

1.2 Generalizing trends of the ethno-cultural phenomenon in the activities of Ukrainian song ensembles

Careful and meticulous studying of the ethnocultural phenomenon both on the global and local levels led to the creation of new ensembles of Ukrainian songs in Ukraine and beyond its borders. Similar trends expanded through the processes of the ongoing crisis of national identity and inculturation in terms of increased migration and polyethnicity through the challenges of war.

Folk song ensembles are a manifestation of self-identification of the Ukrainian people and an important component of research, reproduction, development, representation and popularization of ethnic song traditions. Collective musical creativity in the modern historical dimension takes on the characteristics of the staged nature of ethno-cultural and socio-cultural processes, which are based on the study, analysis and modern embodiment of unique song samples.

Artistic song interpretations, modified in time and space, vividly reflect the ideology, way of life, aesthetic tastes of the Ukrainian people against the background of the development of multiculturalism or aggressive cultural intervention. Such challenges significantly actualize the practice of enriching the ethno-cultural phenomenon through the activities of folk song ensembles.

Until recently, the Ukrainian folk song seemed to be a favorite, but quite neglected genre on the amateur and professional stage. Gradually, it turned into a historical artifact, lost the features of relevance and topicality. Majority of the modern ensembles of Ukrainian songs were under the influence of pop artists, they copied the manner of performance, style, and interpretation of the content. Most often, the Ukrainian song in group performance could be heard from women of respectable age or from children who, most likely, unconsciously made their choice. Today, it is not uncommon to meet talented performers of folk songs, although the demand for more hyped hits, high-quality and expensive presentation. Bright decoration still leaves the folk song in the shade. For a long time, Ukrainians unfairly underestimated themselves,

cultivated an inferiority complex, were ashamed of their achievements and most precious relics.

It is obvious that the Ukrainian people have not lost their love for their song, therefore the creation of new and the development of existing Ukrainian song ensembles is a relevant and promising direction. Many people think that they know well and are able to sing folk songs, but for preservation and prospective development, a professional art-theological approach, scientific and methodological support, and systematic classes with an experienced leader are needed. The folk song ensemble will not be successful if its members do not systematize the ethno-cultural experience of the creative activity of the best collectives of the past, the methodology of their work, do not analyze and generalize new forms of ensemble performance.

The scientific approach and priming of the practice of enriching the ethno-cultural phenomenon will arm folk song lovers, promote the development of ideas for creative inspiration, and help them reveal their creative individuality. It is also important to be careful when choosing a song repertoire. A significant number of Ukrainian folk songs, which have been unfairly forgotten [4], are published even in printed editions available to the public. For some reason, most ensembles perform the same songs, without trying to choose their own unique repertoire, manner of interpreting the content, and performance style. But, adherence to such a paradigm will make each ensemble unique, and a make folk song a living rarity and a work of art.

The modern ensemble of the Ukrainian folk song, as an element of the ethno-cultural phenomenon, has an ancient history, because group singing has long been one of the most common forms of folk entertainment, which was admired by adults, youth, and children [4, 6]. Various folk songs were heard during folk celebrations, fairs, and folkloric rituals, which traditionally took place both among the rural and urban population of Ukraine. Usually, their performance was accompanied by dances, games, driving round dances, instrumental accompaniment [5, 6]. Subsequently, this type of ethnographic art was synthesized into a modern folk song ensemble, which found its place on the concert stage.

The Ukrainian folk song ensemble differs from the ethnocultural group performance, first of all, because it consists of singers who systematically attend rehearsals, know the folk repertoire well, are capable of improvisation, have a beautiful timbre of voice, musical abilities, flair and acting talent. Thanks to the fact that the members of the folk song ensemble are gifted with a good musical ear, later, during the lessons, they perform learned songs for several parts, decorating them with undertones, melismas and dynamic shades.

