

## MUSIC OF UKRAINIAN POETIC CINEMA AS A SPACE FOR CONSTRUCTING NATIONAL IDENTITY IN UKRAINIAN CULTURE

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### UKRAINIAN POETIC CINEMA IN THE CULTURAL CONTEXT OF THE THAW

Ukrainian poetic cinema is a complex aesthetic, stylistic, and socio-political phenomenon that occurred during the national rise of the 1960s known as “the Thaw” when Ukrainian artists reflected on the phenomenon of national culture breaking the frames of Soviet ideology. This short period in the history of Ukrainian cinema is considered a revival after decades of Russian cultural expansion that suppressed the performance of Ukrainian national identity in Ukrainian culture. The cultural revival became possible due to a certain social and political liberalization after Joseph Stalin’s death in 1953 and the overcoming of his personality cult in 1956, which marked the era of the Thaw. In Ukraine, de-Stalinization was particularly important, since Ukraine was affected the most by the Stalinist terror: Ukrainian nation survived through Holodomor, mass repressions, and extermination of the national elite. The Thaw lasted a little longer in Ukraine than in other Soviet republics due to Petro Shelest – the head of the Communist Party of Ukraine in 1961-1972. Although his political outlook was not liberal, he had a national sentiment recognizing the significance of the Ukrainian language and its role in representing Ukrainian cultural identity.<sup>1</sup> In such a political climate of the 1960s, Ukrainian progressive youth – the sixtiers – founded creative youth clubs to rehabilitate the historical memory and moved from socialist realism in their creative work.

The leading aesthetic principles of the 1960s Ukrainian art movements were the poetization of folklore, the revival of the traditions erased from the collective memory, and their modern metaphorical reinterpretation. They can be traced in the creative outputs of the Ukrainian poetic cinema artists: Serhii Parajanov (*Shadows of the Forgotten Ancestors*, 1964); Yurii Illienko (*A Spring for the Thirsty*, 1965; *The Evening on Ivan Kupalo*, 1968; *The White Bird with a Black Mark*, 1971); Leonid Osyka (*The Stone Cross*, 1968; *Zakhar Berkut*, 1971); Borys Ivchenko (*Annychka*, 1969; *The Lost Letter*, 1972); Volodymyr Denysenko (*Conscience*, 1968); and Ivan Mykolaichuk (*Babylon XX*, 1979). The characteristic features of the Ukrainian poetic cinema movement are:

parable character, attraction towards metaphorical imagery and allegoricity in understanding reality, appeal to irrational motives and images, use of folk symbols as an integral part of everyday life, visual reproduction of national traditions and rituals, presence of typological images of villages, people, particular social groups, and characters.<sup>2</sup>

At the same time, Ukrainian poetic cinema has never been a purely ethnographic phenomenon, because its films “do not simply appeal to sight, hearing, and motor sense ..., but think with texture, color, pattern, rhythm, nature, sound, shot composition – and all their strong totality.”<sup>3</sup> Moreover, Ukrainian poetic films ironically dispel ethnographism at the plot level. In particular, the scene in Illienko’s *The Evening on Ivan Kupalo*, when the Russian empress Catherine II travels around her “possessions” – the Ukrainian lands, is a demonstrative counterargument to identifying poetic aesthetics as ethnographic decorativeness. Going past carton Ukrainian houses and hiding Cossacks, Catherine II wonders why they are neither dancing Ukrainian folk dance hopak nor drinking Ukrainian alcoholic beverage horilka. Catherine II expects this behavior since she believes that “as soon as the sun rises, they dance”. Seeing the Cossacks’ immediate reaction who start dancing like drunks, Catherine II exclaims: “Now that’s right!”. This scene ironically mocks “sharovarshchyna” – a stereotypical identification of Ukrainian culture as a low culture of peasants and Cossacks. The mentioned scene deconstructs the misrepresentation of Ukrainian poetic cinema as an ethnographic movement and the Soviet ideological concept of the Ukrainian national identity as a fixed message transmitted through artistic means of only folklore.

