


The Imagosphere of Myroslav Skoryk's Opera Moses¹

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ABSTRACT

The paper is dedicated to the eminent Ukrainian composer Myroslav Skoryk's opera *Moses*, which has been researched here from the standpoint of musical imagology for the first time. The methodology of the paper is based on the complex imagological concepts of Manfred S. Fischer and Jean-Marc Moura, in which they propose to analyse literary phenomena in national comparative contexts in terms of imagemes, imagothemes, and imagotypes. This triad in its totality makes up the imagosphere, that is, the world of artistic images which are both a cultural representation of a given national identity and its reflection in the artist's work. It has been found that one of the central images of Skoryk's opera and entire output is the national character of his music, which is defined by references to Ukrainian folksongs as well as the nation's operatic and choral tradition. The imagothemes of Skoryk's opera are related to a wide range of 'eternal' philosophical problems, such as good vs evil, faith vs its lack, human vs God, etc. By developing the ideas of Ivan Franko, the author of the opera's literary prototype, the composer presents a whole complex of 'eternal' themes, which he refers to the contemporary Ukrainian context: freedom and faith, liberation from centuries-long slavery and dependence, as well as the theme of the nation's spiritual leaders' responsibilities and their relationship with the people. The main imagotypes of the opera: the God Jehovah, the prophet Moses, a lyrical young couple, and the Poet – correspond to the main qualities of Ukrainian mentality and national character, namely: patriotism, spirituality, piety, 'cordocentrism', and a lyrical-poetic worldview.

Keywords: Ukrainian music, musical imagology, imageme, imagotheme, imagotype

INTRODUCTION

The oeuvre of eminent Ukrainian composer Myroslav Skoryk (1938–2020), comprising symphonic music, large-scale compositions for voices and instruments, stage pieces, numerous instrumental and vocal chamber works, film and theatre music, popular songs and jazz numbers, provides a rich field for contemporary music studies. Along with Valentyn Sylvestrov, Yevhen Stankovych, and Lesia Dychko, Skoryk is one of those composers whose output shaped Ukrainian musical culture in the second half of the twentieth and the early twenty-first centuries. His music has been the subject of a great many publications, including monographs,²

doctoral dissertations,³ collective works,⁴ research papers, and popularising texts. Skoryk's oeuvre has also frequently been taken up in research undertaken by the author of this paper.⁵ His only opera, *Moses*, has been discussed by such scholars as Liubov Kyianovska,⁶ Maryna Cherkashyna-Hubarenko,⁷ Olena Derevianchenko,⁸ Hanna Ovchynnikova,⁹ Viktoriia Drahanchuk,¹⁰

3 I. Pylatiuk, *Skrypkova tvorchist' Myroslava Skoryka v sotsiokul'turnomu konteksti druhoii polovyny XX stolittia* [Myroslav Skoryk's Violin Works in the Social and Cultural Context of the Second Half of the Twentieth century], doctoral dissertation, Lviv, LNMA, 2004.

4 'Myroslav Skoryk: zbitnyk naukovykh prats', prysviacheny 60-richchiu vid dnia narodzhennia M. Skoryka' ['Myroslav Skoryk: A Collection of Scientific Studies Marking the Sixtieth Anniversary of the Birth of M. Skoryk'], *Scientific Herald of Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine*, no. 10, 2000.

5 O. Berehova, 'Zmina svitohliadnykh oriiientyiv v ostannikh tvorakh M. Skoryka' ['The Change of Worldview Orientation in the Last Works of M. Skoryk'], *Scientific Herald of Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine*, no. 10, 2000, pp. 42–45; O. Berehova, 'Komunikatyvna bahatoznachnist' deiakykh instrumental'nykh opusiv Myroslava Skoryka' ['The Communicative Ambiguity of Some Instrumental Works by Myroslav Skoryk'], *Scientific Herald of Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine*, no. 56, 2007, pp. 171–182; O. Berehova, '24 kaprysy Niccolo Paganini v obrazakh suchasnoho maistra' ['24 Caprices by Niccolo Paganini in the Images of a Modern Master'], *Scientific Herald of Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine*, no. 86, 2013, pp. 437–448.

6 L. Kyianovska, '"Moisei" na porozhi novoho stolittia' ['"Moses" on the Threshold of the New Century'], *Muzyka*, no. 6, 2001, pp. 11–12.

7 M. Cherkashyna-Hubarenko, *Opernyi teatr u minlyvomu chasoprostori* [Opera Theatre in the Changing Time and Space], Kharkiv, Akta, 2015.

8 O. Derevianchenko, 'Filosofs'ko-trahediina skladova khudozhnioii kontseptsii opery "Moisei" Myroslava Skoryka' ['The Philosophical and Tragic Component of the Artistic Concept of the Opera "Moses" by Myroslav Skoryk'], *Scientific Herald of Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine*, no. 133, 2022, pp. 160–176, <https://doi.org/10.31318/2522-4190.2022.133.257336> (accessed 22 September 2022).

9 O. Derevianchenko, H. Ovchynnikova, 'Opera "Moisei" M. Skoryka v konteksti natsional'nykh ta zakhidnoievropeiskykh tradytsii' ['The Opera "Moses" by M. Skoryk in the Context of National and Western European Traditions'], *Muzychne mystetstvo*, no. 12, 2012, pp. 164–174.