Modern ensembles of Ukrainian folk songs are differentiated by genres, composition of performers and method of performance. They can be female, male, mixed, children's or youth. Ensemble participants will differ in age and gender. This will depend on the direction of work, repertoire, timbre color, manner of presenting musical material, specific features. The collective's artistic concept can be based on an authentic performance or, conversely, on modern arrangements of folk songs, singing can be a cappella or with instrumental accompaniment.

The activity of Ukrainian song ensembles begins with organizational and methodical work and consists in inviting and selecting talented singers who are endowed with a pleasant voice, musical ear, have a sense of rhythm, have artistic talents and an active lifestyle. However, the main criterion and priority for participation in the ensemble is a passion for Ukrainian songs.

There is a widespread practice of attracting not only individual endowed performers to a new collective, but also groups of amateurs who are used to singing their favorite Ukrainian songs in their everyday environment. It is known that the attachment to folk song arises from early childhood and, remaining throughout life, passes across the generations in both active and passive forms [7]. The Ukrainian song traditionally sounds in the family circle, during friendly parties, celebrations in the educational team, among working colleagues. People everywhere hear and sing Ukrainian songs, learning the samples of melodies, their content and traditions of their reproduction. Among the singers, there are particularly talented folk performers who remember many songs, have a good ear for music, the ability to sing polyphonically and can lead other participants.

For the organization and successful development of the future Ukrainian song ensemble, it is important to invite a talented and professionally trained leader. As practice shows, this is the most difficult task during the creating of such ensemble. It is necessary to find a qualified specialist who loves Ukrainian song, understands its performance traditions, is an educated musician, carefully studies the peculiarities of folk performance, repertoire, is consistently interested in the latest achievements of ethno-cultural heritage, and systematically and purposefully expands his artistic horizons. It is important that the leader of the ensemble must be a moral and musical authority for its members, a bright personality, and have leadership qualities. In addition, it is necessary to immediately select an asset of the ensemble from the most proactive singers, who will help the leader in solving organizational and current tasks in the process of creative activity of the Ukrainian song ensemble.

During the organization of the Ukrainian song ensemble, one of the tasks of the team leader is to attract singers with bright, timbre-colored, clean voices. An experienced leader knows that during the formation of a team, it is not necessary to arrange an individual audition. It is pedagogically appropriate to sing known songs together. This technique relieves unnecessary tension, allows you to listen to others, feel a common manner, adapt to the style of performance, helps unite the future song team. It is more appropriate to sing without instrumental accompaniment. Team leader will listen to each performer, analyze such singing and, thanks to his professional training and experience, will be able to make a differentiated approach to assessing the abilities of the applicants.

It is a misconception that only well-gifted singers should be accepted to participate in Ukrainian song ensembles. Performers with modest musical abilities should not be neglected. Often, in the process of regular classes, their musical ability develops progressively. Sometimes, at the initial stage, shyness or lack of singing practice becomes an obstacle. But, even if individual performers have a clear but not loud voice, their singing in an ensemble of a Ukrainian song in the process of joint performance will help to achieve a thick, timbre-rich and high-quality sound.

In addition to the timbre of the voice and musical ear, at the organizational and methodical stage, the head of the Ukrainian song ensemble checks the sense of rhythm, purity of intonation, and peculiarities of sound production. Sometimes future participants copy pop singers, imitate their manner of performance, thereby mocking their own voice nature. It is important that from the very beginning the members of the Ukrainian song ensemble learn to sing easily and casually.

Both at the organizational and methodological stage, and in further creative activities, the leader of the Ukrainian song ensemble strives to create a friendly, calm atmosphere that will help reveal the individual manner of singing of each participant, mastery of the voice and words, feel the expressiveness of performance, purity of intonation, will contribute to the maximum disclosure of creative abilities and executive talent [5].