Ukrainian poetic cinema was widely recognized in Western culture. The triumph of Parajanov’s *Shadows of the Forgotten Ancestors* at the international film festival in Mar del Plata, Argentina, drew the world artistic community’s attention to the new ideologically independent Ukrainian art. However, Ukrainian poetic cinema’s success lasted only a few years at home. In the early 1970s, the Soviet authorities began a brutal attack on talented directors, including Parajanov, with devastating criticism and repression, restricting artists’ creativity, and eventually, forbidding the poetic cinema movement. Many films were stigmatized as “ideologically unreliable” and removed from distribution. Although Ukrainian films were not accused of nationalism directly, it was clear that their strong national identity annoyed Soviet officials the most. Even after the political censorship was softened, in 1979, Mykolaichuk overcame many challenges to get permission to film *Babylon XX* from the Soviet authorities. Only after the restoration of Ukraine’s independence in 1991 did the viewers, film critics, and experts get access to the Ukrainian poetic cinema heritage. Still, most of the publications on various aspects of the Ukrainian poetic cinema output are journalistic and popular-science. The lack of scholarly research on this topic, thus, demonstrates its relevance.

The Ukrainian poetic cinema music has never been an object of specialized scholarly research. Some information about it can be found in general overviews of the history of Ukrainian

cinema in film and music studies, particularly in the dissertations of Oksana But and Olena Yankovska, articles by Halyna Filkevich, Olha Lytvynova, Larysa Bryukhovetska, and Volodymyr Davydenko. Therefore, the consideration of the Ukrainian poetic cinema film music in terms of the formation of national identity from the philosophical and musicological standpoint is the first comprehensive study of this topic. In this context, it is expedient to analyze the film music of *Shadows of the Forgotten Ancestors*, *A Spring for the Thirsty*, *The Evening on Ivan Kupalo*, *The Stone Cross*, *White Bird with a Black Mark*, *The Lost Letter*, and *Babylon XX* as the most prominent Ukrainian poetic films.

### PERFORMANCE OF CULTURAL IDENTITY THROUGH FILM MUSIC

Sound is one of the key dimensions of Ukrainian poetic cinema. It constitutes an “added value” of poetic films – structures vision, ensures the reprojection “onto the image the product of their mutual influences,”<sup>4</sup> and creates a sound polyphony of the film frames. In Ukrainian poetic films, poetic thinking dominates the word by various audible means. Silence, nature sounds, human voice, dialect speech, Ukrainian musical instruments, the performance of folklore, and the instrumental music of Ukrainian composers collectively form the sound world of Ukrainian poetic cinema. Music appears to be its most significant component as it implies a complex intellectual and corporeal experience of film creators and the audience. It transforms the film space by performing the invisible (what was not seen before). Thus, even though music is not directly seen in the film, it exists in a space of vision: constituting films’ imaginative and symbolic dimensions, it is an instrument for performing collective representations. The music of Ukrainian poetic films, thus, can be analyzed as a space for the construction of national identity. For this purpose, national identity construction through the music of the Ukrainian poetic cinema can be fruitfully considered a performative phenomenon.

Jeffrey C. Alexander’s cultural pragmatics within the cultural sociological approach appears to be a fruitful methodology for considering film music as a cultural performance. Alexander defines cultural performance as a collective action aimed at the realization of the script as a foundation of social integration and consensus.<sup>5</sup> From the standpoint of Alexander’s conception of cultural performance, film music is not a reflection of a social group’s collective ideas, but a shared experience of the film’s creators and the audience while watching a film that enables viewers and listeners to maintain solidarity, raise relevant social issues, and influence a social reality. Therefore, film music as a performance is not an abstract artistic activity or object but a dynamic process, collectively created and interpreted by the composer and the audience.

