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The East in the Works of Charles Griffes

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The article is devoted to the oriental compositions of the American composer Charles Griffes (1884–1920), created in the 1910s. These include the symphonic poem "The Pleasure-Dome of Kubla Khan" (1912–1917), the vocal cycle "Five Poems of Ancient China and Japan" for voice and piano (1916–1917), and the Japanese pantomime "Sho-Jo" (1917). Significant creative contacts (Eva Gauthier, A. Coomaraswamy, E. Bloch, A. Bolm, M. Ito), extensive reading, fascination with folklore, poetry, painting, and philosophy of Asian countries led to the formation of his own method of working with oriental materials. The composer saw prospects for the interaction of Western and Eastern music in his address to the archaic, to the stylization of ancient folklore. An example is the music for the pantomime "Sho-Jo" and the cycle "Five Poems of Ancient China and Japan." Natural modes (pentatonic modes), organ points, ascetic quarto-quinto-second verticals, spatial sound, and rhythmic ostinato allow us to draw parallels with new folkloristics, in particular, with the works of I. F. Stravinsky. In the symphonic poem "The Pleasure-Dome of Kubla Khan," the European influences at the forefront are associated with the study of the "Russian" East (first of all the writings of N. Rimsky-Korsakov) and the French oriental pieces by C. Debussy and M. Ravel. Colorful in mood and harmony, a multi-layered texture, and spicy timbers testify to the features of impressionism. The technique of orchestral writing enables us to find similarities with Ravel's "Sheherazade" Overture. Also, the works of Griffes brightly revealed features of the Art Nouveau style: the image of dance, the increased interest in the element of water, ornamental melodies-arabesques, and the independence of timber layers.

Keywords: Charles Griffes, The Pleasure-Dome of Kubla Khan, Five Poems of Ancient China and Japan, Sho-Jo, Eva Gauthier, orientalism, American music of the first quarter of the twentieth century, impressionism, modern style, new folkloristics.

Charles Tomlinson Griffes (1884–1920) belongs to the generation of American artists who are traditionally referred to as "pre-historic" in terms of national music composition school formation. Like many musicians at the turn of the 20th century, he studied in Ger-

many in 1903–1907 under Engelbert Humperdinck[1] and was carried away by German Romanticism. Upon returning home, he became interested in contemporary French art — Impressionism, Symbolism, and Art Nouveau. He became acquainted with the atonal works by Arnold Schoenberg, *Saisons Russes* of Sergei Diaghilev, and during the war years turned his attention to the group "Les Six." Griffes was interested in the most popular tendencies, which he perceived as a "Europeanized" author with the energy of a neophyte mastering new idioms of style.

The heyday of Griffes's creative work was marked by an increasing interest in the East. To begin with, love for the exotic was inspired by the cultural atmosphere of the Art Nouveau that took the form of the exquisite iconography of the Tiffany style and pictorial photographs by Alfred Stiglitz (the group "The Photo-Secession," 1902), as well as in the colorful eclecticism of the "antique trend." American researchers point out the popularity of "Persian market places, Oriental bazaars, Hindu rituals, Chinese pagodas, Indian war dances, Japanese rickshas, and other picturesque bric-a-brac that cluttered up the musical landscape and publishers' catalogs for years" [1, p. 129–30]. The oriental flair of Griffes's compositions of the 1910s characteristic of the poem "The Pleasure-Dome of Kubla Khan" (1912–1917), the vocal cycle "Five Poems of Ancient China and Japan" (1916–1917), the Japanese pantomime "Sho-Jo" (1917) perfectly fit into the context of the popular "oriental" style[2]. At the same time, the "exotic" bias in the USA found its expression, first of all, in decorative and applied art, in popularizing books on history, folklore, and poetry of Asian countries. In academic music, American composers mainly followed their European colleagues, mastering oriental themes and their means of implementation with some delay[3].

Griffes's milieu did not play a role in his choice of plots and texts. His diverse artistic contacts facilitated his growth of interest in the East. He was acquainted with Ananda Coomaraswamy, an outstanding thinker and researcher of Indian culture, an educator who introduced traditional art to Western society. The lecture by Coomaraswamy and the music played by his wife, Ratan Devi made a lasting impression on Griffes. His recollections of this event suggest that it was the first time that the composer became aware of the raga: "Dr. Coomaraswamy told about the music first. She (Ratan Devi)[4] interpreted and sang the weird music remarkably and accompanied herself on a strange long-necked instrument. It had four strings loosely strung, with overlapping overtones, and no frets…" [As cited in: 1, p. 173][5].

At one of the parties, Griffes was introduced to Ernest Bloch, who began to work actively with Jewish folk material in the 1910s. The composer was certainly familiar with some works by Bloch and was interested in the methods of this Swiss composer.

An important milestone in the musician's life was his meeting with Adolf Bolm (1884–1951), a ballet dancer and choreographer from Russia. A graduate of St. Petersburg

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[1] Biographical data given in this article is borrowed by the author from English and American sources, including Maisel's work [1].

[2] Oriental images can be traced in Griffes's "White Peacock", a piece from a piano cycle "Roman Sketches" [2; 3].

[3] As an example of exoticism in a traditional romantic style, it is worth mentioning the vocal cycle of the American composer George Whitefield Chadwick (1854–1931) "Lyrics from 'Told in the Gate'" for voice and piano based on poetry by Arlo Bates and borrowed from Arabic fairy tales. Each of the 12 songs is preceded by a poetic epigraph and dedication.

