

VISUALIZATION OF MUSICAL COMPOSITION PRINCIPLES IN ASHOT ASATURYAN'S BALLET: DEDICATED TO THE CHOREOGRAPHER'S 85TH BIRTHDAY

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In 2022, we are celebrating the 85th birthday of outstanding choreographer Ashot Asaturyan.

The choreographer died as many as 23 years ago, but judging from the videos of his ballets, we can say that his creative mentality and methods of musical and literary interpretation are still progressive and timely. One more peculiarity of Asaturyan's method is visualization of polyphonic principles. While in *Theme and Variation*, a ballet created to the music of the Finale of Pyotr Tchaikovsky's 3rd Orchestral Suite, those principles have an immanently choreographic function, in some other ballets, they are of dramaturgical significance. The common feature of the three ballets analyzed in this article is the polyphonic nature of their scenarios. Those ballets are Maurice Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloe*, Igor Stravinsky's *Orpheus* and Sergei Rachmaninoff's *Symphonic Dances*.

Key words: Ashot Asaturyan, choreographic composition, visualization of polyphonic principles, two-part scenario, Daphnis and Chloe, Orpheus, Symphonic Dances.

Introduction

In 2022, we are celebrating the 85th birthday of outstanding choreographer Ashot Asaturyan.

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Ashot Asaturyan got the best choreographic education of his time. At the Tbilisi Choreographic College, he studied in the class of outstanding dancer and choreographer Vakhtang Chabukiani. In 1962, he entered the newly founded Choreography Department of the Leningrad (Saint Petersburg) Conservatoire. His teacher was innovative choreographer Fyodor Lopukhov (1886-1973), who influenced not only the best Soviet choreographers Yuri Grigorovich, Vladimir Varkovitsky and Konstantin Boyarsky, but even great George Balanchine and his method of symphonic dance as in the 1920s, Georgy Balanchivadze (the real name of Balanchine) took part in Lopukhov's Dance Symphony, a historic one-act ballet choreographed to the music of Beethoven's 4th symphony.

What does it mean to be Lopukhov's student and one of the first graduates of the Choreography Department of the Leningrad Conservatoire? Unlike many choreographers who create their ballets by ear (that is, by listening of a recording or an accompaniment), Asaturyan did it by reading orchestral scores. He sight-read piano scores and knew all the peculiarities of orchestration. He studied elementary

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theory of music, harmony, musical forms and polyphony. As a result, he was able to see music and to make it visible to others by putting its nuances into choreographic forms.

After graduating from the Conservatoire, in 1968-1973, Asaturyan was the principal choreographer with the Saratov Chernyshevsky Opera and Ballet Theater. In 1973-1990, he was a choreographer with the Yerevan Spendiaryan Academic Opera and Ballet Theater and in 1991-1997, the principal choreographer with the Kharkiv Lysenko Academic Opera and Ballet Theater. By the end of 1997, the ailment that tortured him since the early 1990s, aggravated, and he was forced to retire and to go back to Yerevan. On May 23, 1999, Asaturyan passed away at the age of 62.

Throughout his fruitful carrier, Ashot Asaturyan choreographed 23 ballets in Saint Petersburg, Saratov, Sverdlovsk (Yekaterinburg), Yerevan, Tbilisi, Chelyabinsk, Baku and Kharkiv. He made choreography for operatic and drama performances. He adapted classical ballets for the Saratov and Kharkiv companies and created a great number of choreographic miniatures. His archives contain a dozen of scenarios that remained on paper.

Asaturyan's studies at the Leningrad Conservatoire coincided with a wave of active opposition to ballet drama, and Asaturyan was among those innovators. Their concept was to interpret ballets as symphonies, to materialize philosophical ideas into choreographic forms, to depict psychologically ambiguous and allegorical characters and generalized rather than specific situations.

The key feature of Asaturyan's method was to build the choreographic score upon the musical score. He believed that only in music can you find the characters, the plot, the composition and the choreographic solutions for your ballet.

Asaturyan preferred symphonic forms, particularly, sonata-symphonic cycle as well as variation cycles. The word "symphony" can often be seen in Asaturyan's abstracts and explications. The analysis of his ballets suggests that he meant the structure. This structure characterizes the scores of most of Asaturyan's ballets.