Simon Frith, a British socio-musicologist, shares this perspective. Frith defines music as a performance and a story, and the unity of the event and the text. He claims:

not that social groups agree on values which are then expressed in their cultural activities ... but that they only get to know themselves as groups (as a particular organization of individual and social interests, of sameness and difference) *through* cultural activity, through aesthetic judgment. Making music isn't a way of expressing ideas; it is a way of living them.<sup>6</sup>

Frith demonstrates that music gives people an intensely subjective sense of being sociable and encourages members of the community to experience their collective identity as “what we would like to be, not what we are” giving “a real experience of what the ideal could be.”<sup>7</sup> Therefore, the music of the Ukrainian poetic cinema participates in constructing the national myth and transforming the national culture under the pressure of the Soviet regime into an integrated system.

Accepting these theoretical foundations enables the authors to regard film music as a performative instrument of the organization and construction of identity in situations of shared experience, which incorporates collective self-images into broad cultural narratives. In particular, the music of Ukrainian poetic cinema is demonstrated not as a text that reflects a fixed normative guidance of what Ukrainian identity is but as a space for deliberation about it and the platform of its construction.

#### FOLKLORE AS AESTHETIC AND ARTISTIC FOUNDATION OF UKRAINIAN POETIC CINEMA MUSIC

The national character of Ukrainian poetic cinema music is determined primarily by the themes of its literary sources. Mostly these are works of Ukrainian classic and modern authors who create ethnographic pictures of Ukrainian villages in different regions of Ukraine. The films *Shadows of the Forgotten Ancestors* and *The Stone Cross* based on the eponymous works by Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi and Vasyl Stefanyk depict the daily life and customs of peasants of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Prykarpattia. *The White Bird with a Black Mark* highlights the life of the Bukovynian village, whereas the action of the films *The Evening on Ivan Kupalo* and *The Lost Letter* on the motives of Mykola Hohol's writings takes place in the Cossack settlements of Central Ukraine. *Babylon XX* based on Vasyl Zemlyak's novel *Swan Flock* and *A Spring for the Thirsty* filmed from a screenplay by Ivan Drach both depict the rural life of the Kyiv region. These films' direction is peculiar for involving real villagers in the mass scenes and a close relation of the film's plot to the actual life of the village. It is no coincidence that authentic folklore represented in all its genre-

ritual and thematic diversity plays an important role in the musical dimension of Ukrainian poetic cinema.

*Authentic material*

Authentic music is particularly notable in *Shadows of the Forgotten Ancestors*. This film embodies Ukrainian poetic mythology full of magical rituals, archaic emotions, pre-Christian customs, and at the same time Orthodox traditions. Every sound in the film acquires a special symbolic meaning. Oksana But notes:

The film constantly reproduces the cyclical nature of the archaic worldview: ‘life – love – death’. It begins with the sound of cutting spruce symbolizing the broken fate of Ivan's little brother. The boy's cry ‘absorbs’ the trembita sound traditionally associated with the most significant events in Hutsuls’ life – weddings and funerals. Another ‘ambiguous’ attribute that expresses both joy and grief is church bells. Before the wailing for the deceased could be heard we hear the bright and enchanting play of the jaw harp, bells, pipes that sound at the village fair; then, without a pause, the bells ring again, but now festive ones, and church singing.<sup>8</sup>

The repeated sound of a considerable number of specific authentic instruments and ritual scenes with musical accompaniment gives grounds to talk about a branched system of leit-timbres (hurdy-gurdy, floyara, jaw harp, trembita) and leit-genres (prayer, vocal lament, chant). Myroslav Skoryk, a composer of *Shadows of the Forgotten Ancestors*, recalled his trip to Verkhovyna by bus. There he found musicians in mountain villages and took them to the recording studio in Kyiv by plane.<sup>9</sup> The most common among purely musical phenomena in the film are rhythmic intonations of kolomyika, which dynamizes the plot development, as well as a whole range of calendar songs that frame Hutsuls’ life in Kryvorivnia: carols, spring songs, wedding songs, and commemorative songs. Parajanov thoroughly selected the song material, carefully studying Hutsuls’ life and customs.