10 V. Drahanchuk, 'Arkhetyp Moiseia u muzychnomu dyskursi: natsional'ne v refleksiakh universalizmu Ivana Franka' ['The Archetype of Moses in Musical Discourse: The National Element

2 K. Ivakhova, *Fortepianna tvorchist' Myroslava Skoryka*, [Myroslav Skoryk's Piano Works], Khmel'nytskyi, PP 'Medobory-2006', 2013, p. 201.

and Nataliia Bielik-Zolotarova,¹¹ among others. To date, however, Skoryk's music has not been the subject of any imagological studies, that is, texts in which 'the functions of images and their systems' would be analysed 'in various types of relations ("self" vs 'the other', "ours" vs "alien")'.¹²

The emergence of the imagological approach in Western literary studies in the latter half of the twentieth century (M. Fischer,¹³ D.-H. Pageaux,¹⁴ H. Dyserinck,¹⁵ H. Hrabovych,¹⁶ J.-M. Moura,¹⁷ J. Leerssen,¹⁸ and M. Świdarska¹⁹), literary and cultural research undertaken

by Dmytro Nalyvaiko²⁰ and Ihor Yudkin-Ripun²¹, as well as studies on the social and cultural contexts of imagotypes,²² have all contributed to the development of Ukrainian imagology in art studies (A. Tymofeienko,²³ M. Harbuziuk,²⁴ O. Berehova,²⁵ and Van Yui²⁶). The concept of musical imagology,²⁷ conceived as 'a branch of musicology and musical culture studies dealing with the study of images of the Self and the Other with a view to defining their identity, originality, and characteristic qualities, including common features and differences',²⁸ has been applied to the study of musical works since the last quarter of the twentieth century. Imagological analyses of music have proved to benefit from the work

in Ivan Franko's Universalist Thought'], *Naukovi zapysky Ternopil'skoho pedahohichnoho universytetu imeni Volodymyra Hnatiuka. Mystetstvoznavstvo*, no. 2, 2016, pp. 5–13.

11 N. Bielik-Zolotarova, 'Diia ta protydiia v khorovii operi M. Skoryka "Moisei"' ['Action and Counteraction in M. Skoryk's Choral Opera "Moses"]], *Tavriiski studii. Mystetstvoznavstvo*, no. 4, 2013, http://nbuv.gov.ua/UJRN/tsm_2013_4_12 (accessed 22 September 2022).

12 Y. Kovaliv (ed.), *Imaholohiia: Literaturoznavcha entsyklopediia: u 2 t. [Imagology: Literary Encyclopaedia in Two Volumes]*, Kyiv, VTs 'Akademiia', 2007, vol. 1: A–L, p. 412.

13 M. Fischer, 'Komparatistische Imagologie. Für eine interdisziplinäre Erforschung national-imagotyper Systeme', *Zeitschrift für Sozialpsychologie*, vol. 10, issue 1, 1979, pp. 30–44.

14 D.-H. Pageaux, 'Une perspective d'études en littérature comparée: l'imagerie culturelle', *Synthesi*, no. 8, 1981, pp. 169–185.

15 H. Dyserinck, 'Komparatistische Imagologie. Zur politischen Tragweite einer europäischen Wissenschaft von der Literatur', *Europa und das nationale Selbstverständnis: Imagologische Probleme in Literatur, Kunst und Kultur des 19 und 20. Jahrhunderts*, Symposium in Luxembourg, September 1984.

16 H. Hrabovych, 'Yevreiska tema v ukraïinskii literature 19 ta na pochatku 20 st.' ['The Jewish Theme in Ukrainian Literature of the 19th and Early 20th Centuries'], in H. Hrabovych, *Do istorii ukraïinskoii literatury: Doslidzhennia, esei, polemika [Contributions to the History of Ukrainian Literature: Research, Essays, Polemics]*, Kyiv, Osnovy, 1997, pp. 238–258.

17 J.-M. Moura, 'L'imagologie littéraire: tendances actuelles', in J. Bessiere, D.-H. Pageaux (eds), *Perspectives comparatistes*, Paris, Rodopi, 1999, pp. 181–191.

18 J. Leerssen, 'Imagology. History and Method', in M. Beller and J. Leerssen (eds), *Imagology. The Cultural Construction and Literary Representation of National Characters. A Critical Survey*, *Studia Imagologica*, vol. 13, H. Dyserinck and J. Leerssen (series eds), Amsterdam and New York, Rodopi, 2007, pp. 17–32.

19 M. Świdarska, 'Comparativist Imagology and the Phenomenon of Strangeness', *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*, vol. 15, issue 7, 2013, <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2387&context=clcweb/> (accessed 22 September 2022).

20 D. Nalyvaiko, 'Literaturna imagologiia: predmet i stratehii' ['Literary Imagology: Subject and Strategies'], *Teoriia literatury i komparatyvistyka*, Kyiv, Vydavnychiy dim 'Kyievo-Mohylianska akademiia', 2006, pp. 91–103.

21 I. Yudkin-Ripun, 'Imagologiia yak kompleksnyi napriam doslidzhennia kul'tur' ['Imagology as a Comprehensive Direction of Cultural Research'], *Kul'turolohichna dumka*, no. 1, 2009, pp. 42–48.

22 Studies by, among others, Z. Aliieva, W. Budnyi, M. Ilnytskyi, T. Hundorova, I. Zabiaka, N. Kior, L. Oliander, I. Pupurs, T. Sverbilova, and V. Jakymovych.

23 A. Tymofeienko, 'Imagolohichniy metod doslidzhennia kul'turnykh tekstiv (na prykladi kinomaterialiv)' ['The Imagological Method of Researching Cultural Texts (Based on Film Materials)'], *Ukraiinska kultura: mynule, suchasne, shliakhy rozvytku*, no. 29, 2018, pp. 135–139.

