

## IMAGOPOETICS AS AN IMAGOLOGICAL VISION OF A CONTEMPORARY MUSICAL WORK

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**Abstract:** The academic paper considers the imagological approach to musical works, characterized by priority attention to the identification of stereotypes used by the author. Imagology entered the postmodern discourse in the middle of the XX century; however, it was limited to the literary sphere for a long time. The present research explores the possibility of applying an imagological approach to musical art and its specifics. In contrast to literature, music operates with its own semiotic system based on intonation, a complex of pitch, rhythmic, and other features that determine the semantic content of musical constructions. This feature suggests supplementing the transduction of the concept of "imagology" with the transduction of the literary concept of "poetics" to the immanent features of a musical composition. From the perspectives outlined, the definition of the concept of imagopoetics in relation to musical art is derived in the academic paper. It is revealed that both the author's European audience's perception of non-European musical cultures and a wider range of images, which in the imagological discourse are called "imagothemes" and "imagotypes", can be considered as stereotypes in the modern scientific discourse. At the same time, the issue of the correlation between the author's authentic immersion in the relevant figurative sphere and the orientation to the stereotypical perception of the relevant figurative spheres by the author's audience is actualized for each "imagotheme" and "imagotype". The author also touches upon the controversial issue of the possibility of using the imagological approach to deny the existence of an objective difference between artifacts of different peoples, which is most clearly manifested in the musical art.

**Keywords:** Imagopoetics, Imagology, Music, Postmodernism, Musical intonation, Modern music, Classic music.

### 1 Introduction

Imagology as a separate field of scientific inquiry has not only gained a foothold in scientific discourse in recent decades but also shows a tendency to expand its scope. Having originated in the bosom of literary studies as a discipline that explores the images of a particular ethnic group in the literature of another nation, imagology quickly acquired an interdisciplinary character, developing at the intersection of cultural studies and ethnography, sociology and political science, and attracted researchers of various art forms, from fine arts to cinema and music.

The terminological apparatus of imagology is also constantly increasing, due to both the expansion of the methodological base and the objects studied. The diversification of approaches has also led to the emergence of various terms that describe different imagological approaches to studying cultural phenomena, such as image semantics and imagopoetics. The definition of such terms is still characterized by the pluralism of approaches. Moreover, in our opinion, this is due to the immanent pluralism of postmodern worldview, which avoids generally accepted determinants and, therefore, leads to the diversification of the terminological apparatus and semantic fields of most definitions.

The foregoing fully applies to the attempts of the imagological approach in the field of musicology, which has only been actualized in recent years in scholars' research activities. The concept of "imagopoetics" is being actualized in the context of art historical studies, which involves the synthesis of imagological and immanent art historical approaches. We believe that this concept seems to be promising for studying the phenomena of musical art and allows us to outline at least the intention of defining the objective features of musical works that give grounds to consider the imagological processes in musical creativity.

### 2 Literature Review

An analysis of recent publications shows that the field of imagological research has expanded in both disciplinary and geographical aspects. At the same time, we will focus on studies relating directly to music.

In fact, the first imagological study that directly examined a musical work was the article by the Polish researcher Regievicz A. (2018), which examines the joint album of the Ukrainian band "Haydamaky" and the Polish writer Andrzej Stasiuk "Mickiewicz. Stasiuk. Haydamaky..." The scholar considers this album in the context of stereotypes of Polish-Ukrainian relations from the Polish side, which mostly seem to be unattractive and boil down to the perception of Ukrainians by Poles in the context of "trade, economic immigration and low-skilled labor or illegal business on the territory of the Polish state" (Regievicz, p.112). Meanwhile, according to the scientist, the authors managed to find an approach that helps overcome negative stereotypes and, alternatively, find common features: "after all, both peoples were enslaved and colonized, struggling against imposed cultural hegemony, both are fighting against a negative foreign narrative (Russia and the European Union) and both are creating a hyper-positive image based on values that are status-based for both peoples".

At the same time, O. Berehova's monograph (2020) is the first study that provides a thorough and comprehensive study of the imagological discourse in music. The researcher distinguishes musical imagology for the first time as an independent "section of musicology and musical cultural studies that explores the images of the "I" and the "Other" in works of musical art in order to reveal their identity, originality and specificity, common and distinctive features". The author explores Ukrainian composers' creativity and she interprets it as the category of "I", and foreign (for a Ukrainian researcher) music as the category of "Other".