*The White Bird with a Black Mark* also stands out for its remarkable authentic music component. The film deals with the tragic story of the Dzvonar family, musicians from the Bukovyna village Hlynysia, during the violent 1930s and 1940s when the region was under Romanian and later Soviet occupation. The Second World War scattered the brothers on different sides of the political and military confrontation. According to Illienko’s directorial idea, the instrumental ensemble of the Dzvonar family consisted mainly of instruments typical for Bukovyna: cymbals (Petro), violin (Orest), trombone (Bohdan), bells (Heorhii), basolia (Les). Authentic folk melodies recorded by folk musicians are presented here in various genres: fair march, Christmas carol, patriotic military song, and wedding song. The film’s key leitmotifs are the humorous kolomyika “You combed your hair, you licked your hair, you dressed in white pants”, which characterizes Petro, and the melody of the Sabash wedding dance that sounds in the key dramatic scenes related to the tragic love story of Orest and Dana.

In *The Stone Cross*, authentic folklore is used in one of the most important dramaturgic episodes – the scene of the protagonist’s farewell to the residents of his native village on the eve of his emigration to Canada. The film composer Huba recorded a significant part of the music in Pokuttia. Kolomyika’s sound and polka’s catchy dance melodies performed by folk musicians contrast with the depressed psychological state of the farewell attendees. One of the most emotionally powerful parts of the farewell episode is also the scene of the blind musicians’ passage, during which a short motif is played by old, “almost decayed by the time”,<sup>10</sup> detuned cymbals that Huba accidentally found in the attic of an abandoned house.

*Folklore in the music direction of Ivan Mykolaichuk*

Ivan Mykolaichuk played an important role in introducing folklore as a musical counterpart to the aesthetics of Ukrainian poetic cinema. A talented actor and director considered a symbol of Ukrainian poetic cinema, Mykolaichuk had remarkable musical skills and knew Ukrainian folklore well, especially of his native region Bukovyna. In many acting works, he sings and plays cymbals (*The White Bird with a Black Mark*), violin (*Mistake of Honoré de Balzac*, *Babylon XX*), and double bass (*Such Late, Such Warm Autumn*). Mykolaichuk attached great importance to the musical component in his directorial practice:

A good film should be built as a musical piece. The dramaturgy of a musical work is the greatest and most powerful dramaturgy. If I ever managed to build a film plot and all my film-thinking in the way that it is possible to do in music, then I would not dream of anything else...<sup>11</sup>

Mykolaichuk initiated a selection of musical material for several Ukrainian poetic films, including *The White Bird with a Black Mark*, *The Lost Letter*, and *Babylon XX*. Larysa Briukhovetska notes that “the entire musical part of the films, for which Mykolaichuk prepared music, consists of folklore, which has its roots in the distant past.”<sup>12</sup> In these films, there are both authentically performed songs and interpretations of folk songs by modern professional performers, such as the trio “Zoloti Kliuchi” created under the auspices of Mykolaichuk (*The Lost Letter*), recordings of bandura player Halyna Menkush (*The Lost Letter*), and Moldovan singer Nicolae Sulak accompanied by the folk music ensemble “Fluierash” (*Babylon XX*).

*The Lost Letter* is a kind of anthology of Central Ukrainian musical folklore, in which Ukrainian folk songs of various genres are heard: the lyrical “Unhitch the horses, boys” (“Rozpryahayte, khloptsi, koni”), “Oh, willow, willow, where did you grow” (“Oi, verbo zh, verbo, de ty zrosla”), “And I’m poor, unhappy” (“A ia bidnyi, neshchaslyvyi”), the wedding song “Bless, the Earth” (“Blahoslovy, zemle”), a humorous dance “A fish danced with crayfish” (“Tantsiuvala ryba z rakom”), which became a humorous characteristic of the main characters – brave and witty Cossacks Vasyl (Mykolaichuk) and Andrii. However, heroic Cossack folklore and authorial melodies associated with the struggle of Ukrainians for national independence and

