

CHORAL ART OF UKRAINE AS A SOCIO-CULTURAL PHENOMENON

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Abstract: National development and symbols of spiritual potential are one of the main factors in the formation of the socio-cultural image of the state. Ukraine has historically formed the aesthetic phenomenon of choral art, which preserved the national peculiarities of the language, traditions, and values inherent in the Ukrainian ethos and accumulated the socio-cultural experience of generations. The choral art of Ukraine is a phenomenon that imitates the singing ethnocultural archetype implemented in multicultural dialogues, so its scientific understanding has obvious prospects. The research aims to determine the current trends of scientific developments in the development of choral art and study its socio-cultural phenomenon, as well as to clarify some practical aspects of the development of Ukrainian choral art as a leading direction of modern artistic culture. Methodology. During the study, the analytical and bibliographic method was used to study the scientific literature on the development of choral art, as well as an online questionnaire survey for the practical clarification of certain sociocultural aspects of the phenomenon of this art form in Ukraine. Results. According to the results of the study, the directions of studying Ukrainian choral art as a sociocultural phenomenon by scientists are highlighted and some practical aspects of the study and development of its components are analyzed.

Keywords: choral art, social factors of cultural development, folk song style, trends in choral performance, specifics of Ukrainian choral creativity, musical and aesthetic education of society.

1 Introduction

Globalization changes that are taking place today in all spheres of human activity, including in the cultural and artistic sphere, erase the peculiarities of national cultures. At the same time, there are tendencies to search for cultural determinants. The values of generations, ideals of national culture, and, accordingly, the revival of historical cultural heritage are formed on their basis. The development of culture is significantly influenced by social factors. Folklore heritage, created as a set of works of folk art and popularized in society, can have a stimulating effect on the processes of regeneration and renewal of folk art culture. The forms and methods of its preservation, dissemination, and transfer of artistic values deserve attention. Folk culture has a mechanism of functioning and preservation of culture aimed at strengthening the spirituality of society. Ukrainian choral art today meets the requirements of the present and the needs of the socio-cultural sphere (Sadovenko, 2022).

The theoretical part of this study substantiates the trends in the formation of choral art in Ukraine, its functions, and its components.

The practical part of the study includes an assessment of the most common trends in choral art in Ukraine, which deserve the attention of scientists in terms of the social phenomenology of their development, clarification of the features of Ukrainian choral art that cause interest in the world socio-cultural space,

features of amateur choral creativity, as well as the most dynamic features and the most problematic issues in the field of choral art in Ukraine.

Based on the results of the study, conclusions were drawn on the issues raised. In particular, it was found that in Ukrainian choral art it is possible to distinguish varieties of choral singing that deserve the attention of scientists in terms of the social phenomenology of their development. This refers to the singing of scientific and experimental groups that reproduces the original performance, the selective use of traditional singing by academic choirs, and the stylization of folk choirs and ensembles to folk song traditions. The primary features of choral art in Ukraine, which caused the emergence of great interest in this art form in the global sociocultural space, are warmth, love for nature, and connection with ancient rites. At the same time, the features of amateur choral creativity, which leads to its popularization in the world, include the active participation of choir members in various types of social activities, their focus on self-knowledge, that is, "self-discovery" in amateur choral creativity, as well as spiritual and aesthetic experiences of participants in choral activities. The most striking advantages of choral art were named by the respondents. These are the expansion of the range of genre-stylistic transformations in choral music; modern performance activity, in which a special place is occupied by the intonation and tone "play" of vocal styles; theatricalization, plastic, and light visualization of musical images. There are problems and difficulties in the field of choral art in Ukraine, which need to be improved and can be the object of further research by scientists in this field. These are the need for new types of skills and activities of the choir director (conductor, choirmaster) and the formation of the need for new types of competencies of the choir artists are highlighted.

2 Literature review

Trends in the formation of choral art in Ukraine and its development are complex and sometimes contradictory, therefore this process requires a culturological understanding (Bermes & Polyuha, 2017).