24 M. Harbuziuk, 'Obraz Ukraiiny u pols'komu teatri 19 st.: imagolohichniy aspekt' ['The Image of Ukraine in the Polish Theatre of the 19th Cent.: The Imagological Aspect'], postdoctoral dissertation, Kyiv, M. Rylskyi Institute of Art Research, Folklore and Ethnology, 2019.

25 O. Berehova, *Obraz Inshoho v muzychnomu universumi [The Image of the Other in the Musical Universe]*, Kyiv, Institute for Cultural Research of the National Academy of Arts of Ukraine, 2020, https://icr.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Book_2020_Beregova.pdf (accessed 23 September 2022).

26 V. Yui, 'Imagolohichniy dyskurs vtilennia obrazu Turandot u svitovii muzychnii kul'turi' ['Imagological discourse of the Embodiment of the Image of Turandot in the World's Musical Culture'], doctoral dissertation, Lviv, Lysenko Lviv National Music Academy, 2021, <https://lnma.edu.ua/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/%D0%94%D0%B8%D1%81%D0%B5%D1%80%D1%82%D0%B0%D1%86%D1%96%D1%8F-%D0%92%D0%90%D0%9D-%D0%AE%D0%99.pdf> (accessed 24 September 2022).

27 The term 'imagosphere', used in the title of my paper, is defined here, in accordance with imagological theory, as the world of artistic images that are both a cultural representation of national identity and its reflection in the artist's oeuvre.

28 Berehova, *Obraz Inshoho v muzychnomu universumi*, p. 26.

of literary scholars, in particular – from the complex Fischer–Moura methodology, which proposes to discuss literary phenomena as multi-level systems of images, imagothemes, and imagotypes. According to Jean-Marc Moura, the role of an image, that is, a kind of cultural emblem of the given country, can be fulfilled by objects and phenomena belonging to the given nation's traditional culture, national anthems and songs, key places, architectural monuments, etc.²⁹ Imagothemes are themes, motifs, and images most commonly present in the culture of the given country, which, as Moura claims, draw on historical, cultural, and social myths.³⁰ By analysing imagothemes one may define a set of themes which regularly evoke associations with the image of a given country, nation, or its culture. The concept of imagotype, proposed by Manfred S. Fischer,³¹ concerns the most frequently used and most uniform, basic units of the national image, directly related to ethnic and national stereotypes.

Of special importance to imagological studies are the so-called 'eternal' images or motifs in national discourse as well as ethno-mental and cultural archetypes, which make it possible to form generalisations concerning the system of values and mental world image of a given nation in a specific historical period. They facilitate the perception of 'the Other' by representatives of other cultures, as well as adjusting and correcting the ways in which participants of cultural dialogue perceive one another.

The present paper aims to analyse the imagosphere of Myroslav Skoryk's music on the example of his opera *Moses*, based on Ivan Franko's eponymous philosophical poem.

THE IMAGE OF MOSES IN THE WORKS OF IVAN FRANKO AND MYROSLAV SKORYK

Skoryk's opera *Moses* (2001) to a libretto by Borys Stelmakh and the composer himself was Ukraine's first opera of the new millennium. It received the blessing and financial support of Pope John Paul II. These circumstances would have sufficed for this work to earn a place in contemporary Ukrainian operatic history from the very moment of its world premiere. First performed on 23 June 2001 at the Solomiya Krushchynska Lviv

State Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet, it was later presented by Lviv Opera in several Ukrainian cities, such as Dnipro, Kharkiv, Simferopol, and Sevastopol, as well as in Poland in Warsaw and Bydgoszcz. For the 150th birth anniversary of eminent Ukrainian poet, writer, literary scholar, and social activist Ivan Franko, Skoryk's opera was also staged in 2006 in Kyiv's Taras Shevchenko National Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre of Ukraine.

The libretto is based on a Biblical theme corresponding to problems of modernity. Its literary model was Franko's greatest work, the poem *Moses* (1905), which sums up his reflections on the Bible, Jewish history, and the Ukrainian national idea. The protagonist is a real figure, whose life and activity are described in detail in the Old Testament.³² According to Hrabovych, references to existing literary models (to the Bible in particular) and the tendency to 'remake' and transform well-known literary images are characteristic qualities of Franko's poetry.³³

The main dramaturgical conflict concerns the clash of the materialistic and idealistic worldviews embodied in the figures of Azazel and Moses, as well as the relation between the nation's spiritual leader and his materialistically minded people, between the leader's faith and his doubts concerning the rightness of his chosen path. Franko projects the tragic dimension of the Biblical situation onto dramatic events from Ukrainian history, which stood in the way to establishing a Ukrainian statehood. Literary scholars, especially Dmytro Pavlychko,³⁴ have thus explored parallels between the person of Moses and Franko himself as a poet for whom the independence of the Ukrainian nation, oppressed by neighbouring states and deprived for centuries of its own statehood, was the leitmotif of his art. Like his Biblical prototype, Franko died humiliated by his own nation on the eve of the proclamation of the Ukrainian People's Republic (UPR).

³² After leading the Jews out of slavery in Egypt under Pharaoh Ramses II, Moses spent forty years in the desert before reaching the Promised Land. Skoryk's opera refers to that fragment of the Old Testament in which Moses is tormented by doubt concerning the validity of his chosen path.

³³ H. Hrabovych, 'Franko i prorostvo' [Franko and Prophecy], *Teksty i masky*, Kyiv, Krytyka, 2005, pp. 140–154.