[4] Author's note.

[5] Perhaps, veena is meant here, an ancient Indian struck string instrument.

Theater School and a principal dancer with the Mariinsky Theater, he took an active part in the activities of Sergei Diaghilev's itinerant ballet company. Griffes spoke of him with admiration, he called Bolm a real ballet star, incredibly intelligent and well educated, and he tried not to miss a single performance of the *Saisons Russes*. He saw the scandalous production of Leonide Massine's "L'Après-midi d'un faune" and "The Firebird" choreographed by Michel Fokine.

After the American tour of Diaghilev's troupe concluded in 1916, Bolm decided to stay in the USA, where he later set up his own dance company "Adolph Bolm Ballet-Intime." The group featuring "choreodramas and comedies" was international and included dancers from Europe, India, and Japan. Griffes wrote the one-act pantomime "Sho-Jo" to be performed by the Japanese mime Michio Ito who later became a famous representative of modern style American ballet.

The composer used the performances of the *Saisons Russes* as a model of theatrical synthesis: during the four months of the tour the audience of the New World was acquainted with a repertoire "accumulated over the past years including 'Scheherazade', 'L'Après-midi d'un faune', 'The Firebird', 'Les Sylphides', 'Carnaval'" [4, p. 129]. Griffes, however, had discovered Russian music much earlier: he admired Stravinsky's compositions (in particular, he arranged the "Petrouchka" score for two pianos commissioned by the New York company "The Neighborhood Playhouse"); he was enthusiastic about "The Mighty Handful" (he analyzed "Boris Godunov" by Modest Mussorgsky, praised the Polovtsian dances from "Prince Igor" by Alexander Borodin, was familiar with the music of "Scheherazade" by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and "Islamey" by Mily Balakirev) [See: 1, p. 140, 170–2]. The exotic Orient of Russia attracted Griffes far more than a Westernized trend of Russian Romanticism, for instance, he accepted Pyotr Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker" much more critically, speaking highly only of "Arabic Dance" in the ballet. The piano music by Alexander Scriabin attracted him primarily in terms of its unusual modal system, "exotic scales", which, according to the composer, he heard in Scriabin's Sonata No. 8 and his later miniatures, Op. 63 "Masque" and "Etrangere" [See: 1, p. 179].

While working on the pantomime ballet "Sho-Jo," Griffes met singer Eva Gauthier (1885–1958). Born in Canada, she began her European career in Paris in 1909 as an opera soloist. The area of her interest included modern music and her favorite composer was Claude Debussy. A few months after her debut in France, Gauthier went on a trip to the island of Java and stayed there for four and a half years right up to the outbreak of World War I. In one of her American interviews [See: 1, p. 202], the singer said that she was performing a lot and simultaneously studied local languages and musical culture — modes, traditional genres and Indonesian orchestra (gamelan). Her repertoire consisted of national songs performed to an accompaniment, which she studied under the guidance of famous Javanese musicians. In the first half of the 1910s, Gauthier visited Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, and Japan. She continued "collecting original material" [As cited in: 1, p. 203] and copied the images she came across in folk collections she came to like.

On coming to the USA, the singer managed to combine her two principal interests — the art of the Orient and contemporary Western music. She organized unique educational programs, "reviewing" different epochs, styles and national schools. Her concerts featured Baroque (Henry Percell) and Romantic (Vincenzo Bellini) airs from operas as well as the compositions by Igor Stravinsky, Maurice Ravel, Darius Milhaud, Maurice Delage, Bela Bartok, Paul Hindemith, Arnold Schoenberg ("Lied der Waldtaube" from "Gurre-Lieder")

in the interpretation of Alban Berg), Arthur Bliss, Charles Griffes, jazz pieces by George Gershwin, Gerome Kern, Irwing Berlin and Javanese folklore compositions. Gauthier in the USA performed many vocal compositions for the first time. For example, in 1917 she premiered Stravinsky's "Three Japanese Lyrics." Later she introduced the audience to the "Ballads of the Four Seasons" by Arthur Bliss composed after Li Bai's poem and two musical miniatures from "Trois Chansons Espagnoles" (op. 42 bis) by Swan Hennessy. Her recitals were always held in the Aeolian Hall on the posh 43rd Street of Manhattan. Sometimes she sang to the accompaniment of the composers, for example, Gershwin who liked to perform with her.

Gauthier gave Griffes a number of songs she had collected during her trips, when he was busy working on the ballet "Sho-Jo"[6]. The composer was keenly interested in the folklore of Java, Sumatra, India, Japan, and China seeing in it a way to revive his musical idiom. Familiarization with the art of the East was supplemented by the study of philosophy, literature, poetry, Japanese gravures and drawings of exotic musical instruments.

The result of Griffes's collaboration with Michio Ito and Eva Gauthier was the pantomime ballet "Sho-Jo or the Spirit of Wine — a Symbol of Happiness." The booklet specially issued for the premiere outlines the main idea of the composition and its synopsis, "This is a legendary dance of Old Japan which illustrates the vagaries of a youth who smiles continuously and invites his friends to drink. In his happiness under "the spirit of wine," he has a vision of a beautiful maiden whom he desires and vainly attempts to ensnare. She escapes him, but his exhilaration continues, until exhausted, he drops to sleep" [As cited in: 1, p. 204]. The Bacchic and unrestrained dance of the youth intoxicated by his passion and wine was impersonated by Michio Ito, while the composer's principal interest lay in rendering Japanese *couleur locale* and in showing the atmosphere of the ancient rite and of the "forgotten" archaic ritual[7].