Ukrainian choral art has a long tradition. The origins of choral art on the territory of modern Ukraine go back to ancient times. Its development was continuous for many centuries. The Ukrainian peasantry was completely isolated from the artistic achievements of the world. However, an original, unique culture was cultivated among the ethnic group. The choir played a decisive role in the work of talented folk singers. The phenomenon of singing has been actively developed and improved in various forms of choral sound for many centuries (Sinenko, 2020).

The formation of the national style of folk singing took place based on those features of the singing performance that arose in the central region of Ukraine. At the same time, the number of amateur choirs increased in all regions of Ukraine (Havrylenko, Hrytsun, Kondratenko & Sukhova, 2022).

Changes in historical realities and forms of social life in the early 20th century led to the emergence of new elements in music. Amateur choirs began to meet not only aesthetic needs. Folk singing begins an active path to professionalization - performance technique and repertoire are improved, and public performances and tours are organized (Dovzhynets, Govorukhina, Kopeliuk & Ovchar, 2022).

In the activity of Ukrainian choirs, one can trace the aspiration to achieve the highest artistic level. In the early 20th century, solid foundations were laid for the development of national poetry and prose, necessary for the development of musical art. An important role in the formation of Ukrainian choral art was played by passionate conductors who introduced Ukraine to the world (Nerubasska, Palshkov & Maksymchuk, 2020).

Taking into account the fact that local singing traditions were not yet known to the general public, the standard performing style, the basis of folk song performance was recognized to be the sound of the choir (Choi & Lee, 2019).

The problems of managing folk song material were implemented by conductors in two directions. First, folk performance is subject to the principles characteristic of academic choral singing. In the second case, the basis for working with song material is a sample of folk singing, which originated in Dnieper Ukraine. It has subsequently established itself in the minds of a standard of national Ukrainian folk singing for all regions (Gilstrap et al., 2021).

Folk music was associated with a characteristic chest singing. Until recently, it was called in the musicological literature "white tone" or "open tone" singing. This way of singing became a model and quickly spread to all regions and different song styles (Gintere, 2020).

Choral art has always maintained a close connection with Ukrainian composers. Nowadays, the mission of Ukrainian choral artists (directors, conductors, singers, accompanists, organizers, patrons, etc.) is to preserve Ukrainian choral culture and choral art from the influence of the commercial sphere (Samikova, 2020).

Choral art of Ukraine is a dynamic artistic phenomenon that successfully develops and occupies an increasingly important place in the national culture. The choral art of Ukraine forms emotional and value foundations, ideals, and moral principles. This kind of art, as an integral part of artistic culture, can reflect the dynamics of cultural development, all socio-political and moral views of society in a certain historical period, and at a particular stage of society's existence (Zubai, 2022).

The specifics of the development of Ukrainian choral creativity on the territory of Ukraine testify to the decisive influence of social conditions on the development of musical art. Periods of formation of new social relations open the way for the movement of art, and periods of social decline and historical

depression inhibit creative impulses. However, the creative personality is always inherent in a special psychological upsurge, the search for new, unknown. The thirst for creativity, a special "language of feelings", is always unquenchable and is the living source of the ethnos, through which the genetic code of spirituality of Ukrainian society has been shed for centuries. Even in times of significant social upheaval, this feeling cannot disappear from life. It is in this holistic approach to the nature of singing that the spiritual and moral essence of the artistic culture of Ukraine is formed (Fahey, Phela, Clift & Moss, 2022).

The choral art of Ukraine always reveals the unity of man and nature. Furthermore, it expresses folk wisdom based on the eternal laws of human existence with ease and simplicity.

3 Aims

The paper aims to determine the position of specialists and teachers of choral art on the most common features of the use, spread, and modern development of varieties of choral singing in Ukraine.