³⁴ D. Pavlychko, 'Ivan Franko – budivnychy ukrains'koi derzhavnosti' [Ivan Franko as the Founder of Ukrainian Statehood], in D. Pavlychko (ed.), *Khrestomatiia politolohichnykh statei Ivana Franka*, Kyiv, Publishing House 'Kyievo-Mohylianska Akademiia', 2006, pp. 23–35, https://shron1.chtyvo.org.ua/Pavlychko/Ivan_Franko_budivnychy_ukrainskoi_derzhavnosti.pdf (accessed 24 September 2022).

²⁹ Moura, 'L'imagologie littéraire: tendances actuelles', pp. 181–191.

³⁰ Moura, 'L'imagologie littéraire...'.

³¹ Fischer, 'Komparatistische Imagologie...', pp. 30–44.

Several key elements may be distinguished in Franko's interpretation of the image of Moses. The first of these is his unquestionable alienation and separateness in relation to the community whose leadership was entrusted to him. In other words, the prophet is lonely in the mental, existential, moral, generational, social, and political sense. The second aspect is 'the sense of personal responsibility for actions of historical significance. Franko undertakes to present the tragic dimension of the necessity of making choices and the clash of personal will with a sense of social and historical necessity, which a person aware of the historical importance of his actions must needs accept.'³⁵ Moses is thus aware of the unique character of his mission, but also of not being understood by his people, not being a prophet in his own country. What is more, Azazel accuses him of undertaking arbitrary actions in the name of Jehovah. This profoundly affects his psyche and eventually makes him doubt God's very existence. 'Franko's image of Moses tormented by doubt is extremely powerful in dramaturgical and narrative terms, as well as exceptionally convincing. It draws on the poet's own earlier thoughts on this subject [...].'³⁶ Though his faith is put to the test, his boundless love for the nation remains unshakeable. As Moses says in one of his key statements, his love may even be stronger than God's since it is unconditional and concerns both the nation's virtues and its weaknesses. Besides, it is directed to one nation only, whereas God as the Father of humankind has obligations towards his other children as well. It may be the great power of Moses' love that makes the crowd listen to his prophecies. Hrabovych claims that 'the key point of the poem is that even when the society attempts to outlaw the prophet and treat him like a criminal, it is unable to ignore his message, provided that his prophecy is really inspired by God and concerns the community's vital interests.'³⁷

The poet's complex interpretation of the image of the Biblical prophet, its close affinities to the ethos of the oppressed nation, references to history, and an intertextual rooting of Biblical events in a contemporary context – all this inspired Myroslav Skoryk to create a multi-dimensional, dramaturgically sophisticated opera in two acts and five scenes, with a prologue and

epilogue. Apart from religious themes, the work takes up several other invariably topical issues such as the relation between the nation and its leader, the nation's struggle for independence, and ethnic problems. Like the author of the literary prototype, the composer did not shun references to the present. Contemporary Ukraine, Skoryk claimed, is similar to the Biblical characters '[...] in that [our country] is also looking for its own route across the stormy sea of internal and external problems. At times it moves forward, at others – it is tossed in various directions. Situations and figures recur like Moses' chimeras.'³⁸ In this context one could quote Yuri Lotman's thesis that as a system of signs every work of art interacts with other systems of signs (and with 'the text of life' in particular), and 'thus begins to function as a generator of new messages and texts'.³⁹

LITERARY AND MUSICAL IMAGEMES, IMAGOTHEMES, AND IMAGOTYPES IN THE OPERA MOSES

Imagemes

Drawing on the Scriptures and their interpretation by Franko, Skoryk takes up one of the 'eternal' literary imagemes of all time and all nations, namely, the Biblical parable. The imageme of Israel as the Promised Land and as the generalised image of the fatherland plays a crucial role in the opera, recurring as a leitmotif which, in the work's complex structure, becomes the leading theme of the entire composition. It should be explained that Skoryk's *Moses* comprises six leitmotifs present in the first three scenes. Together they make up a wide array of musical images, symbols, and metaphors. The leitmotif of Israel, associated with the part of Moses, recurs at key moments in the opera, for instance when the prophet presents the moral derived from the parable of the trees (No. 8, sect. 9).⁴⁰

³⁸ T. Polishchuk, 'Napysaty "Moiseia" Myroslavu Skoryku pidkazav bat'ko' ['Myroslav Skoryk was Prompted by His Father to write "Moses"'], *Den*, no. 115, 4 July 2001.

³⁹ Y. Lotman, 'Mozg – tekst – kultura – isskusstvennyi intellekt' ['Brain – Text – Culture – Artificial Intelligence'], *Izbrannyye statii v 3-kh tomakh. T. 1: Statii po semiotike i tipologii kul'tury*, Tallinn, Aleksandra, 1992, pp. 25–33, at p. 27.

⁴⁰ Moses tells his people a fable about trees that elected their king. Stately and splendid trees rejected the crown, which was eventually accepted by the shabby and inconspicuous blackthorn. Moses compares this bush to the people of Israel, who fail to understand their high and noble mission.

³⁵ T. Hundorova, *Intelihentsiia i narod v povistiakh I. Franka 80-kh rokiv* [*The Intelligentsia and the People in I. Franko's Novels of the 1880s*], Kyiv, Naukova dumka, 1985, p. 99.

³⁶ Hrabovych, 'Franko i prorotstvo', p. 150.

³⁷ Hrabovych, p. 151.