If a person has even outstanding vocal ability and singing talent, but shows disrespect for other team members, conflicts, disregards existing orders, then he should not be accepted into the ensemble. A creative team is a group of like-minded people who have common ideals and are tolerant of each other. People come to the ensemble of Ukrainian songs at the call of their souls in order to meaningfully diversify their leisure time, expand the circle of communication, self-development and self-realization. Any negative influence or insult interfere with the promising creative development of both individual performers and the ensemble as a whole.

The generalizing trends of the ethno-cultural phenomenon in the process of creative activity of Ukrainian song ensembles consist in the consistent reproduction of creative achievements inherited from their talented ancestors. Learning and modern performance of ancient Ukrainian songs attracts the attention of not only professional musicians, but also ordinary Ukrainians. Such songs are especially popular among young people who cultivate their national identity. Ukrainian song ensembles are an example of repetition of the singing skills and rich ethno-cultural song heritage of Ukrainians.

Cultivating the singing skills of even all performers of a folk song ensemble does not at all guarantee success on stage. Through systematic training, the leader forms a

high ensemble culture of singers. The result of such consistent and purposeful work will be a harmonious sound, feeling and support of each other. The formation of repertoire of the Ukrainian song ensemble involves the selection of artistic samples considering the genre, style and individual characteristics, singing skills and ensemble culture of its members [6].

Ethnic forms of Ukrainian folk performance contain tendencies of melodic and harmonic principles of musical thinking. The basis of Ukrainian polyphony is a system of undertones or variants of the melody, which «produced» by individual performers. Such a free manner of group singing is characterized by a variety of techniques of polyphonic sound. These can be: a varied repetition of the main melody; singing in thirds or other parallel intervals; an independent singing that involves the mediated opposing movement of individual voices. Undertones have an independent intonation-melodic line and ratio of intervals, which end with a perfect (prima, octave, fifth) or imperfect (third, sixth) consonance.

Polyphony built on undertones is a characteristic feature of Ukrainian traditional songs and evidence of the high musical culture of the people.

The score of the Ukrainian folk song looks quite transparent. The main stanza of the song is sung by the soloist, then, as a rule, another singer or the whole ensemble picks up. Melodic and rhythmic variations are observed through the layering of voices, but the leading motif remains unchanged throughout all the verses. The stable nature of the melody is explained by the fact that it is performed by the majority of voices, while undertones are "produced" separately or even by one voice [6]. The score depends on the genre and character of the song, because a humorous song will have a more simplified, close arrangement of parts than a lyrical one. Songs that are performed to the accompaniment of folk instruments, modern musical accompaniment or a phonogram do not require developed polyphony. Two or three parts are enough, for the climax it is sometimes advisable to use a complex polyphonic fragment.

Collective performance of Ukrainian songs is an attractive but difficult job for performers. Singing in an ensemble involves the ability to sing one's part well and, at

the same time, listen carefully to other singers. This is one of the most difficult tasks in the activity of Ukrainian song ensembles.

Musical improvisation is a characteristic ethnocultural feature of the collective performance of a Ukrainian song. The performers' desire for creative improvisation while singing is an valuable feature of such groups. During improvising, singers are not limited by the score, but perform the song based on their own feelings and understanding of the melody and content at the time of performance. This is what makes Ukrainian song ensembles unique creative centers that have an original performance style and are able to reveal and enrich any ethnocultural musical masterpiece.

The roots of vocal improvisation is going back to the distant past. It originated in the traditional practice of authentic singing without musical accompaniment. The desire to enrich the melody and form of the song made it possible to create real works of folk art. Improvisation in the collective of Ukrainian songs is a continuous process that cannot be fixed [6]. The method of improvisational variation is purely individual and has a significant number of different melodic examples of the leading melody of the song. It seems to the listener that improvisation happens spontaneously, unconsciously and even anarchically. However, the singers improvise within the ethnic style, summarizing the trends of the unique musical heritage preserved over a long historical period.

The activity of Ukrainian song ensembles involves mastering a wide ethnographic repertoire. In the process of systematic group or individual classes, spadework is carried out to improve vocal skills, acquire new skills in group and solo singing, master the basics of musical training, raise the general cultural level, and conduct active concert and educational activities.