One more peculiarity of Asaturyan's method is visualization of polyphonic principles like double counterpoint, two-, three- and four-part linear development, imitation and inversion. While in *Theme and Variation*, a ballet created to the music of the Finale of Pyotr Tchaikovsky's 3rd Orchestral Suite, those principles have an immanently choreographic function, in some other ballets, they are of dramaturgical significance. It should be noted that the use of polyphonic principles in Asaturyan's ballets did not always mean the presence of such structures in the music as is the case with *Theme and Variations*. Polyphonic principles were used on very different levels.

Polyphonic (Two-Part) Ballets by Ashot Asaturyan

Among the stories underlying Ashot Asaturyan's ballets, we can point out the class that can be termed as "polyphonic" or "two-part" ballets. In this article, we would like to analyze three such ballets.

DAPHNIS AND CHLOE

This ballet was created in trying circumstances, when the Alexander Spendiaryan Opera and Ballet Academic Theatre was under repair. Just a couple of

operas and ballets were still performed on the stage of the Opera Studio of the Yerevan Komitas State Conservatoire. Premieres were rare. But it was exactly then, in May 1980, that a new ballet was born. Maurice Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloe* was premiered on the stage of Gabriel Sundukyan Drama Theater.

Daphnis and Chloe was composed in early XX, when ballet was being reformed. The libretto was based on a novel by Haniel Long. The first choreographer was Mikhail Fokin. The world premiere took place at Théâtre du Châtelet as part of Sergei Diaghilev's *Ballets Russes*. Since then the ballet was choreographed all over the world, but in the Soviet Union, before Asaturyan, it was interpreted only twice: by Georgy Davitashvili at the Leningrad Maly Opera and Ballet Theater in 1960 and by Mai Murdmaa at Estonia Theater in 1966. The latter one was also staged at the Leningrad Kirov Opera and Ballet Theater in 1974. Thus, Asaturyan was the third Soviet choreographer to refer to this score. He revised the story. To be precise, he wrote his own one. The ballet is based on philosophic generalization and emotional figurativeness, with the plot having just an auxiliary role. However, the most important thing about this ballet is that here for the first time Ashot Asaturyan uses a polyphonic two-part scenario. Later, he used the same type of choreographic narration for Stravinsky's *Orpheus* and Rachmaninoff's *Symphonic Dances*.

One of the two parts is the story of Daphnis and Chloe. But the main theme is the history of love from Adam and Eve to our days. Here we can see the picture of the Fall, where Lycaenion can be interpreted as the serpent or as Lilit (a personage from Sefer Raziel *HaMalakh*, XIII, and the *Zohar*)¹, the way she was interpreted during the Renaissance. Each of the characters has at least three incarnations: Chloe is Eve and Aphrodite (Venus), Daphnis is Adam, Lycaenion is the serpent and Lilit. Ravel's score consists of three parts, while Asaturyan divides it into six episodes. Below you can see the libretto, the way it was presented to the first audience.

Alexander Spendaryan Opera and Ballet Academic Theatre

Maurice Ravel

Daphnis and Chloe

ballet in two acts

libretto by Ashot Asaturyan

My *Daphnis and Chloe* is a choreographic symphony. When composing his bright and poetic music, Maurice Ravel sought not so much to narrate the story as to revive the Greece of his dream.

Long's *Daphnis and Chloe* is a refined poetic story about young lovers, raised by nature and its forces – nymphs and Pan. Long's poems is full of pantheism, tenderness and emotions.

The main theme is the evolution of love as the unity of beauty and harmony that overcomes the evil.

The ballet consists of six episodes:

¹ For information about Lilit see article "Lilit" [5]

- Episode 1 – the Birth
- Episode 2 – the Fall
- Episode 3 – the Ascension
- Episode 4 – the Apocalypse
- Episode 5 – the Resurrection
- Episode 6 – the Ode to Love

In his booklet, Asaturyan says nothing about the story and gives symbolical names to the episodes. Some of them refer to the Bible – the Birth, the Fall, the Ascension, the Apocalypse.

There are two more aspects here.