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ХОР-1

S. Там во - йов - ни - ки

A. Там во - йов - ни - ки

T. Там во - йов - ни - ки

B. Там во - йов - ни - ки

ХОР-2

S. Там за го - ра - ми си - ні - є Йор - дан,

A. Там за го - ра - ми си - ні - є Йор - дан,

T. Там за го - ра - ми си - ні - є Йор - дан,

B. Там за го - ра - ми си - ні - є Йор - дан,

P-no

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ХОР-1

S. лю - ті! Нам і тут не по -

A. лю - ті! Нам і тут не по -

T. лю - ті! Нам і тут не по -

B. лю - ті! Нам і тут не по -

ХОР-2

S. там ді - бро - ви й зе - ле - на му - ра - ва,

A. там ді - бро - ви й зе - ле - на му - ра - ва,

T. там ді - бро - ви й зе - ле - на му - ра - ва,

B. там ді - бро - ви й зе - ле - на му - ра - ва,

P-no

2BHS Lviv-Ukraine

Musical example 1 (page 1).

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S. га - но! За - мов - чіть! За - мов - чіть!

A. га - но! За - мов - чіть! За - мов - чіть!

Хор-1

T. га - но! За - мов - чіть! За - мов - чіть!

B. га - но! За - мов - чіть! За - мов - чіть!

S. нас там жеде, нас там жеде,

A. нас там жеде, нас там жеде,

Хор-2

T. нас там жеде, нас там жеде,

B. нас там жеде, нас там жеде,

P-no

124

S. За - мов чи, ти, по - ма - но!

A. За - мов чи, ти, по - ма - но!

Хор-1

T. За - мов чи, ти, по - ма - но!

B. За - мов чи, ти, по - ма - но!

S. нас там жеде і ба - гат - ство і сла - ва!

A. нас там жеде і ба - гат - ство і сла - ва!

Хор-2

T. нас там жеде і ба - гат - ство і сла - ва!

B. нас там жеде і ба - гат - ство і сла - ва!

P-no

2BHS Lviv-Ukraine

Musical example 1 (page 2).

The leitmotif of Israel subsequently recurs in the full tripartite exposition of Moses' arioso (No. 12, sect. 17), in which the protagonist abandons his nation, lamenting its arrogance and obstinacy. For the last time we hear the Israel theme in Scene Four (first in the Moses part, later in the orchestra) as Moses struggles to drive away Yokhaveda (Jochebed), the evil tempter-spirit of the desert (No. 10, end of sect. 10).

The national character of Skoryk's musical themes finds its expression in one of the opera's main musical imagemes – that of the Ukrainian melodic type. The typically Ukrainian melodiousness, derived from lyrical romances and various kinds of folk music, gains prominence in many solemn passages of the opera, in particular – in Moses' aria with the parable of the trees (No. 7) and in the chorus 'It Was Moses in His Prayer' (No. 20, sect. 15). The tradition of Ukrainian folk duet is evoked by the composer in the duet of two young Jews, Liya and Yegoshua (Joshua) (No. 1).

Skoryk also draws on the tradition of operatic arias, choral scenes, and Ukrainian folksong arrangements as initiated by the classic of Ukrainian art music, Mykola Lysenko (Nos 4, 7, 20). On the instrumental level one may find another musical image related to Oriental melodic patterns (No. 1), particularly in the extensive ballet scene (dance in honour of Baal, Nos 13–16).

Imagothemes

The central dramaturgical conflict of this opera is the test to which the protagonist's faith is put. The multi-aspectual nature of this conflict was represented through binary opposites, each of which can function as one of the most powerful imagothemes present in (particularly Ukrainian) culture: the spiritual leader vs the nation; freedom vs slavery; good vs evil; human vs God; faith vs its lack; the material vs the spiritual, etc.

The first of these imagothemes in particular, 'the spiritual leader vs the nation', represents not only the multidimensional personality of the prophet Moses, but also the situation of conflict between his followers and opponents. This conflict is reflected on the musical and dramaturgical level, where Moses and his adherents stand out in melodic-harmonic terms (as in chorus No. 4 'Blue Jordan Beyond Yon Mountains') and their appearances are accompanied by modulations to remote keys. Musical portraits of Moses' opponents, on the other hand, lack characteristic motifs. The phrases sung by Aviron (Abiram) and Datan and their orchestral settings are built on chords based on tritones. Their melodic lines are

generally awkward, which, in combination with restless triplet rhythmic patterns, bestows a tense and ominous character on the rebels' parts. The chorus only repeats some phrases from Aviron and Datan's parts or recites the text on a single note.

The imagotheme of 'freedom vs slavery' manifests itself most prominently in an analysis of the opera's system of leitmotifs. Of the six leading themes mentioned above, two come in the prologue. These are the slavery theme (which Kyianovska refers to as 'the motif of those bound in chains'⁴¹) and the motif of freedom. In the former, the music illustrates a toilsome, painstaking pushing forward and powerless descent (an ascending chord progression in the strings, on the tonal base of G minor).

The leitmotif of freedom, conversely, is free, vast, and melodious, exhibiting hymnal qualities. Performed by the Poet and the choir with orchestral accompaniment (sect. 13 and 14) it symbolises the belief that Israel will regain its freedom.

The imagotheme of 'good vs evil' is represented through Moses' contacts with the mystical spirits of the desert, embodiments of evil, coupled with a motif that can prominently be heard in Scene Three (at the beginning of No. 8). This bipartite theme consists of a tremolo in the strings based on radically unstable chord combinations and its melodic development in the part of the muted trumpet.

It is against the backdrop of this splendid leitmotif, akin to an adder's hiss, that Azazel the desert spirit accuses Moses of following his boundless pride. By leading his people out to wander in the desert, he claims, the prophet abandoned the right path. The spirits' leitmotif recurs later towards the end of No. 19.