statehood occupy the most important place in the film. Since authentic Ukrainian culture was taboo in the Soviet Union, Zaporizhian march as the film's leitmotif, the historical song "The black arable", and the Cossack march "Let's take the weapons, brothers" ("Hey numo, brattia, do zbroii"), written in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the coryphaeus of Ukrainian theater Marko Kropyvnytskyi, were a bold move. It is no coincidence that bandura – a symbol of the Cossack musical epic – in Halyna Menkush's recording turned out to be the leit-timbre of the film's music design. In addition, Mykolaichuk planned to use the song "And already two hundred years as a Cossack's been in captivity" ("A vzhe dvisti rokiv iak kozak u nevoli"), which expresses an angry protest against the destruction of Cossacks' autonomy by the Russian Empire. Even though this song was removed from the film for political reasons, the film was censored and banned for 10 years.

The variety of national musical symbols can also be traced in *The White Bird with a Black Mark*. Among the above-mentioned authentic Bukovynian melodies, the UPA song "Oh, the rebels were standing in the forest on the lawn" ("Oi u lisi na poliantsi stoialy povstantsi") banned by the Soviet censorship is also present in the film. To avoid problems, Mykolaichuk had to "disguise" the national expressiveness of the film music by the contrast introduction of "ideologically correct" Soviet songs following the plot of the film. However, this juxtaposition only strengthened the feeling of foreignness of Soviet ideology and the savagery and brutality of the "liberators" of free Hutsuls. In this regard, there is a demonstrative scene with the timber rafting related to the establishment of Soviet authorities in a Zakarpattian village. The stressed cheerful music of the Soviet "Aviators March" sharply contrasts with the muted Bukovynian melodies and lines of the rebels and sounds intrusive and frightening.

Folkloric melodies of different backgrounds coexist in the music of *Babylon XX* – the last work of Mykolaichuk, where he demonstrated his talents as a director, leading actor (philosopher Fabian), and composer. Although the plot of this film (defined by Mykolaichuk as a "folk romantic true story") refers to the events of the 1920s in Central Ukraine, its music is collected from different Ukrainian regions. Moreover, the Moldovan folk song about unrequited love performed by Nicolae Sulak has the key dramatic importance appearing in romantic scenes of the main characters – Fabian and Malva. This melody, atypical for the location of the film, is both "offscreen" and "onscreen":<sup>13</sup> it sounds not only in the background of the film frame but is also diegetic since the characters react to it. Fabian states that it is "Walachian" music – the music from a historical region in Zakarpattia, which Ukrainians called "Woloshchyna" that included Romanian and Moldovan territories at different times. The use of Moldovan folklore, widespread in Mykolaichuk's native Zakarpattia, probably indicates the artist's feeling of special kinship with the image of his character.

Similar to *The White Bird with a Black Mark*, in *Babylon XX*, traditional Ukrainian folk songs "The cows went from oakwood" ("Yshly korovy iz dibrovy"), "Oh, my grove, green grove" ("Oi haiu mii, haiu, haiu zelenenkyi") and dance melodies performed by Three musicians contrast

with the Bolsheviks' folklore ("How my mother saw me off", "I have courted Maruska for three years"), but sometimes their intonations merge. As Mykolaichuk later explained:

We wanted the film frame to contain the very life of the village of the 1920s – as it was created by the centuries-old course of the development of people's culture, especially as the revolution broke the centuries-old lifestyle. People started speaking different languages.<sup>14</sup>

At the same time, the artist justly reminded that Bolsheviks borrowed the melody of the song "How my mother saw me off" from the Ukrainian folk song "Oh, what a noise was made" ("Oi shcho zh to za shum uchynyvsia").

