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**ДЕМІУРГІЙНО-ЕСХАТОЛОГІЧНА КОНЦЕПЦІЯ ПРОЛОГУ ОПЕРИ  
А. САЛЬЄРІ «ТАРАР»**

Розкрито сутність Прологу опери А. Сальєрі за лібрето П. О. К. де Бомарше «Тарар» як деміургійно-есхатологічної драми. Висунуто гіпотезу про авторське трактування Прологу як можливого знищення опери в разі її провалу, зумовленого властивою їй винятковістю змісту та жанрової специфіки. Якщо К. В. Глюк викладав ідеї реформи в Передмовах до опер, то Сальєрі і Бомарше вважали за доцільне переосмислити традицію декларованого новаторства за допомогою викладення принципів у художньо-алегоричній формі оперного Прологу. Актуальні для Просвітництва ідеї висловлені в Пролозі алегоричними персонажами, що зумовило нейтралізацію інноваційної енергії деміургійно-есхатологічної драми.

**Ключові слова:** деміургійно-есхатологічна концепція, оперний Пролог, релігійно-філософська драма.

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**ДЕМИУРГИЙНО-ЭСХАТОЛОГИЧЕСКАЯ КОНЦЕПЦИЯ ПРОЛОГА ОПЕРЫ  
А. САЛЬЕРИ «ТАРАР»**

Раскрыта сущность Пролога оперы А. Сальери по либретто П. О. К. де Бомарше «Тарар» как демиургийно-эсхатологической драмы. Выдвинута гипотеза об авторской трактовке Пролога как возможного уничтожения оперы в случае её провала, обусловленного присутствием ей исключительностью содержания и жанровой специфики. Если К. В. Глюк излагал идеи реформы в Предисловиях к операм, то Сальери и Бомарше предпочли переосмыслить традицию декларированного новаторства путем изложения принципов в художественно-аллегорической форме оперного Пролога. Актуальные для Века Просвещения идеи высказаны в Прологе аллегорическими персонажами, что обусловило нейтрализацию инновационной энергии демиургийно-эсхатологической драмы.

**Ключевые слова:** демиургийно-эсхатологическая концепция, оперный Пролог, религиозно-философская драма.

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**DEMIURGICAL AND ESCHATOLOGICAL CONCEPTUAL IDEA OF THE  
OPERATIC PROLOG BY ANTONIO SALIERI "TARARE"**

The paper explains the essence of the operatic Prolog of Antonio Salieri "Tarare" based on the scenario by Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais as a demiurgical and eschatological drama. The author makes

a hypothesis on the author's interpretation of the Prolog as a possible destruction of the opera in case of its failure caused by its inherent exceptional nature of content and the genre specific character. If Christoph Willibald Gluck spelled out his ideas of reforms in the Prefaces to operas, then Salieri and Beaumarchais preferred to reconsider the tradition of the declared innovation by setting forth the principles in the art and allegorical form of the operatic Prolog. The relevant ideas for the Enlightenment are expressed in the Prolog by the allegorical characters, which caused the neutralization of the innovative energy of the demiurgical and eschatological drama.

**Keywords:** demiurgical and eschatological conceptual idea, the operatic Prolog, religious and philosophical drama.

A number of researchers tried to comprehend “Tarare” — one of the most unusual operas in the legacy of A. Salieri. However, the Prologue to this opera has not yet drawn attention of any researchers, who might have underestimated its innovative nature. And yet, the Prologue to the opera act contains individual original concept, moreover, it explains ideals of the opera authors, which indicate their belonging among geniuses and thinkers of the pre-revolutionary period in the history of the Age of Enlightenment. These aspects allow us to conclude that the Prologue to “Tarare” is the very artistic material, the study of which shall significantly enrich understanding of the authors' outlook, of the opera genre interpretation peculiar to Salieri, which makes it necessary to study it.

The aim of the research is to study the Prologue to the opera by A. Salieri and P.-A. C. de Beaumarchais as a reflection of artistic and philosophic-religious ideas of the authors, who were contemporaries of the pre-revolutionary atmosphere in France at the end of 1880s, and to develop the concept that forms its basis.