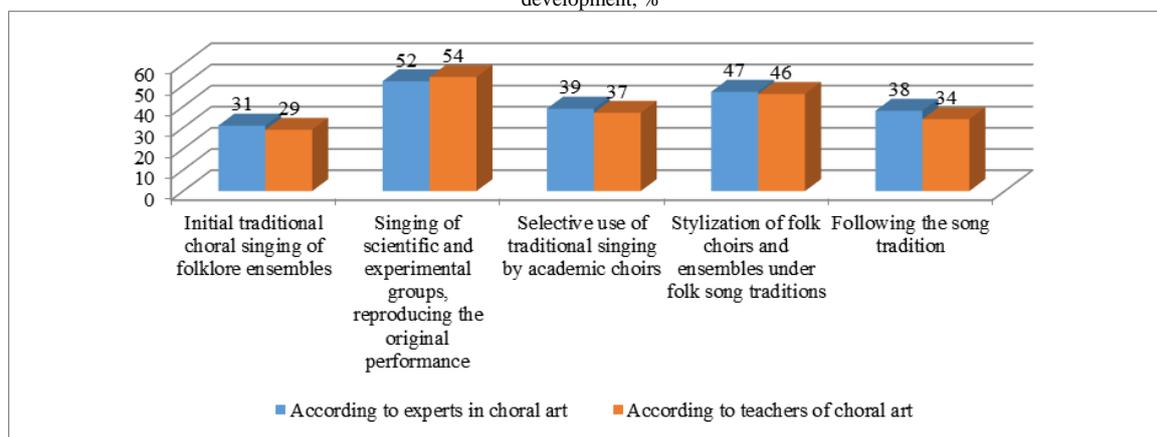
4 Materials and methods

A practical study of modern trends in the development of choral art as a socio-cultural phenomenon was conducted through a survey of 211 practitioners and 164 teachers of choral art, who teach in 24 higher art education institutions of Volyn, Rivne, Zhytomyr, and Kyiv oblasts of Ukraine. The study was conducted using the LimeSurvey service.

5 Results and Discussion

Nowadays, in the context of the rapid socialization of society and globalization of cultural processes, in Ukrainian choral art, it is possible to distinguish varieties of choral singing that have arisen historically and are more or less represented in the continuous process of Ukrainian choral culture. The survey participants were asked to assess the most common trends, which, in addition, deserve the attention of scientists in terms of the social phenomenology of their development (Figure 1).

Figure 1: The most common trends of choral art in Ukraine that deserve the attention of scientists in terms of social phenomenology of their development, %



Source: constructed by the authors.

According to the survey participants, such areas are the singing of scientific and experimental groups, which reproduces the original performance; selective use of traditional singing by academic choirs and stylization of folk choirs and ensembles to folk song traditions.

In the course of the survey, the respondents have identified the primary features of choral art in Ukraine. These features cause the emergence of great interest in this art form in the global sociocultural space (Figure 2).

As can be seen from Figure 2, the main of these are warmth, love of nature, and connection with ancient rituals.

Amateur choral art is an integral part of choral art.

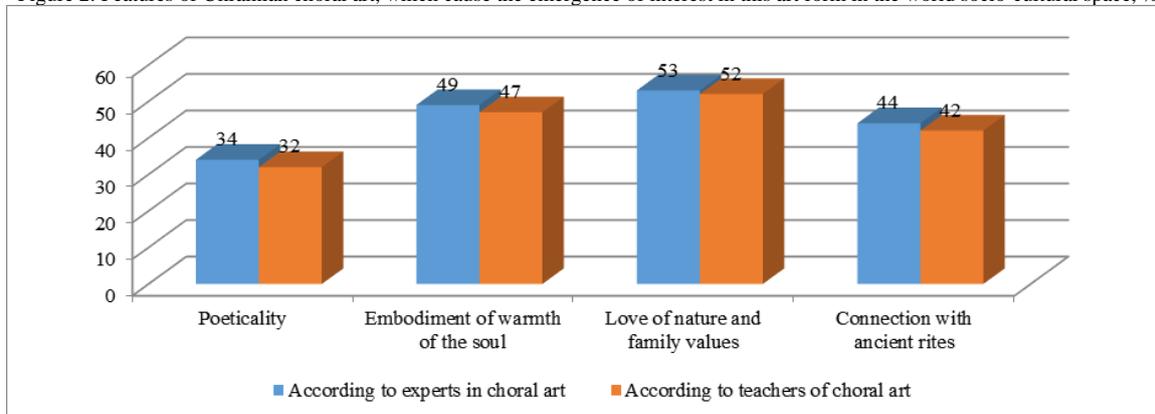
In the course of the survey, the respondents' opinion on the characteristic features of amateur choral creativity was examined, which is the reason for the spread of this art form in Ukraine and causes its popularization in the world.

