Day With Viktor Pleshak's song «The Crew is One Family».

The work of the composer was appreciated at the state level and awarded various prizes and awards. Since 1982, V. V. Pleshak has been a member of the Composers' Union, chairman of the popular music section and a member of the Board of the St. Petersburg Composers' Union. He is an Honored Artist of the Russian Federation (2004), a member of the Union of Theater Workers of Russia; Academician of the International Sciences Academy of Ecology, Human Safety and Nature (ISAEHSN); Laureate of the Leningrad Komsomol Prize (for the cycle of civic songs «Still, Marches», 1980); Diploma-recipient of the National Theater Award «Golden Mask» (musical «Incognito from Petersburg», 2000), Laureate of the International Children's Theater Festival «Blue Bird» for the performances «The Canterville Ghost» (2000) and «Inheritance» (2002); Diploma-recipient of the First Festival of New Musical Projects in Russia «New Shores» («Angels in Time», 2004). He was awarded the Silver Medal named after N.K. Roerich for his contribution to the ecology of culture (2003), he is also a member of the World Club of Petersburgers, Member of the Authors' Council of the Russian Academy of Education, awarded the Order of John Krondshtadskij (2006), the Order of Merit for the Fatherland medal II degree (2009), the Prize of the St. Petersburg Government (2014) [5, p.10-11].

Viktor Pleshak took up the fulfillment of an order from China to write symphonic music dedicated to the Great Silk Road with interest.

In that project, the composer was attracted by the high content of the forum, which essence was the unification of countries pursuing not military or ideological cooperation, but trade, and primarily cultural contacts so necessary for people in the modern world.

The purpose of this article

To present to the scientific community a new symphonic work by the St. Petersburg composer Viktor Vasilyevich Pleshak, dedicated to the Great Silk Road, commissioned to him by the government of Danxu province and the city of Dunhuang (China) in 2017. The composition was performed at the International Forum «One Belt, One Road» on September 27, 2018 in Dunhuang (China). This interesting experience of international cooperation is an example of the interpenetration of different modern cultures

Literature review

There is practically no literature on this issue; there are several reviews about the performance of the symphony by V.V. Pleshak «One Belt - One Road» in Russia and China, audio recording of the premiere in China, the author's handwritten score (sheet music) and the only monograph by T.P. Samsonova «St. Petersburg Composer Viktor Pleshak: Known and Unknown.» SPb.: Publishing House «Planet of Music», 2019.

Methodology.

The article uses the methods of historical, source study, musical theoretical and comparative analysis.

Main part.

As the composer V.V. Pleshak noted in some interviews, the work on the Chinese symphony was unprecedented for him. It began with the study of Chinese culture, philosophy, history, folk music, pentatonic scale, filmography; the composer consulted with Sinologists living in St. Petersburg. As a result of the preliminary «immersion» in the material, the composer had an interesting concept of using a classical symphony orchestra with a number of Chinese solo instruments, such as *pipa*, *sheng*, *erhu*.

Pic. 2 Pipa - Chinese Folk String Instrument https://dp.pconline.com.cn/photo/list_5030480.html

The inclusion of Chinese folk instruments in the classical symphony orchestra gave a special timbre to the overall sound of the orchestra, and filled the artistic image with national flavor, sensations of endless spaces and movement.

Another creative composer's impulse proved to be important in the general concept of the Chinese symphony. The study of Chinese folk music, the features of the pentatonic scale, and his own reflections made the composer refuse to directly quote Chinese folk melodies. Many Russian composers of The Mighty Handful in the 19th century (M.P. Mussorgsky, N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov, A.P. Borodin) and the «sixties of the new folklore wave» of the 20th century (V. Gavrillin, B. Tishchenko, S. Slonimsky) did it this way. The theoretical basics of using the folklore in composer's work were laid in Russian musicology by the research of I.I.

Zemtsovsky (born 1936). One of the Zemtsovsky's theses says that the primacy of the «associative and mediated» creativity of the composer helps him «to create music that has a national spirit, even without visible signs of nationality» [2, 5p.]. This mindset was adopted by the composer V.V. Pleshak. He didn't use quotes from Chinese folk music; the composer relied on the pentatonic scale, his own intuition and great love for the rich spiritual culture of this country. The symphony program was written by the composer himself. The symphony has 9 parts, the total duration is 70 minutes. Each part of the symphony, according to the composer, can be performed as an independent symphonic miniature. At the same time, the structure of the symphony can be presented as 2 symphonies in one: the first is «Dunhuang: yesterday, today, tomorrow», the second is «Dunhuang. The Golden Part of the Silk Road». The symphony was written for the Bolshoi Symphony Orchestra and eight soloists (three Chinese instruments - sheng, erhu and pipa, also cello, violin clarinet, piano and high soprano solo).