The Prologue of the opera by Salieri-Beaumarchais reflects interaction of two concepts peculiar to the end of the Age of Enlightenment — demiurgic and eschatological. Prologue is a religious-philosophical drama of the artistic world creation with its subsequent destruction as an unsuccessful experience. Originality of artistic interpretation of demiurgic-eschatological music drama of the Prologue lies in the fact that its action is projected to create a work of art — the future opera, with its peculiar characters and relations between them. It is revealing, that the pathos of the Prologue as a creation/destruction drama of the opera artistic world is caused by the idea inspiring the opera authors on creating a fundamentally new work of art. However, unlike demiurgic-eschatological forces of the Prologue — Nature and the Genius of Fire — Salieri and Beaumarchais did not destroy, but submitted to audience's approval the opera created by them, which did not fit into traditional genre boundaries. At the same time, the very presence of the destructive near-final episode allows us to assume that the idea of

destroying “creations of own hands” in case of realizing their imperfection can occupy the minds of two geniuses — librettist and composer. In any case, in the Prologue, they programmed a way to destroy the work they created in case it fails due to its inherent exclusivity.

The existing Prologue of such kind means that authors were aware of the innovative nature of their creation, of which they informed their contemporaries and descendants through their characters in the demiurgic-eschatological introduction to the opera. If C. W. Gluck stated his innovative ideas on his own opera reform in the well-known Prefaces (e.g., to “Alceste”), then A. Salieri and Beaumarchais chose to rethink Gluck’s tradition of declared innovation by stating its principles in the artistic-allegoric form of the opera Prologue. The authors united provisions of the opera concept, reformist by nature, with philosophic and social ideals. At the same time, their stating was to a great extent clouded due to the fact that ideas topical for the Age of Enlightenment were covered using allegoric characters, traditional for the Prologue, which resulted in neutralization — that innovative energy, which pervades the demiurgic drama in it.

Moreover, it should be noted that the content of the Prologue goes beyond the opera plot introduced by it, since it displays typical religious-philosophical and political climate for the age.

The leading characters of the Prologue — embodiments of the demiurgic force in its female and male aspects — are Nature and the Genius of Fire. If the image of Nature is connected to the task of stating harmony of the perfect universe, then the Genius of Fire — personification of the life-giving force — to creation of a new artistic world, which will receive its development later in 5 opera acts.

The large-scale Prologue has a multiepisode stage structure. Division of the Prologue into sections, typical of it, is determined by connection to one or another stage of the world creation. It is revealing, that the composer, as a rule, divides one demiurgic stage from another by introducing such definition as a double bar-line, due to which the structure of the Prologue receives special clearness.

Considering that all events in the Prologues are exceptionally spectacular, active, it seems to be possible to define peculiar sections (parts) of the world creation drama as “episodes”.

Its detailed section 1 includes a number of stages, from picturing the Universe to the new creation, filled with excitement before creating a new world, a new human and state, when only “the ether rules in the world knowing no worries”, and right up to the program of creation of a new human, stated by the demiurgic force bearers — the Genius of Fire and Nature. Thus, section 1 of the Prologue can be defined as the Prologue Introduction, as some sort of “prologue in the Prologue”.

The monologue of the Genius of Fire presents transition from describing harmony of Nature — “perfect organization of the Earth”, from admiring diversity of the “past races” that were infinitely scattered in the Universe to stating the demiurgic program, which could be reached only by collecting all elements scattered in this world.

The first task for the creative force is to create a “human race of mixed breed”. To do this, the Genius of Fire turns to the earth in the first place (gathers “a handful of soil”), like in the biblical story of creating human race. The force that animates the soil becomes the demiurgic force of fire, invested by the Genius into hands and souls of the newly created humans to animate “their ephemeral existence”. In this way, the Prologue of “Tarare” rises the Promethean theme joined with an allegory of fire as human transformation.

The second stage of creation, according to the plan of the Genius of Fire, includes collecting elements to create a “vast Empire”.

