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Value World–Pictures and Axiological Codes of Musical Genres

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Abstract

This article explores the possibility of establishing cultural dialogue through the axiological codes of musical genres. Genre here is defined as a worldview and as a component of the world-picture that carries axiological codes. The methodology used here combines culturological, axiological, world-image, and comparative approaches. As a result, we have developed the samples of the typological and national models of the value world-picture based on genre axiological codes. The key conclusions are: it is possible to construct a musical genre world-picture, which reflects the hierarchy of values in the world pictures of different types, and to promote the genre-value world-picture facilitating cultural dialogue.

Keywords: value world-picture, musical genre, axiocode, axiologeme, value hierarchy

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1. Highlights

- musical-genre world-picture produces a musical ontology imbued with value attitudes due to the emotional nature of music;

- musical genres carry axiocodes and may create value world-pictures of various types and kinds;

- by marking axiologemes of various provenance, musical genres reveal a hierarchy of axiological sphere inherent in world-pictures of various types and kinds;

- value world-picture that is based on musical genres actualises dialogical nature of cultural interactions.

2. Introduction

The current era in Russian history is, inarguably, a time of changes, contradictory ones and fraught with unpredictable consequences. This era is a part of the global crisis of human civilization due to exacerbation of both exogenic and endogenic challenges and conflicts, which arise from the simultaneous existing of communities with different

values and different interests, where '*interests are masked as values... conceptual values are supplanted by the instrumental ones*' [8, p. 9]. This crisis condition is caused, on the one hand, by the heterogeneous types and stages of development of civilization and the heterogeneous character of culture as such; on the other hand, it inevitably influences all spheres of cultural existence, including, first and foremost, its value-meaning core, or axiological sphere. This is what provides **relevance** to axiological research in general and musical axiology in particular (see, e.g., G.G.Kolomiyetz). Within the musical axiology, the most important phenomenon is a phenomenon of **musical genre** as a cultural form reflecting axiological priorities of culture, their historical dynamics and ethnic or national character. Understanding of these phenomena is important for communication between cultures of different types and for the rewarding dialogue between them.

Many works dealing with musical genres use different approaches – from purely theoretical (classification, typology) to practical-oriented (sociological, institutional, communicative, ontological, epistemological, etc.). The second group includes closely related culturological and axiological approaches (V.V.Medushevsky, C.Dahlhaus) and a semantic approach (V.N.Kholopova, M.S.Skrebkova-Filatova, I.Ya.Neyshtadt, Ya. Yiranek, etc.; see the full list in [6]), which we supplement with **world-image approach** – that is, an approach that interprets genre as a world-picture, world-model or world-image.

The **problem** of this research is a question of potential for cultural dialogue through axiological dimension of musical genres that represent cultural axiologemes. Therefore, the goal of this paper is to test a possibility to construct value world-pictures based on axiocodes of musical genres.

Methodology used here combines culturological, axiological, world-image, and comparative approaches.

It is well-known that the axiological interpretation of culture which is based on the principle of 'culture forming function of values' (B.A.Starostin) developed as a result of 'axiological turn' of early XXth century that allowed Martin Heidegger to call the philosophy of values 'a true scientific philosophy of culture' [cited in: 3, p. 19]. In this respect, **value content** of culture is today understood as a 'proper field of cultural philosophy' [3, p. 16]. The concept of **value world-picture** is more relevant than ever: it reveals an hierarchy of cultural universals indispensable for understanding and communicating with other cultures. In humanities and arts, value world-picture unites culturology, art history and psychology: all of these disciplines develop and use the concepts of world picture/image/model. Psychologist A.N.Leontyev called them

'the fifth quasi-dimension': semantic field, a system of meanings conditioned by the perception of a 'sensory fabric' and intra-systemic connections of the objective reality. While meanings are oriented towards values, sensory perceptions ('perceptional world') lead towards a possible artistic world-picture.

In cultural theory, world picture (or 'cultural world picture') is interpreted as a 'cultural matrix' that determines 'both a general character and a concrete content of a culture' [8, pp. 906–907]. It is used as a methodologically important concept of culturological analysis of social reality and as a basic concept of culturological knowledge [12]. Based on the axiological concept of culture, V.M.Pivoyev offers a notion of 'value world-picture' [13, p. 13], which he uses as a foundational concept. The concept of artistic world-picture, which was introduced by B.S.Meylakh (1984), reveals an artistic ontology – world-building (Yu.N.Kholopov) as a system of imaginative (artistic) images creating a secondary reality. Imaginative world picture has a higher axiological potential due to heightened emotional and judgement-based nature of artistic consciousness; also because it becomes a representation of the artist's personal world-view. It explicitly reveals value system typical for its time, ethnic or national sphere, social stratum, personal belief system and world view.

