Section 2. Study of art

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CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PERIOD OF ORIGIN AND FORMATION OF FOLKLORISM AS A METHOD IN BELARUSIAN THEATRICAL ART

Abstract. This article analyzes the specific features of folklorism at the stage of origin and formation of this method in theatrical art of Belarus (from 1850s to 1950s). The idea of the authors' approaches to the use of folklore manifestation methods is defined, which predetermined the ways of further development of folklorism up to the early 1990s.

Keywords: folklore; folklorism, theatrical art.

As the most unique and rich layer of national culture, folklore has a potential for artistic creation, which is realized in the process of its embodiment in the art. Folklorism as a method of embodiment of the Belarusian traditional folk art has been actively used in all forms of art for many centuries. This approach to comprehension of our ancestral heritage is also prominent in theatrical arts. In this context, the aim of this article is to reveal the specific features of folklore traditions embodiment in the theatrical art at the stage of origin and formation of folklorism as a method.

The first rare examples of Belarusian folklore traditions embodiment date back to the second half of the XIX century. For example, in the play "Sjaljanka", which was staged in 1852 by Vincent Dunin-Marcinkievič himself, in addition to proverbs and sayings, organically intertwined in the fabric of the literary source, as close to the authentic material, the Belarusian folk songs "Jak pajšoŭ ŭ naš kaval", "Ja cyacerku zlavioŭ, uŭ ja", "Hadzi, dzeŭka-čarnabreŭka"

and Mjancelica dance with chastushkas were staged. Researchers give other examples as well. For example, in the 1870s, some performances featured Belarusian folk songs, while some Russian-language productions used traditional folk proverbs and sayings of the Belarusians, which was extremely risky in the face of severe oppression and censorship by the tsarist authorities, but demonstrated the civic stance of the authors and performers [1, 138].

After the revolution of 1905–1907, the tendency to turn to folklorism as a method became even more stable, which was caused by the emergence of another wave of national and cultural revival, one of the symbols of which was the Belarusian parties, dating back to traditional folk games with songs and dances. These evenings of the Belarusian culture were built on the principle of synthesis of stage action and, along with the dramatic productions, which became dominant over time, included blocks of folk songs and dances. So, at a party, which was organized by the Nasha Niva newspaper in Vilno in February 1910,

choir led by L. Rogovsky performed interpretations of the Belarusian traditional folk songs “Čamu ž mne ne peć”, “Oh, ty dub”, “Pryljaceli gusi”, “Dyj kudy ž ty, dub zjaleny”, and I. Buinitsky’s dance group performed “Ljavanicha”, “Mjacelica”, “Jurka” and “Verabej”. However, the researchers emphasize that if at the first parties folk songs and dances in relation to the performance were an independent section of the program, over time they merged with the dramatic action [1, 142–150]. In these projects, in addition to the song and dance, the embodiment of folklore traditions was reflected in the design of the stage and in the interpretation of stage outfits in the Belarusian authentic structures of the regions from which those folklore pieces have originated. It is noteworthy that often the spectators themselves came to the evenings of Belarusian culture in authentic costumes. Therefore, the interest in Belarusian oral folk art stimulated the emergence of groups that adhere to the principle of the most accurate reflection of the original folklore source in the process of its stage embodiment. It should be noted that the form and content of the stage action borrowed from the Belarusian parties was taken as a basis for the performances of the troupe of I. Buynitsky, the mobile troupe of V. Golubok, the First Association of Belarusian Drama and Comedy and other groups.

In the 1920s, the folklore traditions of the Belarusians formed the basis of many plays of Jeŭscihniej Mirovič on the stage of the Belarusian State Theatre (“Na Kupalle”, “Vjaselle”, “Mašeka”, “Kastuś Kalinoŭski”, “Kaval-vajavoda”, etc.). It is noteworthy that for some plays fielded ethnographic expeditions to find the necessary material at the preparatory stage. For instance, in the course of work on the play “Na Kupalle” (1921) traditional folk costumes and household items were brought from Slutskiy district, and for the play “Mašeka” (1923) the necessary authentic material was found in Mogilev region [1, 211–212]. Mirovič’s productions widely represented the arrangements of Belarusian folk melodies, folklore elements enriched the scenography, and according to the director’s con-

cept, episodes with the stage embodiment of Belarusian traditional folk rituals (the plays “Na Kupalle” and “Vjaselle”) were introduced. It is noteworthy that the Belarusian State Theater, along with the dramatic company, included a choir, orchestra and ballet, which in addition to participation in the performances had its own concert repertoire. For example, the ballet company under the direction of Konstantin Andreevich Aleksyutovich in 1927 on the stage of the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow presented to the audience stage versions of the Belarusian traditional folk dances “Ljavanicha”, “Kryžačok”, “Taŭkačyki” and “Jurachka”. It should be noted that at the initial stages of K. Aleksyutovich’s work in the Belarusian State Theater (later — the First Belarusian State Theater), the dance folklore in the performances of the theater and solo programs of the ballet company was embodied as close as possible to the authentic original source, but gradually the choreographer began to focus on the artistic development of folklore [2, 98]. In this regard, we should note that the trend of active transition from the minimal stage adaptation of folklore material to its artistic processing in the work of art was clearly expressed in the period of formation of folklorism as a method.