The dissertation by Chinese researcher Wang Yu (2021), which examines Puccini's opera Turandot from the standpoint of imagology, also draws our attention. The special interest of this study lies in the fact that the scientist is in the cultural field of the "Alien" for the composer of the opera, while the opera character, "Alien" for the composer, turns out to be "Go-to person" for the scientist. Deep understanding of Chinese culture allowed the researcher to identify and substantiate the "fairy-tale-romantic, state-imperial, scenic, harem, and feminine imago of the heroine" with femme fatale features that "create the central ethnic imago of China" and "form the leading musical markers of Turandot".

At last, the concept of "imagopoetics" was introduced by the Russian researcher V. Trikov (2015). The researcher criticizes imagology for the uncertainty of the methodology and terminology, as well as its use for political purposes, namely, attempts to "de-ideologize national consciousness in order to develop a pan-European civilization". At the same time, V. Trykov recognizes the relevance of the problem of studying the image of the "Other" and proposes to use the term "imagopoetics" to refer to the field of poetics that "studies the image of the "Other" [...] not from the standpoint of postmodernist discourse analysis but by turning to the comparative historical method and traditions of historical poetics".

I. Purpus attaches a slightly different meaning to the term "Imagopoetics" (2018). In her opinion, the term "Imagopoetics" "seems to be more relevant to the imagological tools of comparative studies". The researcher believes that imagopoetics includes "geocultural imago" and "decorative imago" but refrains from defining both concepts. Both terms are considered as components of "imagopoetics". Along with this, "geocultural

imago” in the above-mentioned dissertation by Wang Yu is defined by the scholar as “understanding and perception of the primary origin of the Other”, “decorative imago” – “author’s textual strategy towards the Other”.

The geographical boundaries of the adults also show a tendency to expand. For instance, the following cultures act as a pair of “I – Other”: Romanian and English (Colipcă-Ciobanu, 2014), Czech and Slovak (Zelenková, 2016), Ukrainian and Polish (Regievicz, 2018), Russian and German (Zhdanov, 2018), French and Lithuanian (Dručkutė, 2020), Crimean Tatar and Ukrainian (Kocherha, Visych, 2023), etc. However, these works relate to fiction, while in music, according to our analysis, the imagologic approach has been developed to a much lesser extent. This circumstance prompts us to consider the prospects of an imagological vision with a focus on contemporary musical art.

### 3 Methodology

Imagology has developed its own method of research, which distinguishes it from other humanities disciplines. One of the founders of imagology, Hugo Dyserinck, noted its method as follows: “Comparative imagology primarily seeks to explore and comprehend certain forms of image manifestation, as well as the moment of their origin and their existence. In addition, it wants to contribute to illuminating the role that such literary images play when individual cultures encounter each other” (Dyserinck, 1977). Schwiderska M. (2001) defines the imagological method as “a hermeneutical method of interpretation (“explanation”) of the “deep semantics” of the phenomenon of the cultural, national or ethnic “other” that manifests itself in the world of literary texts”. Kozlova (2015) sees the analysis of stereotypes as the basis of the imagological method, which simultaneously characterizes both the object and the perceiving subject, reflecting the features of national consciousness and the national value system. The comparative-typological method is significant for this study since it made it possible to find similarities and analogies between the musical works under study. Wang Yu considers discourse analysis to be the leading imagological method, in which “the emphasis is on identifying the sources of the image of the “Other” (Wang, 2021). Tymofiyenko (2018) notes that “the imagological method is aimed at identifying the elementary units of the national image in the minds of other nations’ representatives”.

Finally, the most specific method for analyzing the musical features of the works under study is the method of analyzing intonation practices, in the implementation of which we rely on the works of Yu. Chekan (2009), which opens the key to understanding the immanent musical interpretation of the images of the “I” and the “Other” in the prism of the author’s vision. The methodology of intonation analysis makes it possible to reveal the correlation between the intonation constants of three categories: the intonation thesauri of the culture to which the author belongs, the culture the author studies and perceives as “Alien” and, finally, the third – the resulting intonation sphere, which is a syncretic alloy of the author’s specific and the intonation spheres studied by the author and is determined by their interaction. Such an approach provides the key to understanding the composer’s interpretation of foreign cultural phenomena in the complex interaction of objective and subjective factors of intonation processes.