Since 1980s, Russian musicology has often used world-picture as a cultural paradigm for the correct semantic interpretation of a musical text. In fact, the method of musicology is developing a **world-picture approach** even though the concept of world picture/image is not yet a part of its terminology. Artistic world-picture naturally exists in music due to value attitudes based on emotional and judgement-based perception: 'Emotion is "keen" and "biased" in its judgement about reality; it lets an individual know about its judgements using the language of feelings' (B.I.dodonov [cit. in: 11, p. 80]). Music has **intonation** as its semantic material that carries an emotional message. Therefore, music is **immanently value-based.**

'World-modelling' genre phenomena plays a particularly important role in the development of artistic world picture. N.L.Leiderman, believing that a work of art forms an 'image of the world', argues in favor of the concept of 'genre world-model' and its cultural status: "An experience of genre as a system of artistic modelling of the world is one of the essential components of culture. [...] The structure of every genre has signals that... guide a reader towards a certain world-model" [10, p. 84]. The result is 'the building of a set of genre codes (as types of artistic world-models together with the rules for their decoding)' [10, p. 84]. These ideas work both for creative genres as a whole and for musical genres in particular.

Genre codes depend on the **genre function** as a symbol marking a certain type of content and correlate with its status of a **cultural form and value** [14]. They form a part of cultural codes preserving 'worldview universals' (V.S.Stepin) and a conceptual sphere (axiologemes) of culture. Ultimately, an entire culture (pan-culture) is a sociocode, similar to a genetic code, but inherited through social mechanisms and governing human existence [7, p. 4]. **Musical genres** carry **axiocodes: symbolic (musical-symbolic) representations of value attitudes and axiologemes** [15]. They may construct a value world-picture since 'human value attitude to the world is formed within the sphere of culture; it has emotional roots and is arranged vertically' [11, p. 85].

The modern thesaurus of musical genres can create a 'musical reality' reflecting ontological world-picture. As an archetype of the latter model, we have chosen *arbor mundi* with its central axis housing different levels/spheres of nature, society and individual. Using this model, let us focus on the two *typological* and three *national* value world-pictures. Among typological world-pictures we explore anthropocentric and theocentric models, where the core axiologemes are, respectively, human and God, thus leading to the reshuffling of the hierarchy of ontological levels/spheres.

Anthropocentric value world-picture in music is represented, first and foremost, by the classic symphony as an ultimate generalised and diversely conceptual genre exploring the aspects of *individual being* [1, p. 309]: homo agens (acting human), homo meditans (meditating human), homo ludens (playing human), homo communis (social human). The concrete manifestations of this world-picture can also be found in chamber music genres (musical portrait, romantic song, small instrumental pieces), as well as in lyrical opera. The second and the third axiosphere may be represented either by nature or by society, depending on the author's value world-picture and a concrete piece. *Nature* is modelled in the genres of musical landscape, sketch, pastoral, nocturne, barcarole; time as natural attribute is reflected in the genres of fugue, toccata, perpetuum mobile. *Social being* is represented by the largest number of musical genres: secular popular and professional genres (songs, dances, marches); large-scale – opera, oratory, ballet, operetta, cantata, epic symphony, assimilated poems, ballads, fairy-tales, etc.; it is also represented by spiritual music as a part of social practices.

Theocentric (Christian) value world-picture embodies religious values and is led by the most large-scale micro-conceptual genre: Catholic mass or Orthodox and Lutheran liturgy, where the canonical text reflects a God-given unshakeable world order. These genres are supported by Magnificat and Te Deum. The sphere of nature here is not important as such; however, *social sphere* is represented widely by passions, religious oratories and cantatas telling about the fates of God-chosen and godless tribes, their

leaders and heroes, both from the Old and from the New Testament. The *human sphere* is very specific: it is represented by prayers, litanies, canticles and chorals reflecting human relationship to Jesus and his sufferings, to earthly woes, righteousness and patience commandments; a requiem genre (funeral service) encodes tragic emotional experience of human mortality tied to finiteness and sinfulness.