Asaturyan has few ballets with a happy ending. In her article about *Daphnis and Chloe*, Hasmik Markosyan says: “The last episode of the ballet depicted something like future (the 21st or even 22nd century). Faceless people were running about the stage. The main characters were no longer there. Their absence was a puzzle. Perhaps, their travel along the corridors of time – through the Ancient World, the Middle Age and the Renaissance – was stopped and they died from the horrors of our reality. Or perhaps they have been cast aside by the mob, who no longer needs individuality and, consequently, the most individual of all emotions, Love, and has turned into a lot of faceless robots. This ending was a bit disputable – not because it was too pessimistic, simply, all the preceding episodes disputed such an ending. It was a kind of a warning: ‘Take care of Love!’ Love was born when the man was born and will hopefully die only when he dies” [4, pp. 203-204].

Pessimism is prevalent in Asaturyan's ballet. Among his unchoreographed librettos, we can find a story that is very much like *Daphnis and Chloe*. It is not known if it was written before Ravel's ballet or after it. It is entitled *Metamorphoses* and resembles the libretto based on Maxim Gorky's poem and called *Poem of Love*. That last libretto was written for composer Romen Davtyan and was even approved by the Ministry of Culture of the Armenian SSR in 1984², that is, four years after the premiere of *Daphnis and Chloe*. However, *Poem of Love* does not have as many common grounds with *Metamorphoses* as *Metamorphoses* has with *Daphnis and Chloe*.

Let's compare one of the episodes of *Daphnis and Chloe* with one of the episodes of *Metamorphoses*. In her article, Hasmik Markosyan says that “the episode of the Renaissance reminded us of Botticelli's art. Some compositions were direct references to Botticelli's works, with Chloe appearing in the virtuous pose of Venus” [4, p. 202].

The libretto of *Metamorphoses* reads: “The girl appears as those in Botticelli's paintings”. The very titles of that ballet's episodes – *Gospel of the Soul*, *the Gospel of the Evil*, *the Apocalypse – the Dream of Death*, *the Gospel of Love* – certainly resemble the titles of *Daphnis and Chloe*. The whole structure is also similar. Thereby, we are inclined to believe that the libretto of *Metamorphoses* was written before the premiere of *Daphnis and Chloe* and that Gorky's *Death and the Maiden* underwent certain “metamorphoses” and served as the basis for *Daphnis and Chloe*.

² A copy of this libretto can be found in Ashot Asaturyan's personal archives.

It is a pity that the ballet that is still remembered by many dancers and spectators and is believed to be one of Asaturyan's best works ever was performed just twice. When the repairs of the Opera House were finished, *Daphnis and Chloe* was not transferred to the new stage.

Orpheus

When a student, Ashot Asaturyan took interest in Igor Stravinsky's ballets, particularly, *Orpheus*. In 1966, he choreographed some fragments of *Orpheus* and in 1967 some episodes of *Fairy's Kiss*. It is not known how the young choreographer interpreted the myth at that time, but 20 years later, in 1989, he staged it at the Alexander Spendiaryan Opera and Ballet Academic Theatre, and in 1991, along with the *Firebird*, at the Mykola Lysenko Kharkiv National Academic Opera and Ballet Theater. Both performances were recorded. We also have a notebook with the explication, fragments the choreographic score and some personal notes. Thus, we can say that the Kharkiv version is closer to Asaturyan's initial concept.

Orpheus is probably Asaturyan's most complex ballet. It has three main features. First, it is a complex of narration, philosophy and emotion. Second, it has no immanently choreographic episodes. And third, it is a polyphony based on pro and contra motifs.

The first feature makes it similar to *Daphnis and Chloe*, while the second and third ones relates it to *Symphonic Dances*, Asaturyan's last ballet.

Below is the Asaturyan's libretto of *Orpheus*.

Orpheus

The main theme of the ballet – the fight between the good and the evil, the light and the darkness, Life and Death – is interwoven with two plotlines: the well-known myth about Orpheus and Eurydice and a story about the fate of an artist, the internal struggle between his two selves, two contrasting worlds that give birth to art. It is obvious that here the myth serves as a background for the story about the fate of art today – about Orpheus in the 21st century.

The ballet is full of metaphors: the Apollonian art of Orpheus is put on the cross of ideas, Eurydice is the artist's pain for his creation, the Black Angel is his inner duality, the Muses are the flesh of his art.