Like his great Russian contemporary Stravinsky, Griffes turned to folklore. Composing his oriental opuses the composer articulated his own approach to the primary sources, "Sho-Jo is *developed* Japanese music — I purposely do not use the term 'idealized.' Cadman[8] and others have taken American Indian themes and have 'idealized' rather than 'developed' them in Indian style. There is really nothing in them save themes; the harmonization, etc., might have come from Broadway. Modern music tends more and more toward the archaic, especially the archaism of the East. The ancient Greek modes, the pentatonic scales of China and Japan are much used, and there is little difference between the wholetone and one of the Chinese scales. There is a striving for harmonies which suggest the quarter-tones of Oriental music, and the frequent employ of the characteristic augmented second, as well as of the organ point common to both systems. In the dissonance of modern music the Oriental is more at home than in the consonance of the classics. And all this I have borne in mind in the development of the Sho-Jo music" [As cited in: 1, p. 205].

Interaction between East and West gained momentum at the turn of the century. A number of World exhibitions contributed to this, as they encouraged artists to open

[6] Griffes also produced three arrangements of Japanes folklore for a chamber orchestra (flute, clarinet, first and second violins, cello, bass, and harp, 1917) —"Sakura-Sakura", "Komori Uta" and "Noge No Yama". Gauthier gave a few songs to Ravel.

[7] The score of Griffes's pantomime-ballet "Sho-Jo" has not been published yet.

[8] Charles Wakefield Cadman, 1881–1946, American composer who sought themes for his songs and operas in Native American folklore.

up new sources of inspiration. In America, the problem of interplay of "one's own" and "someone else's" has always been relevant due to specific formation and development of culture, potentially "open" to various national schools. Griffes believed that coherent synthesis enriching both sides of the dialogue is possible, "Whistler learned engraving from Japanese prints without sacrificing his own individuality… Michio Ito, who understands the music of his native land *au fond*, believes that it will gain in breadth of expression, that its beauties will be more widely understood if brought into a modified contact with Western art influences" [As cited in: 1, p. 205–6].

When composing the ballet, the composer successfully applied stylization of ancient folklore, "My harmonization is all in octaves, fifths, fourths, and seconds — consonant major thirds and sixths are omitted. The orchestration is as Japanese as possible: thin and delicate, and the muted string *points d'orgue* serve as a neutral-tinted background, like the empty spaces in a Japanese print. The whole thematic material is given to the flute, clarinet, and oboe — akin to the Japanese reed instruments: the harp suggests the koto" [As cited in: 1, p. 206][9]. It should be noted that the principles that Griffes employed in his work, with a musical text, fit quite well in the context of Impressionism that interested the musician greatly in the mid-1910s.

Similar patterns are found in the song-cycle "Five Poems of Ancient China and Japan" (1916–1917)[10]. Eva Gauthier premiered the cycle in a November 1917 recital — that night oriental opuses by Griffes and Stravinsky[11] were presented in the USA for the first time. The comparison of the works of the two authors demonstrates two different approaches to ancient poetry. Stravinsky's "Three Japanese Lyrics" dedicated to the awakening of nature in early spring were derived from poems written by Akahito, Mazatsumi and Tsaraiuki (8^{th}–9^{th} centuries). They are imbued with the metaphors for whiteness so characteristic of the Japanese folk art associated with cherry blossoms, snow, frothing streams of water bursting "from the cracks of the ice crust," and clouds. The composer imparts a refined and mysterious artistic image seen through the prism of the centuries-old musical tradition of European culture.

The key means of expression bring us back to the vocal cycle of Schoenberg's *"Pierrot Lunaire"* which fascinated Stravinsky in 1912. "Three Lyrics" feature the uttermost chromatized and dissonant intonation tune, a rarified manner reaching a pointillistic punctuality in the third miniature, imitations and inversive interchange of voices, the unusual composition of the chamber orchestra (piano, two flutes, two clarinets and string quartet), the canto parlato organized on the intentional removal of stresses in the words ("the shift of long syllables onto musical short ones" [As cited in: 10, p. 30][12].

The spicy in its timber refinement and fragile transparency of a high soprano key [11, p. 67], nicely fits into the style of *Moderne*, while the dedications to his French friends

[9] The original score was written for a chamber ensemble — flute, oboe, clarinet, harp, percussion (Chinese drum, tam-tam, timpani and strings with mutes. In the second edition (1919), Griffes enlarged the ensemble (2 flutes, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, timpani, tam-tam, Chinese drum, celesta, harp and strings).

[10] Griffes is also an author of "Three Javanese Melodies" for high pitch in the Sudanese dialect (1919, not published). For Griffes's vocal work in general, see the [5–9].

[11] Eva Gauthier also performed the aria "Salut a Toi Soleil de l'Orient" of the tsaritsa of Shemakha from Rimsky-Korsakov's "Le Coq d'Or" ("The Golden Cockerel").

[12] Brandt kept the number of syllables and word order of the original.