Among **national value world-pictures** we intend to focus on **English, French and German** musical genre models. For the first case, we refer to Gustav Holst, an outstanding composer of the 'English musical Renaissance', who in 1920s described genre hierarchy of English music like this: **choir music, orchestral music, solo vocal music** [5, p. 46]. Axiological meaning of this hierarchy is as follows: the priority of *choir music* is an axiologeme of *national tradition* formed in the late medieval English folklore (catches, rounds) and later supported by the choral tradition of the Church of England and Puritanism (hymns, psalms, anthems), Haendel's towering oratorios, and a widespread amateur choir movement. The second axiologeme was added by H.Perry who advised his students to 'compose choir music, which is a fitting task for an Englishman and a *democrat*'. [my italics - L.R., ibid]. Thus, he introduces a *social* concept characteristic for the English political tradition. The second place taken by an **orchestral music** is explained by the axiologeme of *symphonism* established by the authoritative Austian-German school which for a long time was a major influence on professional English composers; however, it also had English predecessors in consorts popular in aristocratic culture; in other words, here we see the *value of prestige.* **Solo vocal** genres (both religious and secular) performed individually and expressing the diversity of human personal experience contain axiologeme of *privacy* (a typically English notion tied to the idea of *freedom* and *home*); together they form an equally typical axiological cluster. For example, Gustav Holst's hierarchy typically lacks operas or ballets, which is a part of characteristic English gap in classical opera and ballet, from H.Purcell (late sixteen-hundreds) to B.Britten (mid-XXth century), which was caused, in part, by Puritan influence.

French genre value world-picture, on the contrary, puts on top the **musical theater** (opera, ballet, operetta) with its intertwining *axiologemes of social and personal life,* with the dominance either of the former (French grand opera, comic opera) or of the latter (lyrical opera). At the same time, we see here a highly developed representation of social strata, groups and ethnic communities that create a vivid picture of society, thus reflecting a *social value* of the French nation known for its high energy, its élan, and also a cental importance of the concept of the *people* tied to a famous national axiological trinity of *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*. The second or the third (historically changing)

place in the hierarchy is occupied by **chamber music** (vocal and instrumental) which embodies the axiologeme of French *communicative culture* with its salons and cafés, thus realising one of the most important national values of *savoir vivre* [2]. However, chamber genres also express the value of subtle *intimité* : inner world, its flexibility and sensitivity. **Orchestra genres** traditionally are less prioritized in France: they are used to envision not so much the human conditions as external circumstances: pictures, scenes, in which human existence becomes only a presence. Their programmatic character, vivid imagery, fresh details all tie into the *aesthetic hedonism* of French culture and emotional *élan* of national character.

Finally, let us talk briefly about the **genre value world-picture of the German music.** At the top of the hierarchy is **instrumental music** in its micro-conceptual genres belonging to sonata and symphony cycle (symphony, chamber ensemble, sonata, concerto). They preserve the axiologome of *univeral logico-dialectical thinking* established by the Vienna classics simultaneously by Kant and Hegel. This makes Germans the best recipients of 'pure music' with its existential philosophy and metaphysical problematics (on the other hand, some German ethnic groups prefer theatrical genre – for example, Bavarians, whose culture is very different from the German culture in general). These genres also influence the highest examples of **opera** (Weber, Wagner, R.Strauss, Hidemith), which occupies the second place in German genre value world-picture together with the **choir music.** The latter is especially important for Protestant areas, where it embodies the axiologemes of the *common confession* of godly life and *exalted re-living* of religious narratives. In this respect, Lutheran church does not oppose the Catholic tradition, where similar role is played by masses, magnificats, litanies and other genres of this Christian denomination. The next place is occupied by **chamber genres** that embody axiologemes of personal *Innerlichkeit* and Bedermeyer *Gemütlichkeit* tied to the famous German sentimental tradition.

3. Results

Our study presents the examples of typological and national models of value world-picture based on genre axiocodes. Our conclusions are as follows:

1. constructing value world-picture based on musical genres should be done within *arbor mundi* structural and semantic archetype;

2. musical genres mark cultural axiogemes of different origins existing within the same culture: moral, aesthetic, artistic, religious, socio-political [4, p. 109];

3. musical genre-based value world-picture reflects content and hierarchy of cultural axiologemes in typological and national world-pictures;

4. musical genre-based value world-picture facilitates ongoing dialogical development of contemporary culture.

Our preliminary exploration of the chosen typological and national models of genre axiocode-based value world-pictures requires further theoretical research based on extended corpus of examples (uses) on the typological, historical, national and individual levels. These are the future prospects for the proposed research field: **world-image interpretation of genres as representants of cultural axiologemes.**

4. Conclusion

Because axiological sphere is fundamentally important in culture, serving as a meaning-producing area of human existence, it is vitally important to elucidate culturally determined value world-pictures. The most value-saturated world-picture is an artistic world-picture, since value attitude is intrinsic to a creative imagination; within this sphere, musical world-picture ranks the first in terms of its semantic material. Especially rich in their world-image potential are artistic genres (including musical genres) that carry cultural axiocodes and axiologemes. Examples of typological and national value world-pictures based on musical genre axiocodes (or musical-genre value world-pictures) reflect a concrete hierarchy of cultural axiologemes and provide foundation for understanding specific asiological spheres of different cultures, thereby facilitating fruitful dialogue which is particularly important in modern contradictory and conflict-ridden social space.

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