The imagotheme of evil is related to that of fear, built out of a harmonic progression of four descending chromatic chords. The motif of fear first makes its appearance in No. 4, in the part of the chorus of Moses' followers (choir 2) engaging in a dispute with the rebels (choir 1), who reject the idea of heading for the Promised Land. Moses' supporters remind the latter that they provoke Jehovah's anger (sect. 11). Notably, the musical motifs of slavery and fear undergo various modifications and may sometimes be combined in different ways.

Evil as an imagological category is richly and variously represented in Skoryk's opera. For instance, the parts of Azazel and the voices of the desert, featuring triads with augmented fifths, restless triplet rhythms, and 'slithery' chromaticisms, are akin to the parts sung by Moses'

⁴¹ Kyianovska, "Moisei" na porozi novoho stolittia', pp. 11–12.

28 **3**

Лія *p* Мій ко - ха - ний ти, мій! Мій ко - ха - ний ти,

Єгошуа *p* Ти ко - ха - на мо - я! Ти ко - ха - на мо - я!

Р-но *mf*

30

Лія мій! Ти мій ко - ха - ний!

Єгошуа Зо - ре, мо - я, зо - ре!

Р-но

32

Лія Ти по - чу - сь мій го - лос! Лич - ко мо -

Єгошуа Дай по - чу - ти твій го - лос! Дай зо - ба - чи - ти лич - ко тво -

Р-но

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Musical example 2 (page 1).

34

34

Лія

є, мо-є врод-ли-вс...

Сгошує

є, твоє врод-ли-вс...

P-no

mf

div

Вбігають діти

accel. ДІТИ

37

P-no

Musical example 2 (page 2).

3

ПРОЛОГ

Moderato

1

Piano

f

sf

mf

5

P-no

sf

p

Musical example 3.

opponents. Both are equally unattractive and hostile. These extraordinary, gloomy images may undergo transformations depending on the situation and context. This happens, for instance, in the part of Yokhaveda, claiming to be the soul of Moses' mother, who attempts to persuade the prophet that his efforts are futile. Unlike the parts of other antagonists, hers is quite elaborate, with some lyrical qualities. Within its closed tripartite formal structure (No. 21), it contains third-and-sixth progressions, interplays of single-third scales, a barcarolle-like accompaniment, as well as wonderfully orchestrated strings and harp. Endowing images of evil with external beauty and attractiveness has its counterpart in the music of Alfred Schnittke.⁴²

⁴² In this context, one may refer to the role of the tango in Schnittke's works: his Concerto for Viola and Orchestra and the cantata *Historia von D. Johann Fausten*. In the course of its development, this element betrays its negative essence and destructive power.

Evil is represented in Skoryk's operas by genres other than those attributed to the good side. It is characterised by dance-like and march-like qualities. March rhythms first emerge in the orchestra when Aviron mocks Moses' tale and suggests that the prophet should volunteer as a babies' nanny (No. 9, sect. 11). The dance quality comes to the fore after Moses has abandoned his people (Nos. 13-16). The extensive ballet scene depicting the pagan cult of the Golden Calf and Baal as the god of wealth and power is dominated by syncopated rhythms and strangely ragged melodic contours. The dance episode (No. 14) features an interesting synthesis of composition techniques: one line develops into two- and subsequently three-part polyphony, combined with jazz-derived elements of thematic work such as syncopation, divergence of rhythmic and metrical accents, playing 'around' the same motif, etc. No. 15 is a slow dance delighting the ear with beautiful orchestral ideas, such as the silvery streams of harp notes, virtuoso percussion and brass solos, as well as 'exotic' multi-note chords. Elements



The musical score is for a vocal ensemble and piano. The vocal parts are labeled: Поет (Poet), S. (Soprano), A. (Alto), XOP (Chorus), T. (Tenor), and B. (Bass). The piano part is labeled P-no. The score is divided into two systems. The first system starts at measure 146. The second system starts at measure 13, marked 'rit.' (ritardando). The lyrics 'Та при - йде' are written under the vocal lines. The piano part features a complex, multi-note chordal texture.

Musical example 4 (page 1).

148 **a tempo**

Поет

час, і ти вог - нис - тим ви - дом за -

S. *p* Час, і ти вог - нис - тим ви - дом за -

A. Час, і ти вог - нис - тим ви - дом за -

ХОР

T. Час, і ти вог - нис - тим ви - дом за -

B. Час, і ти вог - нис - тим ви - дом за -

a tempo

P-но

150

Поет

ся - еш у на - ро - дів воць - них ко - лі, трус - неш Кав -

S. ся - еш у на - ро - дів воць - них ко - лі, трус - неш Кав -

A. ся - еш у на - ро - дів воць - них ко - лі, трус - неш Кав -

ХОР

T. ся - еш у на - ро - дів воць - них ко - лі, трус - неш Кав -

B. ся - еш у на - ро - дів воць - них ко - лі, трус - неш Кав -

P-но

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Musical example 4 (page 2).

24

152

Поет

каз, впе - ре - жеш - ся Бе - ски - дом, по -

S.

каз, впе - ре - жеш - ся Бе - ски - дом, по -

A.

ХОР

T.

каз, впе - ре - жеш - ся Бе - ски - дом, по -

B.

каз, впе - ре - жеш - ся Бе - ски - дом, по -

P-но

3 3 3 3

cresc.

3 3 3 3

154

Поет

ко - тиш Чор - ним мо - рем го - мин во - лі, і

S.

ко - тиш Чор - ним мо - рем го - мин во - лі,

A.

ХОР

T.