Charles-Maurice Delage, Florent Schmitt and Maurice Ravel bring to mind some "oriental" compositions in the works of French Art Nouveau.

In Griffies's works, oriental poetry strikes a different note. In his "Five Poems of Ancient China and Japan," the composer decided to try new principles of simulating the archaic musical coloring. Each miniature is prefaced by the name of the author of the text and their dates (the listener witnesses a thousand-year-long history of the Oriental lyric from the 6th till the 18th century as well as the delineated scale which forms the basis of the song. Griffes opts for pentatonism and, mostly, for the pentatonic scale or gong so popular in the Chinese musical tradition[13]. (The structure 1 — 1 — 1 — 1S — 1 is present in three poems out of five). In the third miniature, the scale is dominated by yu (1S — 1 — 1 — 1S), while in the fourth the composer turns to the hexachord (1 — S — 1 –1 — 1S) with an extra tone. The pentatone and hexachord scales organize the whole space of the composition: they wholly determine the vocal part, form the fourth and fifth "empty" accords, parallels of the melodies and harsh second and fourth "grapes" in the accompaniment. The piano accompaniment is based on the ostinato progress of melodious and rhythmic figures and lengthy organ points ("The Old Temple among the Mountains" wholly relies on the pedal).

At the same time, Stravinsky's and Griffes's cycles demonstrate some common features — intimacy, laconism, fragility of sound, ostinato, ingenious onomatopoeic effects, imitation of the tone qualities of national instruments, and completeness (In "Five Ancient Poems," the agile end parts connected with the images of spring-time encase the middle ones, which are restrained and contemplative).

Both composers were noticeably influenced by the Japanese gravure. Stravinsky recollected, "Graphic solution of the problem of perspective and volume we can observe in the Japanese, it prompted me to find something similar in music" [12, p. 39–40]. Those characteristic techniques of composition, which were tested by Griffes in "Sho-Jo," simultaneously "spring up" in the vocal composition. This reminds one about his neutral background of the organ points similar to "the empty spaces in a Japanese print"[14].

The feeling of primeval archaism and clear reliance on the ancient folklore, accented variation, chant-variation type of theme and a thrifty use of material enable one to find some parallels in the neo-folkloric works of Stravinsky's "Russian" period and even in the "new folklore wave," which can be traced amongst others, in Sviridov's compositions,

[13] The Chinese theory from early times has had its own classification of the pentatone scale with five notes per octave, with each of them playing the part of the final tone of the line:

gong —M2 + M2 + m3 + M2

shang — M2 + m3 + M2 + m3

jiao — m3 + M2 + m3 + M2

zhi — M2 + m3 + M2 + M2

yu — m3 + M2 + M2 + m3.

[14] In Stravinsky's wake, the Petersburgian line of putting Eastern poetry to music was continued by Nikolai Tcherepnin, yet another pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov. In 1922, he composed a chamber vocal cycle "Seven Pentastiches by Japanese Ancient and Modern Poets (Tankas)" translated into Russian by K. Balmont, op. 52. The atmosphere of the Orient in it is achieved by a number of means of musical expressiveness typical of the age, which bonds his composition with the Oriental opuses by Griffes. Both cycles are marked by the sensation of brevity of the moment spotted in life, which is filled with a profound philosophical meaning. The predominant element of the music is restrained tempos, bass pedals and ostinant figurations, end keys with a "vacant" middle. The fabric is sewn with fourth and fifth chords and long seconds, the latter "hanging" in the air.

the latter being particularly similar in the purity and melodiousness of the voice part (in the first act, "So-fei Gathering Flowers," Griffes uses a folklore Chinese tune), in natural modes, resonant harmony, ascetic chords made of quarts, quints and seconds, in the spatial sound, transparency of the texture, and ostinant rhythm.

While Western composers were making their way to the East, Chinese musicians were diligently studying Western heritage. The first half of the 20th century in China was marked by an active process of Westernization of art and education (at the forefront of this process were major cities of the Celestial Empire — Beijing, Shanghai and Kharbin with their communities of foreigners). There were concerts, recitals and opera performances of classical repertoire. Before World War II, many performers went to study abroad, mostly to France, Germany, and the USA. The works of Chinese composers of the time were dominated by the romantic style tinted with national colors (the so-called "pentatonic Romanticism") [See: 13].

As a result, Eastern and Western samples of this multi-cultural fusion turned out to be similar, in part. Just as He Luting and Xian Xinghai[15] were turning to the genres, forms and techniques of the Old World diluting their works with pentatonics, song intonations and imitations of the ethnic instruments, Griffes in his "Five Poems of Ancient China and Japan" combined together the most eloquent "signs" of the Orient (the modal ones, first of all) with the Western tradition.

In their turn, those composers who were fated to find themselves in China also attempted to combine what was "theirs" and what was not. A good example of it was the works of Alexander Tcherepnin, musician and teacher, who lived in the Far East from 1934 till 1937. As a professor of piano and composition at the conservatory in Shanghai, he saw his mission in teaching "Chinese to remain Chinese" [As cited in: 14, p. 146]. In his compositions for beginning pianists ("Piano Method on the Pentatonic Scale", 1934–1935, "Etude de piano sur la gamme pentatonique" op. 51, 1934–1935), and later in his virtuoso compositions ("5 Konzert-Etuden" for piano op. 52, 1934–1936, Concerto № 4 "Fantaisie" op. 78, 1947) Tcherepnin relied on the pentatone system striving for the imitation of tones from ancient instruments such as pipa, guqin and turned to national genres and traditional theater. In general, the influence of Chinese music on Western composers in the first half of the 20th century (Puccini, Debussy, Mahler, Stravinsky) primarily manifests itself in the stylistic and formal imitation of exotic folklore.

