

Revolutions and Coups in Europe Musical Theater of the XVIII century37

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The article is devoted to reform in the European musical theater of the XVIII century. For the first time in the article the thesis of the presence of three reforms is formulated. The first occurred at the turn of the XVII–XVIII centuries, the impulse was the ideas put forward by the Roman Academy «Arcadia». Its result was the transition from a mixed baroque genre to the «pure» genres of tragedy and comedy. The second reform (mid.18th century) led to the creation of musical drama based on a combination of compositional and dramatic techniques of Italian and French opera. The third wave of transformations occurred in the last quarter century and was associated with the formation of national opera traditions in Austria, Germany, and Russia.

The article concludes that in all the centers of the reform movement of the middle of this century, the same model was used, which made innovations possible: the initiative always came from above – from the impresario, director of the theater and was provided with the support of the monarch and his entourage; the use of the poetics of the French musical theater to update the Italian opera was also closely linked to external impulses, namely, the strengthening of ties with France, Austria, Russia, a number of German and Italian lands – those in which the reform experiments were cultivated. The third of the reforms of this century was also largely initiated and supported «from above», dictated by the increasing weight of the national idea. The paradox of this era is that regulation by the authorities did not hinder, but, on the contrary, gave impetus to the emergence of a number of masterpieces. In this regard, the experience of the musical theater of the 18th century has remained almost the last successful example.

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