Addressing folklore was typical for the productions of other Belarusian theaters. For instance, based on Belarusian folk songs, riddles, fairy tales and legends, in 1939 on the stage of the Youth Theatre Mirovič staged the play “Cudo ŭnaya dudka”. As an example, we will also give the performances “Večar belaruskich vadevilyaŭ” (The Second Belarusian State Theatre, directed by P. Molchanov, 1936), “Salavey” (The First Belarusian State Theatre, directed by L. Rachlenko and L. Rakhlenko). Litvinov, 1937), “Ščasce paeta” (Janka Kupala National Theatre, directed by I. Sudakov and P. Sushko, 1952), “Raskidanae gnjazdo” (Yakub Kolos Belarusian State Theatre, directed by A. Skibnevsky, 1951), etc.

Speaking about the expression of folklore traditions on the Belarusian stage, one cannot help mentioning the performances-brands “Nescerka”

and “Paŭlinka”. These performances are still present in the theaters where their premieres took place. For example, in 1941 on the stage of the Second Belarusian State Theater (now the Yakub Kolas National Academic Drama Theatre) director N. Loiter based on the authentic traditions of Belarusians created the play “Nescerka”. In this play, folklorism as a method emerged in of Belarusian folk songs arrangements and dances into play (“Ljaceli gusańki ceraz sad”, “Ljavonicha”, etc.), stylization of folklore elements at the scenography level (imitations of a wedding towel on the frontal stage curtain, cross embroidery on the back background curtain, etc.), motifs of the school theater intermedia, stage embodiment of the traditional Belarusian wedding (Vyaselle) and a scene of a harlequin (skomorokh) with a bear. Folklorism as a method closer to the Belarusian authentic traditions was represented in the play “Paulinka” staged in 1944 on the stage of the First Belarusian State Theatre (present name — Janka Kupała National Theatre). The musical design of the play is based on the arrangements of Belarusian folk songs and dances (“Pajshoŭ mily lužkam”, “Aj, u baru, baru”, “Čamu ž mne ne peć”, “Ljavonicha”, etc.). In the scenography the appeal to folklore is expressed even before the beginning of the stage performance — the thin and transparent sheer curtain depicts stylized Belarusian ornament. All the action takes place among the decorations of the interior of the village house, which is decorated with towels and curtains with embroidery. Close to the canons of traditional folk culture are the stage outfits of the acting characters in the play. In addition, in one of the scenes of the play, typical household speeches can be heard. For example, Alzhbetta Krynskaya, despaired and outraged by her husband’s behavior, rants in a typical manner of that time (this heroine’s acting technique is more than a decade old, yet it is still used by contemporary performers).

During the period of formalization of folklorism as an independent phenomenon of landmark

was the staging of the first national ballet “Salavej” (1939, composer M. Kroshner, ballet master A. Yermolayev) on the stage of the National Opera and Ballet Theatre, choreography of which was a mixture of folklore and academic language of dance. As a result of subtle stylization and infusing the traditional form with new content, a language permeated with the intonations of folk dance was created, which combined the ethnic originality and synthesis of the academic dance language [1, 578]. In the following national ballets (“Knyaž-vozera” (1949, composer V. Zolotorev, ballet master K. Muller), “Padstaŭnaya njavesta” (1958, composer G. Wagner, ballet master K. Muller), etc.) the authors repeatedly used and developed artistic techniques found by A. Yermolayev in the ballet “Salavej”. Thus, in the production of “Knyaž-vozera”, folklore traditions are embodied in the plot based on traditional folk legends of Polesie, in the introduction of motives of the Kupala rite, in the stage embodiment of traditional folk dances of the Belarusians, etc. As Y. Churko notes, from the point of view of using folklorism as a method, the director’s work on embodiment of round dance genre is of interest [2]. Mermaids’ scene uniquely combined elements of traditional folk round dance and classical ballet waltz, resulting in the first mass dance “on the toes” on the professional stage with the Belarusian national image. Later, in another version of the ballet, K. Muller has also successfully implemented the stage embodiment of the Belarusian folk dance “Juračka”, synthesizing it with elements of virtuoso toe dancing.

Therefore, it is obvious that at the stage of origin and formation of folklorism there was a gradual transition from the method according to which the folklore material was represented as close as possible to the authentic material, to the method based on its essential artistic treatment, which determined the ways of development of this phenomenon in the direction of academicization of Belarusian folklorism up to the early 1990 s.

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