#### ARTISTIC AND STYLISTIC FEATURES OF AUTHOR MUSIC OF UKRAINIAN POETIC CINEMA

Another area that forms space for performing Ukrainian national identity in Ukrainian poetic cinema is the author music of the composers Myroslav Skoryk (1938-2020), Leonid Hrabovskiy (born 1935), and Volodymyr Huba (1938-2020), who represent the "sixtiers" generation. In the 1960s and early 1970s, along with the strict rejection of radical musical experiments, official circles temporarily tolerated the work of young talented artists who sought to renew the palette of musical and expressive means. This relative freedom of creativity encouraged composers to conduct creative pursuits in the field of film music, which were successfully realized together with the innovative direction of Paradjanov, Osyka, Illienko, Ivchenko, and Mykolaichuk. Symphonic scores of the Ukrainian poetic films are marked by vivid timbre characteristics, rhythmic richness, an expressive leitmotif system, and the dynamism of the unfolding of musical thought.

Author music in Ukrainian poetic cinema is presented in different stylistic dimensions and composition techniques. The features and techniques of different styles often coexist in one film, depending on the peculiarities of the plot and imaginative dramaturgy. In this regard, Hrabovskiy equated a composer's approach to creating music in films with acting:

An actor has make-up, accessories, and costumes, which all work to change his/her image. A composer has only different styles – historical, modern, or perhaps even future styles. Thus, the composer operates with styles as characters.<sup>15</sup>

The closest style to the folk aesthetics of Ukrainian poetic cinema is neo-folklorism (*Shadows of the Forgotten Ancestors*, *The Evening on Ivan Kupalo*), permitted by Soviet censorship and relevant in the times of the Thaw. The composers used techniques of musical language stylization, appealing to general historical styles: romanticism, baroque, and classicism



(*The Stone Cross*, *The Evening on Ivan Kupalo*, and *The Lost Letter*) and avant-garde techniques, in particular, musique concrete (*A Spring for the Thirsty*).

*Neo-folklorism of Film Music by Myroslav Skoryk*

The music of *Shadows of the Forgotten Ancestors* is one of the first and brightest manifestations of Ukrainian neo-folklorism. Myroslav Skoryk, a 26-year-old Lviv composer, created a nationally expressive symphonic “poem” based on authentic Carpathian chants and instrumental motifs reinterpreted using modern compositional techniques with sharp dissonances, non-standard combination of instrumental timbres, and complex bouncy rhythm. Skoryk’s symphonic episodes are harmoniously woven into the heterogeneous soundscape of the film, in which the components of authentic folklore interact in a variety of instrumental and vocal-instrumental performances, animal voices, noises of the natural environment, and sounds of church bells.

Skoryk’s music characterizes primarily the images of the film’s main characters Ivan and Marichka, the dynamics of their relationship, and the tragic vicissitudes of their fates. Each episode reveals the connection of the musical material with a certain folklore motif: in the part “Childhood of Ivan and Marichka” there are noticeable kolomyika rhythms, in the theme of love – intonations of sad Hutsul chants, whereas in the dramatic film scenes (“Thunderstorm and Marichka’s death”, “Cry of Ivan’s mother”, “Ivan’s suffering”, “Appearance of Marichka’s ghost”) a gloomy memorial theme occurs, in which trembita sound merges with orchestral timbres. The dramaturgical importance of Skoryk’s music is also strengthened by his appeal to the principle of leitmotivism. One of the film’s most prominent musical leitmotifs is related to the image of death: its tense ominous sound appears at different times in the death scenes of both characters.

Even though the music of *Shadows of the Forgotten Ancestors* is the only Skoryk’s creative work in the movement of Ukrainian poetic cinema, it was a milestone in the history of the development of Ukrainian cinema. It also influenced significantly the formation of the composer’s creative individuality, defining the neo-folklore style of his further works. Skoryk recalled: “Working on this film inspired me to create my original music both for this film and for the next work – the Carpathian concert for the symphony orchestra.”<sup>16</sup> Based on music for *Shadows of the Forgotten Ancestors*, Skoryk also created the symphonic suite “Hutsul triptych”.