Numerous translations of Chinese and Japanese poets into European languages played an important role in exposing the culture of the East at the beginning of the century. In 1907, the famous "Chinese Flute" by Hans Bethge, scored by many generations of composers from different countries, was published in Germany. In 1912, Alexander Brandt's collection "Japanese Lyrics" was published in the northern capital of the Russian Empire, which inspired those from St. Petersburg such as Stravinsky, Arthur-Vincent Lourié, and Shostakovich to create chamber vocal cycles. Nikolai Tcherepnin selected Konstantin Balmont's translations for his "Seven Pentastiches by Ancient Japanese and Modern Poets (Tankas)." In England, translations also gained popularity, to name a few, "Chinese Poems" by Charles Budd (1912), "A Lute of Jade: Being Selections from the Classical Poets of China" by Lancelot A. Cranmer-Byng (1909), translations of Laurence Binyon (his interest in Far Eastern poetry lasted approximately thirty years). Griffes was familiar with the

[15] Xian Xinghai, 1905–1945, go this education in China and France under Paul Dukas, which helped him adapt European methods of composition onto the Chinese soil.

above-mentioned editions in English, which proves the composer's deep expertise and attention to the metaphoric world of ancient Chinese and Japanese poetry[16]. In his "Five Poems of Ancient China and Japan," the musician turns to some common "signs" of classical oriental lyrics — the symbolism of color (in the final song "A Feast of Lanterns" "the garden is gleaming with cold and white" and "red dragons leap and plunge in gold and silver Seas") and seasons (spring and autumn). The author is fascinated by such metaphors as "the moon-barque" (in the song "Tears"), "mountains," "sleeping dragons" (in the miniature "The Old Temple among the Mountains"), "the lanterns swinging through the trees," and "bright as the myriad argosies of night" (in the song "A Feast of Lanterns").

At the same time, the first miniature of the cycle "So-Fei Gathering Flowers" evokes associations with the iconography of Art Nouveau. The author of the text, a Chinese poet from the Tang dynasty (8th century) Wang Chang-Ling, compares the girl's beauty with the charm of "her sisters" — beautiful flowers (lotuses and lilies "sprinkled with the morning dew"). So-Fei wears "a dress of gauzy fabric, of the 'lien' leaf's em'rald hue"; "rose-hued, too, [are] the maiden's cheeks"; her silhouette is likened to blooming plants of a beautiful garden. The composer chooses the lines with a metaphor typical of *Jugendstil* — a flower to denote a young girl. A similar framework can be found, for example, in Richard Strauss's early chamber vocal cycle "Mädchenblumen" based on poems by F. Dahn (1887).

The songs framing the piece are cheerful spring-time melodies, whereas the mood of the next circle (second and forth miniatures "Landscape"[17] and "Tears") contrasts sharply and conveys a feeling of withering autumnal nature, twilight, loneliness, and sufferings. In the center, there is "the Old Temple among the Mountains" (№ 3), a majestic abandoned temple grassed over the turbulent times of the "rule" of revolutions. Griffes who read oriental poetry, mainly in translations (not always of a high quality), was attracted primarily by the realm of artistic images unusual for a Western reader.

The composer approached the musical representation of *couleur locale* in a different manner compared to his European contemporaries who relied on the same English-language poetic publications. In 1912, two "series" of songs by the Englishman Granville Ransome Bantock (1868–1946) came out. They were based on the poems of Chinese authors published in the collections of L. Cranmer-Bing "The Jade Lute" and "Lantern Festival." Extended vocal compositions filled with sophisticated "Wagnerian" harmonies appeared to be much closer to the passing Romantic tradition than the laconic pentatonic miniatures of Griffes. In his cycle "Five Poems of Ancient China and Japan," the composer succeeded in going beyond traditional Romantic means of representation of the "exotic." Immersion in Chinese poetic images and original folklore sources led Griffes and American music in general to amazing discoveries in the early 20th century, which anticipated the future way of integrating the musical languages of East and West in the USA.

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[16] The cycle includes five miniatures:
"So-fei Gathering Flowers" (Wang Chang-Ling, translated from the Chinese by Charles Budd)
"Landscape" (Sada-Ihe, translated from the Japanese by Laurence Binyon)
"The Old Temple among the Mountains" (Chang Wen-Chang, translated from the Chinese by Charles Budd)
"Tears" (Wang Seng-Ju, translated from the Chinese by Lancelot A. Cranmer-Byng)
"A Feast of Lanterns" (Yuan Mei, translated from the Chinese by Lancelot A. Cranmer-Byng).

[17] Second miniature was written by the Japanese poet Fujiwara no Teika (1162–1241) in the Tanka style.