Synopsis

One of the oldest myths in the world – the myth about Orpheus, was born in Thrace. It says that Orpheus's lyre and voice win the heart of beautiful Eurydice, but their happiness is not long: Eurydice's death puts an end to the poet's charming songs. The Black Angel is touched by his grief and helps him to go down to the kingdom of shadows. His only condition is that Orpheus should not look at Eurydice until they come back into the world. Orpheus brakes the ban and loses Eurydice forever, but his lyre starts singing again: the power of love and art overcomes death.

At first sight, Asaturyan makes it clear that his story is polyphonic. Orpheus has always been an ambiguous figure. Some authors say that he was the son of Thracian

king Oeagrus [2, p. 80]³ and Muse of Epic Poetry Calliope and that it was Apollo who gave him his lyre, while other authors claim that Orpheus was the son of Apollo⁴. In some stories, Orpheus represents the Apollonian cult⁵, in others, he is the founder of the cult of Dionysus [6, p. 400]. This duality might be enough for the pro and contra concept, but Asaturyan adds one more theme – the story of an artist in the 21st century.

The phrases and fragments recorded in the explication suggest that this artist is not some abstract figure but a very specific personage – the main character of Thomas Mann's Doctor Faustus, Adrian Leverkühn. It is known that the prototype of Leverkühn is composer Arnold Schoenberg, the author of dodecaphony.

To prove this, we are going to compare the following phrases, words and fragments from Asaturyan's explication with the text of Doctor Faustus.

Asaturyan's notebook. Quotation:

O Muses, O high genius, now assist me!
O memory, that didst write down what I saw,
Here thy nobility shall be manifest!

Dante, Divine Comedy

Epigraph of Mann's novel:

DAY was departing, and the embrowned air
Released the animals that are on earth
From their fatigues; and I the only one
Made myself ready to sustain the war,
Both of the way and likewise of the woe,
Which memory that errs not shall retrace.
O Muses, O high genius, now assist me!
O memory, that didst write down what I saw,
Here thy nobility shall be manifest!

Dante, Inferno, Canto 2

A phrase from Asaturyan's notebook says: "May God have mercy on your soul, my friend, my fatherland". The last phrase of Doctor Faustus reads: "May God have mercy on your poor soul, my friend, my fatherland".

Asaturyan's notebook contains a lot of phrases like "the magic square," "the chess board", "sold his soul", "says farewell to romanticism", "plays with dodecaphony". The same phrases can be found in Mann's novel.

In Asaturyan's notebook, we can also find some references (not very visible at first sight) to fascism, concentration camps, nuclear explosion. They become visible only when we read Mann's novel, where the author explains that he is writing at the time of WWII and is describing some episodes of that war.

³ In N.A. Kun's version, the father of Orpheus is river god Oeagrus [3, p. 199]. Kun refers to Ovid's Metamorphoses.

⁴ A.F. Losev's Orpheus article in the Myths of the World encyclopedia, v. II, mentions the source of this version – Clement of Rome, Homiliae, v. 15.

⁵ See in the same place.

The very title of Mann's novel makes it clear that the prototype of the story is Goethe's *Faust*.

Thus, in Asaturyan's ballet, *Orpheus* is the worshiper of the Apollonian cult and at the founder of the cult of Dionysus, Adrian Leverkuhn, who sold his soul to Satan and Faust, who sold his soul to Mephistopheles. This comparison is the core of this "ballet of thoughts rather than feelings" as Asaturyan described it.

And now let us analyze the pro and contra concept.

When did it first appear in Asaturyan's art?

Dancers Hovhannes Divanyan and Yelena Pavlidi say that in 1974, Asaturyan created for them a duet to Arvo Part's music and that it was called *Pro and Contra*. Obviously, pro and contra is not just a conflict or a contrast, which are both the core of any dramaturgy. In his libretto of *Idiot*, Asaturyan clearly formulates this concept. There are many questions concerning this libretto. For how many years and since when did the choreographer work on it? The archives contain lots of manuscripts and printed versions. Only one of them is complete. It was created in 1975. Who was supposed to be the composer? Or was Asaturyan going to choreograph the ballet to some existing musical pieces?