«Program: «Dun Huang»- Epic Symphony for a double ensemble of a large symphony orchestra and soloists»

Section One. Dun Huang-yesterday, today, tomorrow.

Part 1. Spirit of the great Zhan Zin. Musical perception of China by a Russian composer. View at the Chinese civilization and the present day of the country. Dedication to the explorer of the silk road - Zhan Zin.

Part 2. The spirit of Juan - a blooming oasis «Reverence for life» (A. Schweitzer). Singing birds, singing sands, flowering herbs and trees. Love for children and respect for elders. The value of friendship. Admiration for beauty. A hymn to nature transformed by man.

Part 3. The mystery of the caves. The Magao Caves as a symbol of the history, religion and art of China.

Part 4. Revived frescoes and statues. The composer's musical fantasy on the themes of fresco painting in the Magao caves.

Section Two. Dun Huang - the golden part of the Silk Road

Part 5. Song of the Girl from Dun Huang. The girls spin silk, and a young girl sings a song in which she speaks words of love for her native land, and she's sad because of parting with a young man who left with a caravan on the silk road. She thinks about the dangers that lie in wait for the caravan on the way.

Part 6. Ancient Silk Road. An image of the ancient Silk Road, full of dangers, is drawn by musical means. It reflects the proud and unhurried pace of the camel caravan, the stomping and neighing of horses, and the dramatic raids of nomads.

Part 7. «One Belt - One Road». A modern maritime silk road full of dangers and adventures. The majestic image of the sea surface and an unexpected storm along the way.

Part 8. Strength and speed (Train «Beijing - Moscow – Berlin») The railroad connects different countries, continents, cultural traditions. Among the musical images, there are recognizable themes from Central Asia, Kazakhstan, Russia and Germany.

Part 9. «Hug, millions!» A call for the unity of all peoples for the benefit of the culture, peace and good values. Development of a musical theme on the ode text «To Gladness » to the words of Schiller (from Beethoven's 9th symphony). A combination of all the main themes of the symphony [5, p.116-118].

Symphony «Dun Huang» by V.V. Pleshaka is the history of many peoples in the past, through which the Great Silk Road passed, and a modern view of the world map, but with different speeds, trains, planes. Pictures of nature and culture, a planetary view on the past and the present, with a Beethoven's call which sounds deeply symbolic «Unite, millions!»

The humanistic idea of the commonwealth of peoples, «peace through culture», «the past in the present» is the general philosophical idea of the new work of the Russian composer Viktor Pleshak, embedded in the "Dun Huang" symphony.

Conclusion.

The premiere of Viktor Pleshak's symphony «Dun Huang» in China is a vivid indicator of interesting cultural contacts which is very necessary for people in the modern world. Features of the musical language of this symphony are as follows: the introduction of Chinese folk instruments (pipa, erhu, shen) into the classical composition of a symphony orchestra is, of course, an innovative solution of the composer.

It is necessary to note the ability of V.V. Pleshak to penetrate into the essence of the characteristic modes of Chinese music, the creation of a large symphonic work with a national without directly quoting Chinese folk melodies

There was sounded not the entire symphony of V.V. Pleshak «Dun Huang» at the forum on September 27, 2018, but only the first, second, fourth parts and the final. As a result, this performance looked like a completely traditional four-part sonata-symphonic cycle. At the premiere, the symphonic sound was accompanied by a multimedia display of photo and video illustrations. The premiere of Dun Huang, a symphony by Russian composer V. Pleshak, had a great success and evoked an enthusiastic reaction from the audience. The concert was attended by guests of the «One Belt - One Road» Forum and delegates from nearly a hundred countries. Performers - Lanzhou Symphony Orchestra, conductor - rector of the Central Conservatory of Beijing, Maestro Yu Feng. The author of the symphony, composer Victor Pleshak appreciated highly the performing skills of the Chinese musicians.

V.V. Pleshak's symphony «Dun Huang» is performed in other cities of China. On May 29, 2019, it was performed at the Shanghai Opera and Ballet Theater on the Spring Music Festival in Shanghai, where the symphony was performed in its entirety, and the finale was repeated twice at audience's request. The symphony «Dun Huang» by V.V. Pleshak was performed in seven more cities of China.

So, it can be noted that the music of the Russian composer has successfully entered the Chinese cultural space, repeating the well-known formula that music can unite different peoples and serve the ideas of peace and goodness.

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