ко - тиш Чор - ним мо - рем го - мин во - лі,

B.

ко - тиш Чор - ним мо - рем го - мин во - лі,

P-но

3 3 3 3

3 3 3 3

cresc.

f

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Musical example 4 (page 3).

№ 8
Мойсей.

8 Rubato

329

Мойсей

p

Ці - нам каз - ка, а ось і ви - клад до

8 Rubato

p

Р-но

Musical example 5 (page 1).

72

332

Мойсей

не - і: Де - ре - ва — не на - ро - ди - зм -

p

simile

Р-но

335

Мойсей

лі, а ко - роль у їх ко - лі — Бо жий

p

Р-но

338

Мойсей

ви - бра - нець, син і слу - га Го - спо - да во - лі, і як

p

cresc.

Р-но

341

Мойсей

те - рен по се - ред де - рев, не - по - каз - ний на

mp

mp

Р-но

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Musical example 5 (page 2).

344 *stacc.*

Мойсей
про - ду, — так і ви - бра - ний Бо - гом на - род між на - ро - да - ми

Р-но

347 *mf*

Мойсей
вбо - гий. Та по - клав Йо - му в ду - шу свій скарб сер - це -

Р-но

350 *stacc.*

Мойсей
ві - дець Є - го - ва, щоб він був мов, сві - ти - ло у

Р-но

353

Мойсей
тьмі, мов скарб - ник Йо - го сло - ва. І по -

Р-но



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Musical example 5 (page 3).

11

126

meno mosso ХОР-2

P-no

f

p

128

S. Ви за - бу - ли про Бо - жий на - каз!

A. Ви за - бу - ли про Бо - жий на - каз!

ХОР-2

T. Ви за - бу - ли про Бо - жий на - каз!

B. Ви за - бу - ли про Бо - жий на - каз!

P-no

130

S. Вас спо - пе - лить гнів Є - го - - - ви!

A. Вас спо - пе - лить гнів Є - го - - - ви!

ХОР-2

T. Вас спо - пе - лить гнів Є - го - - - ви!

B. Вас спо - пе - лить гнів Є - го - - - ви!

P-no

f

f

f

f

dim.

АВІРОН

132

P-но *dim.*

135

Авірон *mf*

Я за - ка - зу - ю вам бо - го хуль - ні про -

P-но *p*

137

Авірон

мо - ви! І пос - лу - хай - те за - раз на - пу у - хва - лу. Да -

P-но

of dance (punctuated rhythms in particular) can also be found in the musical characterisation of the evil desert spirits (No. 23, sect. 19).

Imagotypes

The opera's main imagotype is that of the nation's spiritual leader. Moses' part, most important in this composition, is extremely complex, with a wealth of melodic and harmonic solutions. It contains extensive recitatives, closed numbers such as a tripartite arioso on a diatonic base, daring modulations with unexpected enharmonic transformations, etc. Moses also has his own leitmotif, which can be referred to the motif of the prophecy (an augmented second and a triad in the trumpet against the background of timpani).

This leitmotif opens the second scene and recurs twice more as a reminiscence in Nos 9 and 11, in which Moses prophesies the death of his adversaries, Aviron and Datan. The same leitmotif recurs towards the end of the opera (in No. 27, sect. 13), where Moses' prophecies finally come true. Episodes that represent the protagonist's suffering and tormented soul are linked to melodic structures featuring 'dark' flat keys (such as B-flat minor and E-flat minor in No. 17), whereas in the brighter moments when he is praying to God the tonal palette changes (for instance, to C-sharp minor, which dominates in No. 19).

Faith and the love of freedom are one of *Moses'* main imagotypes. The opera's plot leaves out the events that preceded Moses' liberating the Jewish nation from slavery in Egypt on orders that he received from Jehovah in a revelation. The image of God is nevertheless constantly present in the composition, and His name is uttered with awe not only by the prophet and his followers, but also by his adversaries, and even by the evil spirits. The moment when Jehovah's voice is heard⁴³ (in No. 24) becomes the culmination not just of the scene of Moses in the desert, but of the entire opera. The voice tells Moses that he will be punished by Heaven for doubting the will of God.

Jehovah's part, like that of the protagonist, is entrusted to a bass voice. It starts in that voice's top register and gradually descends until it reaches the lowest note. Notably, this concept of intonation already appears earlier in what we call the leitmotif of Israel, when Moses prophesies to his people that they would be punished by God (No. 8, sect. 9). The similarity of rhythm, intonation, and text in these two episodes is of symbolic significance.

Moses, who guides his people in earthly life in accordance with God's will, here seems to sense his own tragic fate.

From the time of Stepan Hulak-Artemovsky, it has been a tradition in Ukrainian opera to attribute to the romantic operatic couple not only mutual affection, but also a great patriotic love of the fatherland.⁴⁴ In Skoryk's work, this imagotype is represented by young Jews, Liya and Yegoshua. The lyrical layer of the opera was associated by the composer quite naturally with the Romantic style. The couple's amorous duet is thus highly melodious and accompanied characteristically in the style of a barcarolle (No. 1, cf. musical example No. 2). It comes in a lyrical fragment of the prologue, where faith in the spiritual strength of the Jewish nation is expressed (sect. 5–9). These two lyrical images are, at the same time, the highest manifestations of patriotism in the entire opera, since both Franko and Skoryk associate the future of the nation with this young couple. Profoundly moved by Moses' death, Liya and Yegoshua appeal to the people to sentence Aviron and Datan to death and continue their journey along the route indicated by the prophet.