*The Diverse Musical Style Palette of Leonid Hrabovskyi*

Hrabovskyi’s work in the film *A Spring for the Thirsty* which appeared the next year after *Shadows of the Forgotten Ancestors* embodies a radically different aesthetic concept of the music accompaniment. In this film, for the first time in Soviet cinema, the composer appeals to

the techniques of musique concrete. This technique presupposes the use of pre-recorded ambient sounds and natural noises followed by sound processing and editing. The sound score of the film is dominated by the sounds of pottery, the rattle of iron chains, the sound of sand, splashing water, children crying, old woman swearing, etc. Musique concrete was relevant in the works of avant-garde West European and American composers of the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – Pierre Schaeffer, Edgard Varese, John Cage, and Karlheinz Stockhausen. In the Soviet Union, avant-garde techniques were almost unknown, besides, the technical capacities to work with sound were extremely limited. Therefore, Hrabovskyi had to almost completely manually slow down and speed up the tempo on the tape to get the reverberation effect:

We lived in the pre-computer era when cinema sound standards were primitive. It was not possible to add any ‘tricks’: reverberations, flangers, and mixes. We worked in a stairway and released there the sound, which came back with an echo, and we recorded it.<sup>17</sup>

*A Spring for the Thirsty* was banned by Soviet censorship having been in a drawer for 22 years. In 1972, Eduard Artemiev, the Russian composer, used the techniques of musique concrete in *Solaris* by Andrei Tarkovsky. Since Illienko’s film was unknown at that time, Russian cinema was mistakenly considered to be the first to introduce the innovative techniques of musique concrete.

Hrabovskyi considers his second work for Ukrainian poetic cinema – the music for *The Evening on Ivan Kupalo* – to be one of his best works. Like Skoryk, he published it as an independent musical opus under the title *Symphony-Legend* (1976). This score is distinguished by the layering of various stylistic components, following the director’s idea of the film, which resembles “a kind of temporal cocktail, a whimsical mixture of different epochs and cultures: here Ukrainian ritualism and classicism, Tatar-Mongols and even elements of Soviet reality are combined.”<sup>18</sup> In Hrabovskyi’s music naturally coexist features of sophisticated modernism, neo-folklorism, and stylization of distinct historical intonation practices, including Viennese classicism. Hrabovskyi himself explained his work principle in this film:

I tried to make the music as Ukrainian as possible creating reminiscences from folk songs, sometimes partially, sometimes completely reformatted. In general, the music had to be romantic, colorful, and with a rich timbre of instruments.<sup>19</sup>

The film’s central musical episode, which reveals the Ukrainian national character, is the adaptation of the Kupala song performed by a female choir. This song embodies the idea of the unrequited love of the film’s main characters – Petro and Pydorka. The song accompanies the frames that represent ancient rituals: water and fire, burning wheels, dances around the fire, and chasing girls by boys. In this adaptation, Hrabovskyi artfully combined the techniques of folk polyphony with the principles of sonorous technique and stylization of West European musical classics. Davydenko even sees here the intonation parallels with the medieval canon by Guillaume de Machaut and the fis-moll fugue from the first volume of *The Well-Tempered Clavier* by

Johann Sebastian Bach. According to Davydenko, all three themes (Kupala song, canon, and fugue) have connected not only intonationally but also semantically. Bach's theme symbolizes the crucifixion figure, Machaut's theme embodies the sadness of unrequited love, whereas the Ukrainian song – the image of a drowned girl.<sup>20</sup>

The romantic character of Hrabovskiy's film music reveals the poeticization of Ukrainian folklore and the fairy-tale atmosphere of the plot, according to which Peter sells his soul to the devil to marry his beloved Pydorka. The sound solution of the afterlife vividly depicts mystical images and impresses with the ingenuity of the composer's timbre dramaturgy. In the film music, there are 58 orchestral voices, and each string instrument has its own part creating an expressive sonorous effect. At the same time, parody is perhaps the most characteristic feature of Hrabovskiy's music for *The Evening on Ivan Kupalo*. It unites all the different stylistic layers of the music score. Especially amusingly stylized intonations of symphonic music in the spirit of Joseph Haydn are heard in the above-mentioned scene with Catherine II passing Cossack settlements. These intonations ironically display the Russian imperial court's orientation towards West European fashion and traditions which are rapidly replaced by the stylized sound of folk musicians (Three musicians) accompanied by a parodic dance of "drunk" Cossacks. Therefore, Hrabovskiy reveals the national specificity of the music for *The Evening on Ivan Kupalo* reinterpreting Ukrainian folklore through the prism of his creative imagination and intellectual experience based on a deep knowledge of the music history of different times and cultures.

