

SUMMARY

Doctoral thesis entitled *Model shape of a comic figure in the Polish national opera as exemplified by the role of Maciej in The Haunted Manor opera by Stanisław Moniuszko*: analysis of the figure broadened by the author's executive experience begins with real story from author's life, who saw the performance for the first time as an eight-year boy and recalls personal experiences. These experiences are the origins in which the figure has been first remembered.

The first chapter involves a strictly historical background, entitled: *Geopolitical situation and cultural development in Europe of nineteenth Century before The Haunted Manor* was written, describes social-political situation in Europe after the Enlightenment period and Napoleon wars. The chapter depicts the political situation in Europe of XIX Century and describes its influences on art and culture. At the time, certain romantic trends were universal and present in many countries, from Great Britain, through France, Norway to Hungary. They were focused not only on romantic music but also in new trends in painting and literature of the times. The presentation illustrates inspirations reaching pre-romantic and romantic art in Europe. Also the achievements in philosophy and aesthetics of the romantic period proved to be important. Such a complex approach allowed to single out most significant elements of romanticism in general: after all the discussed opera remains thoroughly romantic and, in certain ways, follows such traces.

Author's aim involved a narration on the romantic culture, run in a manner allowing to single out the elements useful in considerations on *The Haunted Manor*: the two basic traces appearing in the art of the Romantic Period, involving social revolution and national liberation movement, as well as the ideas of returning to Nature, to national culture and artistic means linked to it. Obviously, manifestation of such elements varied with nations and their culture as well as with available artistic means. In the operas of Wagner accumulation of such motives is slightly distinct than in Polish art but, as indicated below, certain links between various authors existed and were described. The figure of Giuseppe Verdi was outlined as the common for Moniuszko evaluator of romantic opera style.

Keeping in mind the romantic style, in the Chapter II, entitled *The Haunted Manor as an example of Polish national opera – the national character and specific syncretism of the Stanisław Moniuszko's work*, the author could fully devote himself to analysis of the *Haunted Manor* libretto by Jan Chęciński. This produced a pattern in certain ways

consistent with trends in European romanticism, which have earlier been altered, in other respects the text of Chęciński diverged to areas which – till now – used to be reserved not to a romantic but comic opera. Such a synthesis of patriotic and comic values fully characterises on the unusual character of Moniuszko's work. In order to create an unusual style from the threshold of drama and comedy the duet Chęciński and Moniuszko had to take advantage of various works (both serious comedy-type ones) in creating various narrations. Chęciński based his narrations on the story of Kazimierz Władysław Wójcikowski, originating from the *Collection of Old Talks and Figures*, but in *The Haunted Manor* we may find references to *Mr Taddheus*, to Fredro's comedies (*Girls' wedding's*, *The revenge*) as well as to dramaturgic innovations of Wagner, to folk songs and dances, traditional feasts and beliefs cultivated in Poland for centuries. The presentation of *The Haunted Manor* carries several layers, which have to be isolated in order to focus attention on the selected figure of Maciej. The most important was the demonstration that *The Haunted Manor* by Moniuszko/Chęciński is an exceptional work, linking comedy style, light and humorous with serious, patriotic and liberational matters. Thus, our great national piece contains two styles which, nevertheless, remain in symbiosis. Skillful use of symbols allowed to out-trick censors while the very shape of the piece provided the public with amusement and strengthened the hearts. In the second chapter the author focused his attention on the formal aspects and the strength of message

In the last chapter, entitled *The role of Maciej in The Haunted Manor as a model portrait of a comic figure in Polish national opera*, following an short historic-social outline of the old-Polish Sarmates we encounter an analysis of the figure of Maciej, at first the scenic and, then, musical and interpretatory one. The dissertation's authors stresses that in his work he focused his attention also on the figure of Miecznik, the party of whom he also had the chance to create. Thus, in the performance the party is extremely difficult, requiring a top vocal talent. The figure of Miecznik synthesizes the Polish nature and patriotism. In this context, it is interesting to compare him with the other baritone figure, of Maciej. The role unjustly is poorly valued but even if it is less exposed but it requires that the performer manifests a very high tessiture, much higher than in the role of Miecznik, able to create comic scenes. It is worth stressing that the multi-colour figure of Maciej requires a richer range of actor's abilities, necessary for comic scenes (scenes with frightening in the Act III), emotional ones (the trio of the small house of timber) to fighting attitude (beginning of Act IV).

In Chapter III the author provides broad analysis presenting all values of vocal aspect of Maciej's figure, focuses his attention on the more difficult aspects, related to vocal technique related to tessitura, variable behaviours, moods, reactions to situations, events and intrigues, the complex nature of a honourable and brave nobleman, basing on his own experiences from work on the role, analysis of the figure backed up by his talks with conductors, co-performers. He proves that an insufficient place was devoted to figure of Maciej in theoretical and musicological literature which seems to be an unjust gap in region of such scientific studies.

At the end of work the author focused on artistic paths of singers who played the figure of Maciej. In this way, focusing on the figure the author could distinguish a few common traits manifested by singers who at a certain time in their career had contact with the role. It was found that the same artists impersonated not only Maciej but also Miecznik and Janusz in the *Halka* opera. Such shared roles were more numerous, encompassing both Moniuszko's figures and heroes of comic and even dramatic operas.

Finally we may come to the conclusion, confirming the known for a long time thesis that *The Haunted Manor* represents an iconic piece for Polish culture. It represents an immortal opera, which will be played forever since the universal traits immortalised it in our memory. The links with Polish tradition, light style and important national essence which stems from the text are decisive for the opera's status. So it is with the figure of Maciej, who after lecture of this text should be memorised as a typical Polish Sarmata, manifesting both shameful national defects and the gained by its heavy national history hardened temper and nobility of heart.