### 4 Results

The study of musicological literature indicates the possibility of an imagological vision for a wide range of musical works that have the following features to a greater or lesser extent:

1. The composer refers to a literary source, which is associated with an appeal to the cultures of countries that are distant from the author’s country in the geographical and cultural sense. Most often, we are talking about the appeal of authors from Western Europe to the culture of Asian countries; however, in the light of recent studies, the imagological vision can also extend to the discourse between two

neighboring European countries, the relations between which are characterized by ambiguity and stereotypes regarding each other.

2. The composer refers to the intonational sphere of the musical culture of a country other than his country of origin. Similarly to the previous case, the most prominent examples are related to Western European composers’ references to the musical culture of Asian countries (especially China and Japan).
3. The composer refers to the subcultures that function within his native country but are perceived by the author as “Aliens”.

Within the framework of the criteria outlined above, the level of involvement of a given composition in the imagological discourse can vary widely, depending on the specific historical era, genre, and the composer’s worldview.

European composers’ references to non-European subjects before the beginning of the XIX century were mostly sporadic, with the exception of some biblical stories set in Asia Minor. The most famous examples of such appeals are G.F. Handel’s oratorio “Samson” (as well as the lost opera of the same name by J.F. Rameau) and “Deborah” Nevertheless, both works are sustained in the baroque style typical for G.F. Handel, avoiding allusions to certain characteristic features of the ethnic groups of the Asia Minor region, which does not provide sufficient grounds for their consideration from the imagological point of view.

There are some references to non-European traditions in W. A. Mozart’s famous “Turkish Rondo” from Piano Sonata No. 11 in A major, K. 331 (namely, the third part), the musical language of which has certain associations with the military music of the Ottoman Empire. In this case, we have a conscious attempt of W.A. Mozart to address the intonational features of Turkish military music (Ferenc, 2007). Actually, the allusion to Turkish music is most evident in the left-hand part of the refrain – the arpeggiated first beat and the subsequent pulsation with eighths in 2/4. Nevertheless, from the perspective of imagology, the question should be posed in a different way: how objectively does Mozart reflect the Turkish musical environment, or is it rather a personal vision of Ottoman culture? And, if the latter is true, to what extent was W.A. Mozart influenced by certain stereotypes of European perceptions of the Ottoman Empire? By the way, an interesting observation should be added: Turkish rhythmic formulas are present only in the refrain of the above-mentioned part of the Sonata, while the episodes contrast in both the modal relativity (minor instead of major) and rhythmic terms. Such a contrast indicates a particular intonational dichotomy of two spheres – Ottoman (refrain) and European (episodes), which oppose each other. The presence of this designation indicates at least the emergence of prerequisites for the formation of a future imago position in the musical sphere.

There are numerous references to foreign cultures in the works of L. van Beethoven. These are primarily the cycles as follows: Opus 108: Twenty-five Scottish Songs, Opus 152: Twenty-five Irish Songs, Opus 153: Twenty Irish Songs, Opus 154: Twelve Irish Songs, Opus 155: Twenty-six Welsh songs, WoO 156: Twelve Scottish songs, WoO 158b: Seven British songs, WoO 158c: Six songs of different nationalities, WoO 158a: Twenty-three songs of different nationalities and WoO 157: Twelve songs of different nationalities.

In the listed cases, L. van Beethoven refers to the original themes of folk songs, using an arsenal of classical arrangement tools, including harmonization, selection and variation of musical texture (mainly homophonic-harmonic type), the inclusion of dynamic means of expression, etc.

Let’s take one of the most popular songs from WoO 158 №16 as an example, labeled by the author as “Schöne Minka, ich muß scheiden”. The author used the melody of the Ukrainian song “A Cossack Went across the Danube” and the poem “Schöne Minka, ich muß scheiden” by Christoph August Tiedge and added an

accompaniment performed by violin, cello and piano. The arrangement is characterized by a chordal pulsation performed on the piano, as well as the inclusion of a lamentation intonation (*e - f - e*), which appears alternately in the parts of all instruments. The popularity of this composition in contemporary Ukraine, evidenced at least by the large number of its performances published on YouTube, indicates that the composer managed to deeply feel and convey the Ukrainian spirit, at least to a sufficient extent in order to find a response in the circles of its natural environment. Nevertheless, can we talk about a certain stereotyping of the image of a girl who, according to the plot of the song, is abandoned by a Cossack who goes to war? Focusing exclusively on the analysis of musical material, it can be assumed that such typification took place to a certain extent. It is precisely about the above mentioned lamentation, which is not in the original version of the song; it was added by L. van Beethoven in accordance with the traditions of Viennese classicism in depicting sad (lamentation) images. It appears three times in one sentence (for instance, bars 1-11) - in bars 1, 3, and 5, where it is developed. The inclusion of the lamentation element actualizes the discourse about a particular stereotype of Ukrainian song being generally lamentative, which probably prompted the author to emphasize this lamentation element by means familiar and characteristic of its intonation field, namely, the inclusion of a descending second intonation.