#### *National Determinants in the Film Music of Volodymyr Huba*

Volodymyr Huba is recognized as a film composer given his significant achievements in this field, in particular Ukrainian poetic cinema. Similar to the director-composer tandem of Illienko and Hrabovsky, Huba successfully collaborated with Osyka, the director of *The Stone Cross*, *Hetman's Kleinods*, and *Zakhar Berkut*. Each of these films is distinguished by the original music solution, especially *The Stone Cross* which reveals a special "aesthetic kinship"<sup>21</sup> between the composer and the director. This film is considered an artistic culmination of the Ukrainian poetic cinema wave because it concentrates a feeling of the Ukrainians' deep physical and spiritual rootedness in their native land, the memory of ancestors, and the collective national consciousness. Through music, Huba skillfully reveals the depth of the tragedy of the main character – a poor, exhausted peasant Ivan Didukh forced to leave his native land in search of a better future for his children in Canada.

The music analysis of *The Stone Cross* reveals an authentic combination of folk-national and European features of musical writing amid the dominant romantic style. The main theme that characterizes the main character is presented by a technically undemanding dreary narrative melody intonationally close to a Ukrainian romance song. Repeated performance of this theme

(first piano, then orchestral) creates an effect of monotony and symbolizes the monotony of Ivan Didukh's life: every day he plows a field in severe conditions of the mountain landscape. This theme functions as a leitmotif accompanying the main character in key dramatic episodes.

Another important leitmotif represents Didukh's disturbing premonition. This emotional state is conveyed with the help of cymbals' short beat, which the composer interprets as "a generalized mystical 'sound timbre'."<sup>22</sup> Both leitmotifs appear in the central scene of the film, where the character pulls a heavy stone cross to the top of the hill and installs it there at night. However, the most important musical theme of this silent episode is an expressive organ melody in the style of Bach's organ preludes and passions, which symbolically embody the Way of the Cross with distinctive intonation symbolism (the primacy of chromatic motifs alternately in descending and ascending move). This melody gradually matures from the intonations of the first theme, but later displaces it, gaining strength and covering an increasingly wide sound range. And when Didukh prays in front of the stone cross on the hill, the organ melody sounds at full volume, as if filling the night space in the frame with sound.

Apart from the organ, Huba used bells in the music of *The Stone Cross* which is another timbre associated with a religious ritual. Bells sound in the last culmination accompanying old men's singing in the church, which is associated with the burying of the deceased. The composer perceived the ringing of the bells as an act of purification:

This is a special timbre of both loss and depth of thought... The timbres of the bells are timeless, but also native to Christian Ukraine. They can influence a person's subconsciousness: if one hears them even from a distance, he/she already enters a state of mystical concentration. They contribute to goodness, beauty, and peace.<sup>23</sup>

Thus, the Ukrainian national authenticity in this film's music is revealed through the interaction of musical timbres and intonations of different eras and national cultures.

## CONCLUSION

Music is a significant dimension of constructing the national identity in Ukrainian poetic cinema that enhances visual symbols and is an independent medium of meaning-making. Embodying and fostering the collective cultural experience and deliberation on the Ukrainian culture, the Ukrainian poetic cinema music becomes a means of performing Ukrainian national identity that opposes the official Soviet representational strategy aimed at the marginalization of Ukrainian culture.

The national identity in Ukrainian poetic cinema is constructed through music by the use of:

- folklore of different regions of Ukraine;
- musical symbols of the Ukrainians' struggle for freedom and independence which were banned in Soviet times;
- modern trends in academic and popular music;
- interaction of Ukrainian music with motifs of other national cultures;
- national original material through the reinterpretation of European musical classics.

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