Even though this concept was not materialized, it was crucial for Asaturyan's creative biography. It has a lot of episodes that were later put into other ballets. All the ballets created before 1975 (including *Immortality*) are very different from the ones choreographed after *Idiot* and apparently influenced by it. In *Idiot*, pro and contra is everywhere. The story is full of twins and antagonists, but its main line is the unity of two incarnations – good and evil, Myshkin and Rogozhin – in one man.

In *Orpheus*, pro and contra are Orpheus and the Black Angel.

In *Ara the Handsome and Shamiram*, all the characters have more than two incarnations. Ara has as many as seven, but they are incarnations rather than functions. In *Daphnis and Chloe*, the characters have dual functions as the very story is dual. In *Orpheus*, each character has at least two functions. In his libretto, Asaturyan notes that Eurydice is the artist's pain for his creation, the Black Angel is his duality, the Muses are the flesh of his art. But now that we have discovered the second storyline (Doctor Faustus and its prototype Faust), in this context, Eurydice is Margarete, the Black Angel is Satan and Mephistopheles, Orpheus is Adrian Leverkuhn and Faust. And in the light of the pro and contra concept, Orpheus and the Black Angel are one personality, the inner world of one human, his two incarnations.

We can clearly see this if we analyze the ballet. In episode 1, we see Orpheus in the magic square of muses and furies. The Black Angel appears in episode 2 and ever since we can see that they are two interweaving parts of one polyphony: now they come into unison and then they contrast each other.

When analyzing Pyotr Tchaikovsky's *Theme and Variations*, we pointed out that Asaturyan visualizes polyphonic principles, like double counterpoint, imitation and inversion. In *Theme and Variations*, those principles were immanently choreographic, while in *Orpheus*, they have a dramaturgical function. For example, the first

meeting of Orpheus and the Black Angel is based on imitation: the Black Angel moves and Orpheus imitates his movements, which implies their unity. However, in the next episode, we see a choreographic dialogue: Orpheus asks the Black Angel to show him the path to the kingdom of shadows. The Black Angel warns him that he will have to touch the hearts of the furies with his songs. In the kingdom of shadows, following Orpheus's air de dance performed for the furies, the Black Angel seems to be patronizing Orpheus and keeping him back from looking at Eurydice. When Eurydice appears, the Black Angel gives Orpheus a lyre and blindfolds his eyes. The whole corps de ballet lines up into a grandiose procession, moving to the kingdom of shadows from the right to the left wing.

The next episode, pas de deux (as recorded by Stravinsky), is the brightest spot of the ballet, the recollection of the past happy days. And right away we go back to the episode of coming out of the kingdom of shadows. Orpheus and Eurydice run into each other's arms and the next moment we see Eurydice die. The most impressive moment of this episode is that while Orpheus is passively watching Eurydice's return into the kingdom of shadows, the Black Angel is sobbing. Here, as nowhere else, we can see that the Black Angel is part of Orpheus, his emotional self.

The ballet is montaged as a film, where there is no continuing action but only short contrasting spontaneous episodes. For example, the procession is immediately followed by pas de deux, and again we are back to the kingdom of the furies. The death of Eurydice and the weeping of the Black Angel are immediately followed by Orpheus's rage and the finale. The final death of Orpheus and the Black Angel reveals the unity of White Orpheus and Black Angel in one personality: they are dying together, they are moving identically in an inversed manner.

SYMPHONIC DANCES

Symphonic Dances is the last ballet by Ashot Asaturyan. It was premiered at the Mykola Lysenko Kharkiv National Academic Opera and Ballet Theater in October 1997.

While Orpheus is Asaturyan's most complex ballet, *Symphonic Dances* is the most tragic one.

We would like to precede the analysis of this ballet with a quotation from Hermann Hesse's *Glass Bead Game*: "Thus, to select some examples of greatness, we have no idea whether Johann Sebastian Bach or Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart actually lived in a cheerful or a despondent manner. Mozart moves us with that peculiarly touching and endearing grace of early blossoming and fading; Bach stands for the edifying and comforting submission to God's paternal plan of which suffering and dying form a part. But we do not really read these qualities from their biographies and from such facts about their private lives as have come down to us; we read them solely from their works, from their music" [1, p. 50].