According to the survey, the most important of these features are as follows (Figure 3).

- active participation in various types of social activities;
- focus on self-knowledge, that is, “self-discovery” in amateur choral creativity,
- spiritual and aesthetic experiences of participants of choral activity, starting from creative mastering of choral art and ending with stage embodiment in the form of artistic interpretation.

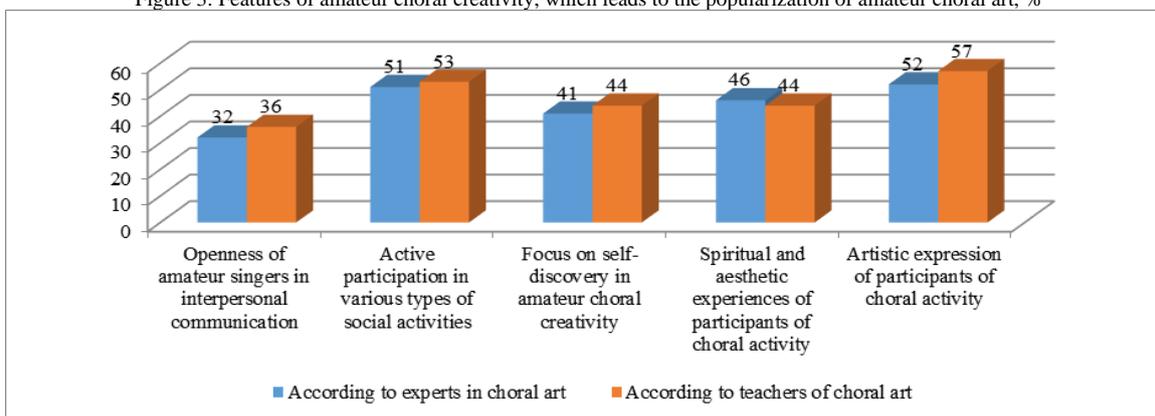
As for the most striking features of contemporary Ukrainian choral art, which, according to the survey participants, are undeniable advantages and attract interest to contemporary choral creativity, the respondents named the following (Figure 4).

Figure 2: Features of Ukrainian choral art, which cause the emergence of interest in this art form in the world socio-cultural space, %



Source: constructed by the authors.

Figure 3: Features of amateur choral creativity, which leads to the popularization of amateur choral art, %



Source: constructed by the authors.

- expanding the range of genre and style transformations in choral music;
- modern performance activity, in which a special place is occupied by intonation and timbre “play” of vocal styles;
- sound imitation;
- theatricalization;
- plastic and light visualization of musical images.

An essential stage of the survey was to identify the existing problems and difficulties in the field of choral art in Ukraine, which need to be improved and may be the subject of further research by scientists in this field (Figure 5).

- the need for new types of skills and activities of the choir director (conductor, choirmaster);
- formation of the need for new types of competencies of choir artists.

The present promotes the comprehensive restoration of the ancient tradition of folk choral art of the Ukrainian people. Even the most radical civilizational shifts cannot radically change the basis on which this tradition grew up. The intersection of tradition and innovation generates quite interesting artistic samples that require their own theoretical, methodological, and practical understanding (Dingle et al., 2019).

In the current socio-cultural situation in Ukraine, choral art is one of the most active types of musical creativity, which is

realized in the activities of a large number of choirs. The academic singing prevailing today arose based on the synthesis of the primary ritual song tradition and the church singing canon (Byzantine and Western European models), which entered the folk song with the introduction of Christianity in Ukraine (Garry et al., 2020).