The person of the Poet stands out in the opera, as separate from the main dramaturgical conflicts and lines of development. It appears in the prologue and the epilogue. The composer entrusted this character with one of the work's loftiest and most optimistic themes: the recurring motif of freedom (cf. musical example No. 4). In Skoryk's opera the Poet's function is much more complex than in other works where such a figure appears as an element binding the individual sections of the composition and organising its poetic-philosophical framework. In Skoryk's *Moses*, the Poet is an intertextual element introducing both the image of Franko as the author of the opera's prototype and of the composer himself. At the same time, the Poet serves as a kind of 'transmission belt' between the Biblical events and the modern society with its anxieties. In the Lviv Opera production of *Moses*, this special role and meaning assigned to the Poet was also highlighted on the visual level. As a reviewer observed, 'his modern European suit stands out from the archaic costumes of the choir members, pointing at the time when Franko wrote his poem and emphasising the topicality of the events presented on the stage.'⁴⁵

⁴³ A microphone was used to amplify and thus enhance the extraordinary mystical effect.

⁴⁴ In this context one could mention Andriy and Oksana, the lyrical protagonists of Semen Hulak-Artemovsky's *Zaporozhets za Dunayem*.

⁴⁵ Y. Kuryshv, "Moisei" M. Skoryka: vira ta znevira' ["Moses" by M. Skoryk: Faith and Despair"], *Muzyka*, no. 1–2, 2002, p.14.

Картина друга

№ 6 Мойсей.

Moderato

178

МОЙСЕЙ

mf

Ви у - хва -

Moderato

Piano

f

p

182

МОЙСЕЙ

ли - ли по - чать на - ло - жить на я - зик мій, на ду - шу, — тож те пер вам у

P-но

p

187

МОЙСЕЙ

- сім впе - ре - кір го - во - ри - ти я му - шу! Ви спри - сяг -

P-но

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Musical example 7 (page 1).

190

Мойсей

ли - ся свій слух за - ти кать на про - мо - ви, не мо - і не мо - і,

Р-по

194

Мойсей

а са мо - го Є - го - ви!

Р-по

198

Мойсей

Вн у - ва - жа - є - те спо - кій най - бла - жен - ні - шим

Р-по

202

Мойсей

ста - ном, та чи ра - див - ся ум ваш з ва шим Бо - гом і Па - ном?

Р-по

2BHS Lviv-Ukraine

Musical example 7 (page 2).

№ 24
Голос Єгови.

21 Andante

593

P-no

p *p* *ff*

8^{va}

22

597

Голос Єгови (Ossia)

Голос Єгови *f*

За сум - нів твій, що - до во - лі мо -

S.

Голос Єгови *f*

За сум - нів твій, що - до во - лі мо -

A.

Голос Єгови *f*

За сум - нів твій, що - до во - лі мо -

ХОР

T.

Голос Єгови *f*

За сум - нів твій, що - до во - лі мо -

B.

f

P-no

mf

(8) 8^{va}

2BHSq Lviv-Ukraine

Musical example 8 (page 1).

206

601

Голос
Стовпи
(Ossia)

е - ї ка - ро - ю бу - де те, що, по - ба - чив ши віт - чи -

S

A.

ХОР

T.

B.

P-no

(8)



605

Голос
Стовпи
(Ossia)

ну, — сам не всту пиш до не - ї. Тут і кос - ті зо - тлі - ють тво -

S

A.

ХОР

T.

B.

P-no

(8)

dim.

dim.

dim.

dim.



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Musical example 8 (page 2).

CONCLUSION

Skoryk's *Moses* is not only a major point in the cultural and artistic life of Ukraine. It also marks Ukrainian music theatre's spectacular entry into the twenty-first century, and symbolically opens a new era in the history of Ukrainian music. Though the issues presented in this stage work are universal, the composer makes it clear in many places that his opera is a specifically Ukrainian interpretation of the Biblical theme. Skoryk's music, distinctly cultivating the national traditions, has brought him worldwide fame and has become a 'flagship product' of contemporary Ukrainian musical culture. It is music that constitutes a crucial image not only of this opera, but of the composer's entire output. This musical image is characterised by references to Ukrainian folksongs as well as the national operatic and choral tradition. One may well claim that, thanks to its original and easily recognisable musical language addressed to both professionals and the mass audience, Skoryk's music has become an image of contemporary Ukrainian culture.

The main imagotypes of Skoryk's opera: Moses, Jehovah, love of the fatherland, the Poet – correspond to the key qualities of Ukrainian mentality and national character, such as high spirituality, piety and the fear of God, patriotism, and cordocentric (heart-oriented) philosophy, as well as a lyrical, poetic attitude to the world.

Skoryk's choice of theme, complex symbolism, and dramatic relations between the persons of his opera, his search for a uniquely personal path leading to truth, his reflections on universal philosophical problems – all reflect the composer's intention to place the Biblical events and parables in a present-day context and to seek modern answers for such questions asked in the Scripture as 'who are we?', 'where do we come from?', and 'where are we heading?' By considering 'eternal' philosophical problems of good and evil, faith and despair, humans and God, etc., Skoryk takes up and continues the ideas of Ivan Franko. His only opera deals with themes that were, and remain to be, important to Ukraine and its people. These are, first and foremost, the subject of freedom and liberation from centuries-long slavery and dependence, from the rule of other nations and cultures in the Ukrainian lands, as well as the theme of the nation's spiritual leaders' responsibilities and their relationship with the people. These topics are constantly

present in Ukrainian literature, philosophical thought, and art. They are the true imagothemes of Ukrainian culture, with which the image of Ukraine has come to be associated.

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