The most striking examples of European composers' references to Eastern cultures belong to G. Puccini, and the operas "Turandot" and "Madama Butterfly" are the first to be mentioned. In contrast to the examples of G. F. Handel, W. A. Mozart, and L. van Beethoven discussed above, both operas rely on literary sources that reveal the contradictory relationship between the Western and Eastern worlds.

From the standpoint of musical imagopoetics, the question should be asked: to what extent did Puccini use the Chinese intonation sphere to embody Chinese images in this opera? The above-mentioned musical work by Wang Yu draws attention with its avoidance of musical examples or references to the composer's use of authentic Chinese musical materials. The author, on the contrary, refers to the observation of Raiche J. (2003), who testifies to the conscious refusal of the contemporary composer Gerald Freed to use Hong Kong authenticity in film music and the decision that "music should be made more exotic than it really is" as an illustration of Puccini's approach.

In general, there is a certain stereotype of Chinese music in Europe as music based on pentatonic. Wang Yu notes that "not all Chinese music is associated with these 5-step modes and they rather represent a decorative China in the imagination of Europeans" (Wang, 2021). Pentatonic modes are found in the music of G. Puccini; however, the composer uses them within the framework of classical Western European tonal harmony and not within the harmonic intonation systems of Chinese music, which inspires the researcher to speak of the representation of the Chinese figurative sphere as stereotypical.

A similar question is relevant to Puccini's "Japanese" opera "Madama Butterfly". The Japanese researcher Kunio Hara (2003) demonstrates "close relationship between some of the Japanese melodies that Puccini adopted in his opera Madama Butterfly" (Hara, p.75) and, in particular, the use of the gagaku mode. The modes of Japanese music are also characterized as pentatonic, and, according to Kawase (2013), more than 70% of Japanese songs are based on the yo sound system (on which the *gagaku mode* is based), which, from the standpoint of modern European music theory, is an anhemitonic pentatonic (for instance, *d-e-g-a-h*).

The composer subordinates the modes of Japanese folk music to the logic of Western European tonal thinking, applying "Western harmonization" to them (Hara, p.45). This gives grounds for an imatological vision of this opera and an emphasis on the perception of Japanese folk music by Europeans from the standpoint of European listening experience.

Modern musical works have a much more diversified intonation base, driven by two reasons. On the one hand, the arsenal of musical means of the beginning of the XXI century reveals a much greater polymorphism compared to previous eras. Europeans gained experience in tonal, modal, and atonal logics of organizing musical material, as well as experience in going beyond the twelve-step sound system. The expansion of intonation possibilities is largely due to the emergence of electronic instruments, the technical capabilities of which are rapidly developing. On the other hand, the possibilities of familiarizing Europeans with the achievements of non-European musical cultures have also increased thanks to modern methods of communication.

Let's take a look at contemporary works that have already appeared in musicologists' studies of imagology. The analysis of the literature makes it possible to distinguish several groups of such works.

1. Musical works related to the use of "imagotypes". According to the viewpoint of O. Berehova, this is "Moses" by M. Skoryk, in which the images of Moses, Jehovah, and the Poet are "imagotypes" and 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" (Berehova, 2022). The other examples of operas with existing imagotypes associated with historical figures, according to the researcher's viewpoint include "Echnaton" by F. Glass, "Iyov" by I. Razumeiko and P. Hryhoriv, "Satyagraha" by F. Glass, "Nixon in China" by J. Adams, "Einstein on the Beach" by F. Glass and "Doctor Atomic" by J. Adams.
2. Musical works related to the use of "images". According to the standpoint of O. Berehova (2020), the examples of such works are as follows: "City Noir" by J. C. Adams (jazz stylistics as an image), the Fourth Symphony by A. Khodosk (Belarusian melos as an image), "Styx" by G. Cancelli (a combination of literary and musical images), Schnittke's Third Symphony (images of Austro-German symphonism), Concert № 3 for piano and orchestra by I. Shcherbakov ("Revolution of Dignity" in Ukraine (2014) as an image), a number of musical works by V. Silvestrov (images are music by European composers of the XIX-XX centuries).
3. Conceptual music albums. In addition to the aforementioned, "Mickiewicz – Stasiuk – Haydamaky" was the first and so far the only music album to fall within the circle of the imagological vision. Regievicz emphasizes the presence of purely musical means of expression associated with folklore sources, namely, the use of Ukrainian folk instruments (drymba, sopilka, nay, and bandura), and the use of Balkan rhythmic structures and solo episodes of brass instruments, which determine the emotional structure of the compositions. The scholar's attention is also drawn to the melodic declamation: "Stasiuk's male, no longer young, voice, somewhat hoarse in some parts, makes the statement more lyrical and authentic. The listener hears the story of an experienced person. [...] The method of declamation makes it possible to reveal the depth of reflection on the world, transience and nature" (Regievicz, p. 116).