The third ideal of creation of a new world is brought by Nature. It is the need to create a “beautiful language” — smiling, noble, “almost supernatural”, which will also help bringing atoms in order, animating yet inanimate “cold humans”. If the Genius of Fire solves the problem of “organizing elements”, of which a new human race is made, by means of government system (in this order the Empire was created), Nature performs the same task by animating humanity through teaching it a beautiful language, which unites and educates it. Interaction of different ideals of uniting and organizing humanity, put forward by the Genius of Fire and Nature, both serve a common goal — transition from chaos to logos, from dissociation of atoms and elements to their unity, from lawlessness to the law, given from above. Demiurgic program stated by Beaumarchais and Salieri is consistent with the ideals of the Age of Enlightenment, which is represented by the authors of “Tarare”.

However, as further development of the Prologue shows, these “points” of the world creation, except for the first one — creation of a human — retain their program nature, even though they are not implemented, embodied in action.

The following 6 episodes of the Prologue (from 2 till 7) are, in a way, similar to the biblical six days of creation.

The episode 2 of the Prologue represents the beginning of creation itself — its “First Day”, related to creating a prototype of a new human race. It is associated with bringing Shadows, which appeared on the stage, to life by the Genius of Fire, their anthropomorphism, animation. The chorus of Shadows represents a glorification of that “wonderful moment” — “unknown charm”, “vague pleasure” that touched the “blooming hearts”, who gained the ability to breathe, express themselves, feel and will, ready to attain flesh and spirit.

The episode 3 of the Prologue presents a dialogue of demiurgic forces — Nature and the Genius of Fire, a subject of discussion (philosophical dispute) of which is the probable future of the newly created Shadows — absolutely joyous due to the ability to “simply love”, or based on the knowledge of good and evil. Separated from non-personified fellow creatures, the awakened Shadow of Altamort — a character, who in the future opera action agrees to execute the order of the king Atar to kill Tarare and kidnap Astasie, brings dissonance to the possible welfare of the created human race. In the context of the future opera action, the image of Altamort plays the role that allows to relate him with the Serpent of Temptation. Like in the Bible, the embodiment of sin is generated before animation (enlightenment) of the human race.

The great importance in the setting of demiurgic concept in the Prologue is given to the final utterance of Nature in its section 3, where it recognizes the animating role of Fire (“It is in vain that Nature is so fruitful: without a spark of your Sacred Fire my work is dead”). In such a way, Fire is understood as an embodiment of natural love that animates the soul of a New Human, a Human of the Future, created by it.

The episode 4 of the Prologue — a solo Gloria of the Genius of Fire, praising eternal wisdom, undying love — presents a condition to achieve such ideal of the Enlightenment as sensitivity. Section 4 presents celebration of the demiurgic force similar to the biblical “And, behold, it was very good”, although in fact there is no demiurgic event here. Gloria serves as a closing of the act 1 of the Prologue, when the shadows are created — human prototypes, intellectual and spiritual powers of which have not yet manifested.

Two tasks lie in the basis of the demiurgic concept of the episode 5 of the Prologue. The first one is to create a Woman, a kind of a new “Eve” in this artistic whole, and after that to create her faithful “Adam”, both, however, still being shadows. In contrast to the biblical story of creation of the human race, Salieri and Beaumarchais through their demiurges — Nature and the Genius of Fire — first of all, create an image of the ideal Wife and only after that — of her faithful husband. The second task is related to naming the shadows of the leading characters in the future opera action — a married couple in love — a beautiful Astasie and her husband, a brave warrior Tarare. Thus, section 5 of the Prologue maintains the relations between the characters.

The content of the stage 6 of the Prologue, being also multistaged (consists of 4 stages), is associated with the demiurgically predetermined destinies of the shadows of Atar and Tarare.

Stage 1 of the episode 6 of the Prologue opens with a Nature’s monologue, welcoming the creation of love — consequence of creating the married couple of Astasie and Tarare, accompanied by renewal of flowers with

wonderful smell. However, this is not all that the content of section 6 of the Prologue is confined to. The demiurges' attention is drawn to "two beautiful shadows" that seem silent and sad. Demiurges meditate on which of the unborn (the ones, who had not gained their flesh) shadows shall be a king, and which — a soldier. Despite the fact that the shadow of Atar responds to the question of the Genius of Fire "Who among you is a king that wants freedom?", exclaiming — "The King", while Tarare says, "I do not feel ready for this mission", the demiurges hold off on making a final decision. Being aware of its fundamental importance, the Genius of Fire fears of a possible fatal mistake that "can make the age miserable".