Central to the musician's "Eastern" heritage is "The Pleasure-Dome of Kubla Khan," inspired by Samuel Coleridge's poem "Kubla Khan or a Vision in a Dream." The idea dates back to 1912: a piano piece was written within a few months and five years later developed into a composition for a large orchestra. Contrary to Griffes's usual way of pursuing his free imagination followed by matching a "suitable" epigraph and music, it was the poem of the English poet that encouraged him to compose this work. "The Temple of Pleasure" is a rare example of Griffes's appeal to the lyrics of early Romanticism in programmatic instrumental compositions. In most of them, he quotes excerpts of poems by contemporary American, English and French poets (Paul Verlaine, William Butler Yeats, William Sharp[18], Edgar Allan Poe).

Griffes chooses the most concrete, "visible" and decorative elements describing the palace, "I have taken as a basis for my work those lines of Coleridge's poem describing the "stately pleasure-dome"[19], the "sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice," the "miracle of rare device." Therefore I call the work The Pleasure-Dome of Kubla Khan rather than Kubla Khan. These lines include 1 to 11 and lines 32 to 38. It might be well to quote in the program book some of the lines — at least the last six" [As cited in: 1, p. 195].

Fascination with the palace does not obscure the other details of the narrative. "The vague, foggy beginning suggests the sacred river, running 'through caverns measureless to man down to a sunless sea.' The gardens with fountains and 'sunny spots of greenery' are next suggested" [As quoted in: 1, p. 195]. Images of water so characteristic for the art of the turn of the century can also be found in the instrumental works of Griffes. The composer is lured by the force of oceans, rivers and raving seas ("Barcarolle," 1912), by the smooth, mirror-like surface of the lake ("The Lake at Evening," 1910), by a tranquil pond ("Notturno," 1915), and by the water spraying from the fountains ("The Fountain of the Aqua Paola," 1916). These piano pieces and "The Pleasure-Dome of Kubla Khan" were produced by Griffes in the mid-1910's, at a time when he took an interest in the Art Nouveau aesthetics.

In Coleridge's poem, the composer stresses some "musical" episodes — harmoniously resonant chants of "an Abyssinian maid." Her magic songs, to the accompaniment of "her dulcimer she played," was recreated by Griffes using the onomatopoeic technique (elaborate Oriental tune against the plunking of two harps and a celesta). Inspired by the description of the palace he "gives his imagination free" [As cited in: 1, p. 195] and "supplements" the plot of the original, "From inside come sounds of dancing and revelry which increase to a wild climax and then suddenly break off. There is a return to the original mood suggesting the sacred river and the 'caves of ice'" [As cited in: 1, p. 195–6].

Colorful pictures of a vigorous dance re-emerge in "Scherzo" (1915) from the piano cycle "Fantasy Pieces," op. 6. This miniature is anteceded by an anonymous fairy-tale of an epigraph, probably written by Griffes, "From the Palace of Enchantment there issued into the night sounds of unearthly revelry. Troops of genii and other fantastic spirits danced grotesquely to a music now weird and mysterious, now wild and joyous" [As cited in: I, p. 23]. One should mention similarity in rendering the images: the endless spin of

[18] William Sharp, 1855–1905, Scottish poet of the late Victorian time, writer and novelist. At a mature age of his work, he used a female name of Fiona Macleod as a pseudonym. He was aware of the leading styles of his age — Romanticism, Symbolism and Modern.

[19] Griffes quotes the second line of Coleridge's poem, "stately pleasure-dome" (translation into Russian by Balmont) [As quoted in: 15, p. 78–80].

brief phrases of a small extent in natural modes (Phrygian in "Scherzo" and Lydian in the "Pleasure-Dome"). In 1919, Griffes rescored "Scherzo" turning it into "Bacchanalia."

The composer was always much more at ease with chamber genres than with long forms which is attested by the number of piano pieces and vocal lyrics in different languages. Void of a chance to hear his symphonic works performed on stage, Griffes orchestrated them by the method trial and error. In the case of the "Pleasure-Dome," he was continually confronted by problems. Throughout the year 1912, he was attempting to finish its piano version: in his diary, Griffes wrote that no other composition of his had been re-written so many times. When he let his friend and colleagues listen to the yet unfinished work, he would hear unfavorable comments on the "non-pianistic" character of the theme and a significant portion of his work.

The first to hear "Pleasure-Dome" was Arthur Farwell[20] who called the draft "impossibly *unklaviermässig*" [As cited in: 1, p. 196]. Griffes agreed with this and throughout the next months he was diligently attempting to introduce changes to it. Half a year later, yet another important listener, the Austrian pianist Gottfried Galston[21] shared his opinion of the "Dome." He found it modern in harmony, "dependent" on French music but not imitative, pointing out "that Kubla was essentially an orchestral piece," — this was the entry in Griffes's diary dated November 9th, 1912 [As cited in: 1, p. 198].

The final decision to turn it into a symphony was made under the influence of Feruccio Busoni whom the composer met during his Berlin years. When the Italian maestro visited the USA, Griffes played for him a few of his piano compositions, including the "Pleasure-Dome." "I think Kubla Khan interested him," wrote Griffes, "He said there was very good Oriental atmosphere in it, and praised the theme. But he advised me to either do it for orchestra or make it shorter for piano" [As cited in: 1, p. 198]. Disappointed by numerous failures, the musician in early 1916 embarked upon the draft of the score. At that time, he virtually had no experience in symphonic music: two earlier, unpublished pieces — "Overture" (1905) and "Symphonische Phantasie" (1907) date back as early as the German period. "Pleasure Dome" was to be the one big orchestral composition of Griffes. It may have been his doubts in his own abilities that strove him to seek recommendations from his experienced colleagues. In June, the composer played his "Kubla Khan" for Arthur Whiting[22] who believed that Griffes was not ripe for a large symphonic score. He advised him not to hurry and to meticulously study the resources of each instrument. As a result, a colorful musical artwork was produced for a large orchestra with extended percussion (cymbals, gong, bass-drum, tambourine) and piano, celesta and two harps.