Musicals are the least studied group of works. According to the viewpoint of A. Bondarenko (Bondarenko, 2022), the originality of the musical genre lies primarily in the peculiar intonation practices, which are more focused on entertaining intonation. At the same time, the focus on spectacularity creates a prerequisite for authors to search for exotic subjects, which in turn will correspond to stereotypical ideas about the exotic rather than modernity. For instance, the musical "Equator" by Zlotnyk, based on the journey of ethnographer Miklouho-Maclay, is such an example. Despite several attempts to use the intonation thesaurus of the countries visited by the protagonist in the musical, the composition as a whole is characterized by "commonality with Russian Soviet intonation practice" (Bondarenko, p. 83).

## 5 Discussion

Imagopoetics, as an integral part of imagology, has been only recently distinguished as a separate concept, and, consequently, its field of application is subject to debate. The imagological vision of a contemporary musical work involves the author's appeal to certain stereotypes about another culture (in relation to the culture of the author's audience). At the same time, the issue of defining stereotypes remains debatable, or, in each case, the question of whether the author's appeal to another culture is deep penetration into its essence or remains its representation, which is inherent in the culture in which the author's worldview was formed and the culture of the target audience for which this work is intended.

The answer to this question, when it comes to a piece of music, should be sought in two planes – cultural and poetic. The first involves analyzing the circumstances of the composition, literary sources and other non-musical information. The second, poetic, involves analyzing the immanent musical features of a particular work, namely, its intonational nature, features of musical harmony, texture, and the means of expression used. It is the second plane, the poetic one, which we call imagopoetics, which forms the basis for the imagological vision and analysis of musical works.

The results of our research show that the imagological vision is only rarely applied to the music of the past centuries, while it is widely used in contemporary works. There are both subjective and objective reasons for this. The subjective ones lie in the fact that the works of the past were thoroughly studied during the last century before the formation of imagology as a specific vision, and, therefore, few researchers dare to re-analyze or re-examine them from new perspectives. There are also objective reasons for this, involving the spread of the postmodern paradigm, which has had a particularly significant impact on musical creativity since the 1960s. The postmodern paradigm implies the artists' appeal to other cultures, other epochs, and the inclusion of their intonational baggage as an element of their own style, as an immanent component of the latest work.

A separate discussion is required to criticize imagology as a kind of "ideology aimed at erasing national identity" (Trykov, p.126). In our viewpoint, this accusation can apply to individual works (for instance, Leerssen, J., 2007, who uses such an illogical construct as "anecdotal belief in different national characters"), but not to imagology as a whole. At the very least, musical imagology cannot deny the existence of different musical modes, different acoustic systems, and, finally, the existence of different musical instruments peculiar to a particular musical culture. On the contrary, musical imagopoetics should take into account the achievements of musical organology and folklore, as well as the musical-theoretical and musical-acoustic fundamentals of music of different peoples, and compare them with the constructive features of the imagotypes under study.

## 6 Conclusion

In the field of musicology, imagopoetics is considered as a method that allows analyzing the immanent musical features of the author's appeal to the intonational spheres of others in relation to his native culture and the culture of his target audience of musical cultures, which he presents not so much in an authentic as in a stereotyped form, that is, in a form closer to his target audience.

Imagopoetics is applicable to individual musical works of past eras; however, it is more widely used in relation to works of contemporary art developing under the postmodern sign. It is the postmodern paradigm, which implies the authors' appeal to the cultural layers of different epochs and countries creating the basis for the authors' appeal to the imagothemes and imagotypes that form the framework of the imagological approach.

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**Primary Paper Section: A**

**Secondary Paper Section: AL**