Stage 2 of section 6 of the Prologue is a Choir of shadows waiting for the fateful "life sentence" to Atar and Tarare, delivered before they were born.

Stage 3 of section 6 of the Prologue is a kind of rehearsal, close to the one in opera and theater. Here, the Genius of Fire, like a director or an author of the future performance, having overcome its doubt, distributes the roles between the shadows created by it. Referring to the shadow of Atar, the Genius of Fire commands: "Speak, I am the emperor Atar! The despot of Asia". There is also a role for Tarare, who will become a soldier. "Born of unknown parents", Tarare is doomed to suffer from his destiny of a soldier designated to him by the demiurge's fantasy. Despite allocation of roles between the characters of the future opera action, Nature maintains their inherent togetherness. Referring to other shadows, it declares: "Soon you will witness their future resemblance!"

Stage 4 (final) of the episode 6 of the Prologue — a prophetic monologue of Nature "Children, I kiss you" — is based on the development of the idea of similarity between the king and the soldier — Atar and Tarare, "equal in their essence", although separated from each other, like "proud greatness" and "humiliated poverty". However, Nature also involves the ability to overcome this "gap", in case, if there is a unity of the king and the people. Thus, the monologue of Nature anticipates ways of development of the future opera action, directed from the unity of characters through their division to the possible unity again.

The episode 7 of the Prologue is a chorus of grateful shadows, highlighting the parts not only of Astasia and Tarara, but also of the characters in the future opera action, such as Calpigi, Arthénée. The musical score allows us to consider this section as a quartet of soloists with the chorus of basses. The meaning of the choral ensemble prayer to the deity Dnite lies not in assuming "equality destruction" of characters, "domination of one man over his brother". It should be recognized that such call is entirely consistent with the pre-revolutionary ideals, later proclaimed by Napoleon: "liberty, equality, fraternity". The choir of shadows is also connected with the drama development. The author's note reads: "The only shadow of Atar

does not sing and leaves in arrogance”. Opposition of the shadow of Atar, who has felt himself a king, to the universal praising of equality does not go unnoticed by the Genius of Fire, who draws Nature’s attention to this fact.

Ending of the 6th day of creation (section 8 of the Prologue) is disappointing to the demiurgic forces. Nature calls to begin the destruction of the created world, thus heralding transition to eschatological concept, a kind of apocalypse.

Section 8 of the Prologue is a radical change in developing the demiurgic concept. Having seen that the world created by demiurges can be threatened by the possible division of humanity into “powers that be” and “the powerless”, disappointed Nature and the Genius of Fire decide to destroy their creation as imperfect: “We crush in the bud the great idea, created for <...> more happy times”. We can see here the parallel with the famous line of Shakespeare’s Hamlet: “And enterprises of great pith and moment With this regard their currents turn awry”. As a result, demiurges become the embodiment of eschatological forces.

Destruction of the created musical-poetic world in the episode 8 of the Prologue can be likened to the way the artist, being disappointed in the fruits of his work, destroys (“erases”) what has just been written on sheets of paper in order to immediately create something more sophisticated. This superior creation is the opera action starting after the Prologue, but which includes the characters and collisions identified in the prototype destroyed by the authors.

In this way, the Prologue to “Tarare” became the embodiment of the play concept, which was so characteristic of the 18th century art. And the leading role in this theater play is given to its organizers and directors — Nature and the Genius of Fire, which to some extent are the counterparts of the opera authors — Beaumarchais and Salieri.

A similar metamorphosis — transition from demiurgic concept to eschatological — is not known in the musical art of the 18th century due to the biblical tradition. The Age of Enlightenment is characterized by a different logical chain, embodied, for example, in Haydn’s oratorio “The Creation”, in which development is directed from chaos to logos. Destruction of the world created by demiurges is more characteristic of the Romantic era, as, for example, is shown in the Wagnerian concept of “The Ring of the Nibelung”: the last section of which is the “Twilight of the Gods” (“Decline of the Gods”), with whom the world they created is burnt. Is it not the evidence that A. Salieri, as well as Beaumarchais, should be included among the great prophets of his age, along with Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven?