Yes, most of Asaturyan's ballets give us no idea whether he lived a cheerful or despondent manner. When watching *Symphonic Dances*, a spectator will hardly think about the life of the choreographer. He is more likely to see there the life of an artist or some metaphorical episodes from Sergei Rachmaninoff's biography.

Just like *Daphnis and Chloe* and *Orpheus*, *Symphonic Dances* has a polyphonic, two-part scenario, where one part is episodes of Rachmaninoff's biography (here again, like in *Orpheus*, Asaturyan tells the story of a musician in the 21st century) and the other one is Asaturyan's own biography, ending in death.

Below is the libretto of *Symphonic Dances*.

Symphonic Dances

one-act ballet to Sergey Rachmaninoff's music

libretto by Ashot Asaturyan

Symphonic Dances is Rachmaninoff's last work, composed in 1940. It is a kind of a three-movement symphony, where there are no dances as such and whose name does not reflect its profound nature. I would call it philosophical dances because here we can find philosophical problems and universal ideas.

This opus is very personal and subjective. This is a story about an artist, his homesickness and loneliness. Initially, the composer planned to title each movement as *Morning*, *Noon* and *Evening*, but later he rejected that idea. Perhaps, he did not want to emphasize the autobiographic nature of his work.

The ballet is a three-movement choreographic symphony about the fate of an artist, his quests and disappointments.

Here the artist confesses that he is missing his lost homeland and is grieving his lost harmony.

There is no continuous storyline. The only link between the movements is the artist, his thoughts and concerns, his internal dialogues. The subtitles *Morning*, *Noon* and *Evening* are metaphorical and can be interpreted as Birth, Fall and Ascension or Perception, Disappointment and Death.

The main theme is the growth of an artist, his search for beauty and harmony.

Synopsis

The young very sensitive and emotional musician sets off to find his dream. His thoughts, feelings and memories are embodied by musical ideas and images.

On his thorny way, he meets his Muse, who becomes his melody, his fixed idea. He experiences grief and sorrow in the circle of tragic waltz. His beloved melody is amid the nightmare of shadows. His heart shrinks. He is chased by tragic thoughts. Is she faithful to him? Is his path right? Amid this dreadful tunes, he hears the voice of his Homeland. And again he sees his fixed idea, like the last thought about love, interrupted by a fatal step – he has left his Homeland.

The artist is surrounded by a mob. He hears groans, shouts, laughter but no melody, no harmony. Harmony has left him. The orgy goes on. He hears the sounds of a march. This is a death-bell – Dies Ire. In the arms of his Homeland, he continues his thorny way⁶.

⁶ We see no need to draw parallels to Asaturyan's biography. They are obvious and you can find them on you own. In any case, let us prompt you: Morning is associated with Tbilisi and Leningrad, Noon with Saratov and Yerevan, Evening with Kharkiv and Yerevan.

We believe that under each line of this libretto, Asaturyan could write “this is about me”.

The ballet has four main characters: the Musician, the Muse, the Death Angel and the Homeland. The first three characters bear some semblance to the characters of *Orpheus*. As regards the fourth one, we will talk about it later.

The libretto of *Symphonic Dances* is philosophical and metaphorical. It has no continuous storyline. The characters have prototypes from previous ballets.

The first line, Death, can be found in Asaturyan's ballets about WWII – *Immortality* and *Heroic Ballade* (where one of the episodes is entitled as *Death Dance*). We can find Death in *Daphnis and Chloe*, *Metamorphoses* and *Poem of Love* (the latter two are based on Gorky's *Death and the Maiden* poem).

The prototypes of the Death Angel are Koshchei from Stravinsky's *Firebird* (choreographed in Kharkiv in 1991) and the Black Angel from *Orpheus*.

Symphonic Dances are also based on the pro and contra concept. Here we also have two antagonists and two sides of one personality – the White Musician and the Black Death Angel. In the first episode, we see the Musician as the “conductor” of his own life, who conducts all the other characters, including the Death Angel, as an orchestra.

In the development section of the 1st movement, the duet of the Musician and the Black Angel is based on double counterpoint. The characters are moving in both inverse and contrasting manners along two parallel lines. In the reprise of the 1st movement is both musical and choreographic: once again we see the same episode, but this time there are two “conductors” – the Musician and the Death Angel.