Griffes creates the image of the sacred river in the slow introduction (Lento misterioso) in dark gloomy hues: against the tremolo of violoncellos and double-basses (sul ponticello) there is "deep Gong which is kept in vibration by friction on the edge" [As cited in: II, p. 1] and bass-drum, which are followed by the frozen ostinant chords of a piano with two simultaneously pressed pedals, three trombones and tuba. The harmonious vertical

[20] Arthur Farwell, 1872–1952, American composer who left a significant heritage in different genres, a conductor and a teacher. Among his students was Roy Harris, music publisher, the founder of Wa-Wan Press, and a popularizer of Native American, Afro-American and Anglo-American folklore and academic music linked to these. Both he and Griffes were interested in German art (both studied in Berlin under Engelbert Humperdinck) and ethnic genres of indigenous population of America.

[21] Gottfried Galston, 1879–1950, Austrian pianist and teacher. They befriended each other in Berlin where both took piano classes.

[22] Arthur Whiting, 1861–1936, American composer, pianist and teacher.

is built by a symmetrical mode (the mode of limited transposition) 1S — S — 1S — S — 1S — S[23] with an augmented triad at the base. Further on, the central theme develops — the song of "the Abyssinian maid" coming from afar (lontano). The authentic folk song was borrowed by the composer from a source unknown to us. Griffes had studied all available materials on the Arab folklore in the library of New York looking for "something" suitable for his "Kubla Khan." The resulting elaborately ornamental solo of the oboe, similar to the leitmotif of Scheherazade, moves along the sounds of the mode with two augmented seconds and has the tetrachords S + 1S + S present in the introduction.

Analogies with Russian music are quite obvious. It was Rimsky-Korsakov who was the first to use the mentioned mode and linked it to the fairy-tale Oriental atmosphere in his early suite "Antar" and emphasized it in his last opera "The Golden Cockerel." Interestingly, both musicians conjured up mysterious female images (the maid from the "Pleasure-Dome," the peri from "Antar" and the Shemakha tsaritsa from "The Golden Cockerel").

The mysterious and faraway East with its vague silhouettes was a point of attraction for many composers at the turn of the century. Yuri Kholopov noted the heightened interest of Russian and French musicians in the modes with symmetrical structure and in this connection singled out works by Lyadov, Stravinsky, Tcherepnin, Scriabin, Debussy and Ravel [16]. Simultaneously with Griffes, the mode with a limited transposition 1S + S was used by one of the last representatives of the Rimsky-Korsakov school, Sergei Prokofiev in his "Toccata" D-Minor (1912). One should mention that besides coming to the recitals of this young Russian pianist, Griffes met him in person during his American tour.

No less obvious is the relation with the contemporary French culture which interested Griffes for many years. Just as his cult-figures, Debussy and Ravel, the American musician was experimenting with ladoharmonic colorfulness, with multilayer sound fabric and spicy timbers. The abundance of solo-performing instruments (violin, violoncello, oboe, flute) the *divisi* of strings, the subdued sound of brass instruments with sourdino, love of the crystal voices of celesta and harps; shifting attention from the formal logic of the development to the sound and structure of chords, ostinance and movement along parallel "empty" or chromatic accords, "orchestrated texture made of the expressive intonations of the relief and coloristic richness of the background" [17, p. 42], they all bring to mind compositions of French impressionists at the turn of the century.

Despite the editorial corrections introduced after the composer's death by the conductor Frederick Stock, the orchestration of the poem reflects Griffes's tastes and way of thinking. The version of "Oriental" orchestration closest to his can be found in the "magic" overture "Sheherazade" by Ravel (1898) who was enchanted by the Oriental theme from his childhood. The big symphonic orchestra (triple cast) of the two composers differs in just a few colors. Wood wind instruments (piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn and three bassoons) in Griffes's orchestration are supplemented by bass clarinet, while in Ravel's by a sarrusophone contrebasse, so loved by French adepts of Romanticism. The difference can only be seen in the number of trumpets (Griffes has three, while Ravel four) and the latter opts for a tuba contrebasse. Otherwise the cast is similar (four horns, three trombones). The percussions are almost identical: timpani, drum (bass drum in Griffes's

[23] A similar structure can be found in Alexander Tcherepnin's modes (mode I — 1S — S — 1S — S — 1S; mode II — S — 1S — S — 1S — S). The composer described his experiments with modes in "Basic Elements of my Musical Language", 1962. See: [14].

case), cymbals, tambourine and gong (Ravel has a triangle). Celesta and two harps adorning the scores of both composers, in Griffes's are supplemented by his beloved piano, whose part, according to the composer's conception, "is not to be played as a solo, but to be blended in with the other instruments" [II, p. 1][24].