The picture of the fall of the newly created world (apocalypse), provided in section 8 of the Prologue, is one of the possible “scenarios” of the end of the world: the Flood (“The waters fall and get lost in the

ocean” — from the part of Nature). At the fall of the world, “future mortals” return to nothingness as well: “the shadows sink into the ground and disappear”.

In this episode, Nature and the Genius of Fire appear as a kind of Saturn, generating and devouring his own children, like Chronos. The final line of the Genius of Fire in the eschatological episode of the Prologue is indicative: “Although our deepest essence devours space and time, sounds of music will be ever heard and seen on the world stage”. This phrase calms, mitigating the destructive brutality of the apocalyptic episode, returns the action into the mood typical of the beginning of the Prologue — harmony of the world before its creation. The “Moral”, encased in the epilogue phrase of the Genius of Fire is similar to the Latin saying: “Ars longa, vita brevis”. The curtain that closes the stage in the *Theatrum mundi* created by Salieri and Beaumarchais — a kind of shadow theater — leaves behind all hope, beauty, sadness and suffering of the world, created and destroyed in an instant.

Section 9 of the Prologue is its second Final, Gloria reprise of section 4 of the Prologue. Once again it celebrates the beauty and harmony of the universe after destruction of an imperfect creation. Gloria reprise, for the first time introduced after creation of the shadows that have not been animated, i.e. before the demiurges make a “mistake” in distributing roles of the king and the soldier. Thus, the final Gloria praises the stage of creation preceding animation of the shadows. Consequently, the challenge of creating a human world itself — animated, individualized — is left by the demiurges as unattainable. Animation of the shadows created by the demiurges in the Prologue will happen in the opera action.

Summary. General composition of the Prologue is as follows: episode 1, which presents the universe before creation, episodes 8 and 9 include pictures of destruction, and then of praising the harmony of the world before its animation, the remaining number of episodes equals six. This characteristic allows us to correlate the actual episodes of creation of the world in the Prologue to “*Tarare*” opera to the number of days of the biblical creation of the world. At the same time, there is no reason to look for direct analogies between the biblical and the enlightenment interpretations of the world creation. In the opera by Salieri-Beaumarchais, creation of the world as such is limited to creation of human race prototypes only in the form of inanimate, unmaterialized shadows.

In fact, in the episodes 2-7 of the Prologue to the opera “*Tarare*”, Salieri and Beaumarchais created a kind of fantasy on the ending of the 6th day of the Biblical Creation, and on its crown — the creation of Human. Moreover, Salieri and Beaumarchais dare not to claim their modest role of artists to be even an opera comparison of the creative power of the Lord. The artistic creation presented by them does not go beyond creation of not-brought-to-life shadows.

On the first day, God created heavens and earth, water and light, and separated the light from the darkness; on the second day, he created the expanse between the waters, divided the water above the expanse from the water below the expanse and called the expanse “sky”; on the third — land, sea and plants, on the fourth — the luminaries of the expanse of the sky; on the fifth — fish, reptiles and birds, and finally, on the sixth — cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth, and human. The story ends with the first three verses of the second chapter of Genesis, where it is said that “on the seventh day” the Creator “rested from all his work”, and “God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done” [1, 1:1—2:3].

Created under the canons of the relevant section of the French lyric tragedy, the Prologue to “Tarare”, however, embodies innovative ideas, since its philosophical-theological concept of demiurgic-eschatological nature, as well as allegories presented in it, have nothing to do with court aesthetics. Moreover, demiurgic-eschatological concept of the Prologue provides access to the political context level of the age: imbued with idea of creating a new world ruled by the laws of wisdom, love, feelings, which animate a New Human, a Human of the Future, it displays the pre-revolutionary ideological situation typical of the French Enlightenment in late 1780s. The Prologue convincingly shows alternative of virtue and embodiments of evil — cruelty, stupidity, envy. If in the Prologue, virtue is associated with the image of future, then embodiments of evil are associated with irrelevant past; if virtue is correlated with life-giving warmth, then the evil — with cold

as a symbol of lifelessness and death. The characters reviving under the influence of the demiurgic forces of Love and Fire undergo differentiation into groups in the Prologue, one of which represents “an outdated world”, presented as its gloomy shadows; while the other is the embodiment of the future “new world”, organized according to the laws of harmony, love and sensitivity as the leading virtues of the age.

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