In the 2nd movement, the Black Angel openly opposes the Musician. He interferes in the pas de deux of the Musician and the Homeland. He comes between them to separate them.

In the 3rd movement, he appears at the very end, to embrace the Musician and to take his life away.

The second line is the Musician and his Muse. This line can be found in the *Nutcracker*, where Masha is a muse for the Nutcracker, in *Daphnis and Chloe*, where Chloe is a muse that revives Daphnis. In *Layla and Mejnun*, the muses are ghazals, poems created by Layla and Mejnun. In *Eupraxia*, the muses are the cherebiaychiks. The most tragic muse is She in *Immortality*. That character is multifunctional. In the first episode, she is the love of the hero, but in the Heroic Adagio, she is the love of each of the heroes remembering his beloved girl before dying in the concentration camp.

In *Firebird*, the muse is the magic assistant of Firebird, in *Orpheus* the muse is one of Eurydice's incarnations.

It is now clear if in *Symphonic Dances* the Muse is a specific person (as this ballet is autobiographical and the Muse was performed by his wife Elvira Mnatsakanyan) or a symbol of Art and Melody. In any case, the Musician's relationship with the Muse is different from his relationships with the Death Angel and the Homeland. The pas de deux of the Musician and the Muse are also

polyphonic and are based on imitation or inversion. Both pas de deux with the Muse can be termed as “duets of accord”, while the duets with the Death Angel are duets of accord and discord. In the final episode, we can see the following sequence: a) the Musician runs into the Death Angel’s arms, b) he is lifted in the pose of Crucifixion, c) he bends down, d) he falls and disappears, e) the Muse soars in his place in the pose of Ascension with her arms stretched up towards the light.

And finally let us focus on the Musician’s relationship with the Homeland, which are quite complicated and autobiographical. In *Symphonic Dances*, the Homeland is ambiguous and volatile: is she the beloved, the traitress (in the duet with the Death Angel, the 2nd movement) or the companion (the 3^d movement)? Seeing this, one can not but wonder if the libretto’s phrase “is she faithful?” refers to the Muse or the Homeland. What is in the Musician’s mind? Did he betrayed his Homeland by leaving it? Or did he leave it because it had betrayed him?

...And down from the peaks of unyielding heights
I come like a stone to the very depth
Of the yielding womb of a slimy mire,
Which since dawn of time
Has been living there,
Reproducing life for quadrillion years.
And in stone I speak, saying “A, B, C,”
Which implies “the Sun”
Or “Eternal Light”...⁷.

This question burns the minds of many artists, musicians and ordinary people who were forced to leave their Homeland.

Now we understand that it was not a coincidence that Asaturyan came back home. Being very sick, he sought to finish his artistic life at home to finally be buried in his native soil.

“May God have mercy on your soul, my friend, my Fatherland”.

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⁷ Lines from Paruyr Sevak’s *Bright Morning* poem. Translated by Ara Asaturyan.

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ԱՇՈՏ ԱՍԱՏՈՒՐՅԱՆԻ ԲԱԼԵՏՆԵՐՈՒՄ ԵՐԱԺՇՏԱԿԱՆ ԿՈՄՊՈԶԻՑԻԱՅԻ ՍԿԶԲՈՒՆՔՆԵՐԻ ՏԵՍՈՂԱԿԱՆԱՑՈՒՄԸ. ՆՎԻՐՎՈՒՄ Է ԲԱԼԵՏՄԱՅՍՏԵՐԻ ԾՆՆՆԵՐՆԵՐ 85-ԱՄՅԱԿԻՆ

ՆԱԶԵՆԻԿ ՍԱՐԳՍՅԱՆ*

Հղման համար. Սարգսյան, Նազենիկ: «Աշոտ Ասատուրյանի բալետներում երաժշտական կոմպոզիցիայի սկզբունքների տեսողականացումը. նվիրվում է բալետմայստերի ծննդյան 85-ամյակին»: *Արվեստագիտական հանդես*, N 1 (2022): 166-178. DOI: 10.54503/2579-2830-2022.1(7)-166

Ընթացիկ 2022 թվականին մենք նշում ենք ականավոր բալետմայստեր Աշոտ Ասատուրյանի ծննդյան 85-ամյա հոբելյանը:

Արդեն 23 տարի է, ինչ նա մեզ հետ չէ: Սակայն դիտելով նրա ստեղծած բալետների տեսանյութերը և ձեռագրերը, որտեղ նրա բեմադրական հայեցակարգն է, սկսում ես ըմբռնել՝ անգամ մեր օրերում որքան առաջատար և արդիական են նրա ստեղծագործական մտածելակերպը, երաժշտական պարտիտուրի խորեոգրաֆիկ ընթերցման սկզբունքները, սցենարների բազմանշանակ մեկնաբանությունը: Ասատուրյանի պարային կոմպոզիցիաների առանձնահատկություններից է պոլիֆոնիկ հնարքների վիզուալիզացիան (տեսողականացումը): Եվ եթե «Թեմա վարիացիաներով» բալետում՝ բեմադրված Պ.Ի. Չայկովսկու Երրորդ նվագախմբային սյուիտի Վերջաբանի երաժշտության հիման վրա, դրանք ունեն զուտ իմանենտ-պարային գործառույթ, ապա Ասատուրյանի ստեղծած մի շարք այլ բալետներում արդեն ստանում են ֆունկցիոնալ, դրամատուրգիական նշանակություն:

Սցենարի պոլիֆոնիկ հնարքներով են պայմանավորված սույն հոդվածում վերլուծվող հետևյալ երեք բալետների առանձնահատկությունները՝ Մ. Ռավելի «Դափնիս և Քլոն», Ի. Ստրավինսկու «Օրփեոսը» և «Սիմֆոնիկ պարերը»՝ Ս. Ռախմանինովի երաժշտությամբ:

Բանալի բաներ¹ Աշոտ Ասատուրյան, պարային կոմպոզիցիա, պոլիֆոնիկ հնարքների տեսողականացում, երկծայն սցենար, «Դափնիս և Քլոն», «Օրփեոս», «Սիմֆոնիկ պարեր»:

* ՀՀ ԳԱԱ արվեստի ինստիտուտի թատրոնի բաժնի առաջատար գիտաշխատող, արվեստագիտության դոկտոր, nazeniks@gmail.com, հոդվածը ներկայացնելու օրը՝ 12.01.2022, գրախոսելու օրը՝ 21.01.2022, տպագրության ընդունելու օրը՝ 20.05.2022:

ВИЗУАЛИЗАЦИЯ ПРИНЦИПОВ МУЗЫКАЛЬНОЙ КОМПОЗИЦИИ В БАЛЕТАХ АШОТА АСАТУРЯНА: ПОСВЯЩАЕТСЯ 85-ЛЕТИЮ СО ДНЯ РОЖДЕНИЯ ХОРЕОГРАФА

Назеник Саргсян*

Для цитирования: Саргсян, Назеник. “Визуализация принципов музыкальной композиции в балетах Ашота Асатурияна: посвящается 85-летию со дня рождения хореографа”. *Искусствоведческий журнал*, N 1 (2022): 166-178. DOI: 10.54503/2579-2830-2022.1(7)-166

В настоящем – 2022 году мы отмечаем 85-летний юбилей выдающегося хореографа Ашота Асатурияна. Вот уже 23 года, как его нет с нами. Однако просматривая видеозаписи созданных им балетов и рукописи, где зафиксированы его постановочные концепции, начинаешь понимать, насколько прогрессивным и актуальным, даже на сегодняшний день, было его творческое мышление, принципы его хореографического прочтения музыкальных партитур, неоднозначная интерпретация сценариев.

Одной из особенностей хореографических композиций Асатурияна является визуализация полифонических приемов. И если в балете «Тема с вариациями» на музыку финала Третьей оркестровой сюиты П.И. Чайковского они имеют исключительно имманентно-хореографическую функцию построения композиции, то в ряде других балетов, созданных Асатурияном, они уже приобретают функциональное, драматургическое значение. Полифоничностью сценария обусловлена специфика трех балетов, которые проанализированы в настоящей статье, – «Дафнис и Хлоя» М. Равеля, «Орфей» И. Стравинского и «Симфонические танцы» на музыку С. Рахманинова.

Ключевые слова: Ашот Асатуриян, хореографические композиции, визуализация полифонических приемов, двухголосный сценарий, «Дафнис и Хлоя», «Орфей», «Симфонические танцы».

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