Ukrainian folk song is a specific musical genre, because its content based on perfect lyrical melodies or fiery dance rhythms is always dominant. Whether it is a lyrical, family-oriented, humorous or satirical song, it will necessarily be based on a conceptual idea embedded in the content. Generalizing trends show that some songs have a significant number of verses and several more variants of interpretation of the

content. Researchers and collectors of folk songs are happy to find and write them down. But for the presentation of the song at concert stage there is a certain timing, so the leader of the ensemble will choose several verses that most fully reveal the essence of the work, have a complete storyline and are not burdensome in terms of time.

Historically, a Ukrainian song in a solo and, even more so, in a group performance sounds without instrumental accompaniment. Nonetheless, singing to the accompaniment appeared in the folk life and reached to the concert stage. This form of performance is easier and more convenient for singers. Thanks to the use of instrumental accompaniment, the need to find talented singers with a good ear and performers who can "bring out" undertones disappears. During the instrumental introduction, the singers are given the tonality, tempo and character of the piece of music. The main task is to pick up the musical material in time and clearly reveal the meaning of the song.

Criticizing the performance of folk songs with instrumental accompaniment, one should admit that such an interpretation is more presentable, loud, enthusiastic, bright. Therefore, it is not surprising that such performance found its place in Ukrainian song ensembles.

Each musical group works consistently and hard during group rehearsals and individual classes. Systematically improving performing skills and acquiring the ability to sing in an ensemble, ensemble members purposefully increase their cultural and educational level, learn new knowledge about the history of musical culture, learn musical notation [6]. It is also important that they strengthen their social activity, find a circle for communication based on interests, cultivate a sense of mutual respect, mutual assistance, and mutual understanding. In the team, performers become more tolerant, communicative, friendly. The everyday life of members of Ukrainian song ensembles becomes more meaningful, filled with self-respect, constant self-development, pride for themselves and their country.

Naturally, the next and main task of folk song ensembles is concert musical and educational activity. Elevating the ethno-cultural phenomenon during performances in front of the listening audience is the main goal of Ukrainian song ensembles. Musical

education, as a socio-ethnographic direction, has a worthy history, because its representatives have always sought to influence the development of cultural life, spreading ideas of justice through the use of trends of the ethno-cultural phenomenon. Therefore, Ukrainian song ensembles participate in a large amount of public events thereby trying to prepare the informed listener, systematically bringing to his aesthetic consciousness the best ethnic works created by the Ukrainian people. The generalization of the trends of the ethno-cultural phenomenon is the main goal of the folk song ensembles. The broad democratic nature of ethnographic concerts helps to direct the content of the song to each listener, to make it more attractive than outwardly spectacular, but anti-artistic musical works. And too, to emphasize the sincerity and wisdom of the emotional and figurative content.

Purposeful and carefully planned musical and educational activities of Ukrainian song ensembles are able to overcome the uncertainty of the value and meaning orientations of national art, the lack of individual artistry, the distortion of folk musical styles, and the neglect of one's own culture. One of the effective ways of popularizing one's folk song is the participation of the folk song ensemble in festivals and competitions held in other cities and countries. Presenting and promoting the achievements of their folk culture, the members of the folk song ensemble exchange their creative experience among others, enrich themselves professionally and emotionally.

The leading trend of preserving the ethno-cultural phenomenon in the activities of Ukrainian song ensembles has become participation in festive concerts, fairs, and mass folk festivities, which are regularly held both at the global and local levels. Exactly here that Ukrainian song ensembles can show off their skills, and listeners can enjoy the national phenomenon of ethnic art, listen to favorite songs from childhood, and see bright concert costumes. Such performances are always successful among a wide audience, effectively contribute to the popularization of ethnic music, Ukrainian songs, awaken a sense of cultural identity and raise national self-awareness.