The idea of a multicolor and fat sound orchestra has its roots in both Russian music ("Scheherazade" by Rimsky-Korsakov, 1988) and French symphonic art (for example, "Fetes" from Debussy's "Nocturnes", etc.), which Griffes, certainly, knew well (the compositions mentioned were performed in New York). The composer paid special attention to the Art Nouveau style including ornamental arabesque patterns that run through the entire musical fabric and intricately intertwine in polyphonic development, an ostinato, independent themes of timber layers that merge to create a rich multi-layer texture, exquisitely chromatized melodies of solo strings and woodwinds, tinted by chorals or fanfare replicas by the brass. The development of the composition based on variations, fluidity and "infinity" of its monothematic unfolding create a feeling of a freely "thriving" form, which nevertheless possesses contours of a ternary and concentric form.

Griffes associated the East with ancient tales and legends. The most important "icon" of Art Nouveau is the symbol of a wild dance releasing primitive instincts and resembling a sudden whirlwind that "breaks off" abruptly rather than abating. An enchanting and alluring female image is mysterious and voluptuous, as if influenced and modeled on *femme fatale*, a heroine beloved in Europe. The theme of the sacred river framing "Kubla Khan" is typical of the aesthetics at the turn of the century with its strong interest in the element of water. Even the ornamental melody of the "Abyssinian maid" represents a "wave."

Thus, the musical embodiment of romantic images of Coleridge's poem fits into the mainstream of Orientalism, which became widespread in Europe and America. Griffes shows both languished, delicate features in the Arab tune and wild ones in the syncopated dance rhythm of the Lydian mode, which reach their climax in coda Vivace (glissando and chromatic patterns) of violins on the background of tritonic Bartok pizzicato of cellos and double basses). At the same time, the hedonism stressed in the title and poetic lines by Coleridge acquires a different tone in music: the East featured by "conflict-free" themes of nature, history and art is portrayed by Griffes in gloomy and grave colors and timbers. Its mysterious nature remains hidden, it appeals to the author and appalls him at the same time, and through his eyes we can see the Pleasure-Dome as if "from the outside," from the perspective of a person belonging to a different culture.

The premiere of the piece took place in 1919 and was conducted by the French Pierre Monteux, who had just been appointed chief conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Collaboration with Sergei Diaghilev's itinerant company developed his taste for Russian opera and symphonic music (in particular, for works by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov) and promoted personal contacts with Debussy, Ravel, and Stravinsky. Admired by Griffes's score, Monteux began rehearsing as soon as he took the post of symphony orchestra conductor (for three previous years he had worked at the Metropolitan Opera). The success was overwhelming and surpassed all of Griffes' expectations: the public eagerly accepted his new composition and leading American media published favorable reviews. During the guest performance of the Boston Orchestra at Carnegie Hall, "The Pleasure-Dome" was presented before a New York audience. Public recognition and professional approval

[24] The interest in the percussion timbers was inspired by the Javanese gamelan, which he came to know via Eva Gauthier.

were very important for the American composer, who spent a lifetime climbing to the pinnacle of his career. The poem turned out to be the last major accomplishment of the musician: a few months later, at the age of 35 he died from Spanish influenza.

Throughout his career, Griffes was attracted by the latest trends — Impressionism, Symbolism, and Modernism — so vividly embodied in the music of Debussy and Ravel, as well as by a superb color scheme of the late operas of Rimsky-Korsakov, neo-folklorism of the Russian ballets of Stravinsky, constructivism in the works belonging to "Les Six" (Griffes knew Darius Milhaud personally). In spite of the fact that Griffes' works show obvious similarities to these compositions, his role cannot be reduced to adopting the musical experiences of others. Oriental works of the American composer reveal his high professional level, his ability not only to absorb the most significant ideas of his time, but also translate them into a personal cultural idiom. His skillful integration of various sources, both European and non-European, is an important feature of the US national school, which was developing and in search for an identity at the beginning of the 20th century. The lack of centuries-long roots stimulated an increased interest in everything new. This may be the reason why the problem of similarities and recurrence of style was so important for Griffes. "One cannot possibly play the new composers much, without being influenced by them in one's own compositions. But I do have a deathly fear of becoming one of the dull imitators of the innovators. There are already enough of those" [As cited in: 18, p. 25].

In conclusion, the Oriental theme in Griffes' works manifested itself in different genres — theatrical, symphonic and chamber vocalic. The musician took a keen interest in faraway Asia, which was, on the one hand, a polar opposite to the West, but on the other hand, an inalienable part of American culture. To recreate the image of the Orient, the composer turned to the expressive means in music at the turn of the century — anhemitonic and symmetrical modes, colorful orchestration, imitation of timbers of ethnic instruments (hence, his attention to woodwind instruments and percussion, onomatopoeic rendition of piano in the vocal cycle), ancient poetry, plots, and metaphors. In spite of a noticeable influence on a part of Russian and French culture, non-European cultures — Japanese, Chinese, Indian, Indonesian, Arab — were important sources of inspiration for him. The composer studied both music and folklore and also literature, poetry, painting, and the philosophy of different countries. This explains Griffes' Orientalism: it is intentionally "simple" in the idiom, closer to a folklore imitation in the cycle of "Five Ancient Chinese and Japanese Poems," but elaborately complicated and spicy in the poem "The Pleasure-Dome of Kubla Khan". Griffes' work exemplifies the beginning of a fruitful dialogue between East and West in the music culture of the USA, which later was continued by Henry Cowell, John Cage, Lou Harrison, Harry Partch, La Monte Young, and other American classical composers of the 20th century.

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