From the phenomenological point of view, the choir is one of the subsystems of several other, more significant systems - cultural and civilizational, spiritual, socio-economic, political, and socio-psychological (Liu et al., 2019).

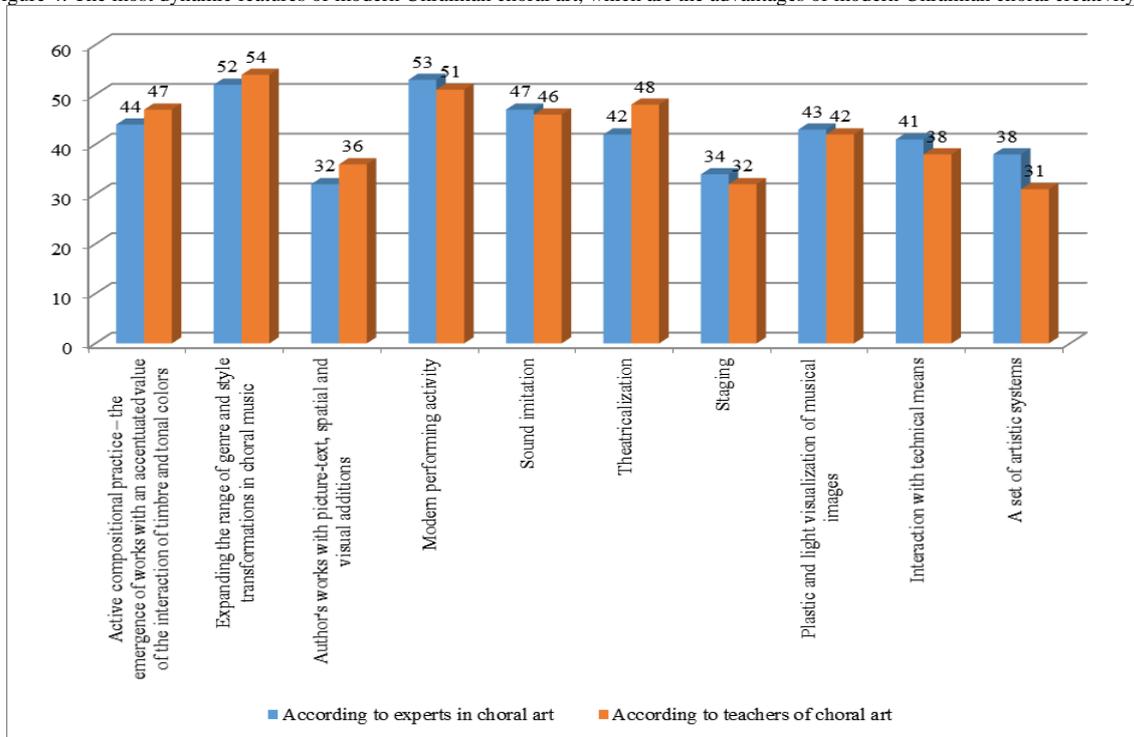
Modern Ukrainian folk art culture is a kind of symbiosis of different types, forms, and interpretations of folk traditions, customs, and beliefs. Ukrainian folk choral art in its various manifestations has long traditions. It preserves the ethnocultural archetype of the singing tradition in a versatile socio-cultural space (Sheppard & Broughton, 2020).

In the social environment, artistic culture appears as a means of spiritual, intellectual, moral, emotional, and aesthetic enrichment of the individual in the process of his creative life. From these positions, choral culture as a whole is established as a universal system of values even in the conditions of significant socio-dynamics of modern cultural life. At the same time, it has a potential impact on social development (Filar-Mierzwa et al., 2017).

As a multifaceted socio-cultural phenomenon, choral art in a unique visual and sound form reflects socio-historical events, influencing the views, thoughts, and moral and ethical attitudes of society. Therefore, choral amateur activity is one of the means of spiritual, intellectual, moral, emotional, and aesthetic enrichment of the individual in the process of his artistic creativity. As a type of cultural and leisure activity, amateur

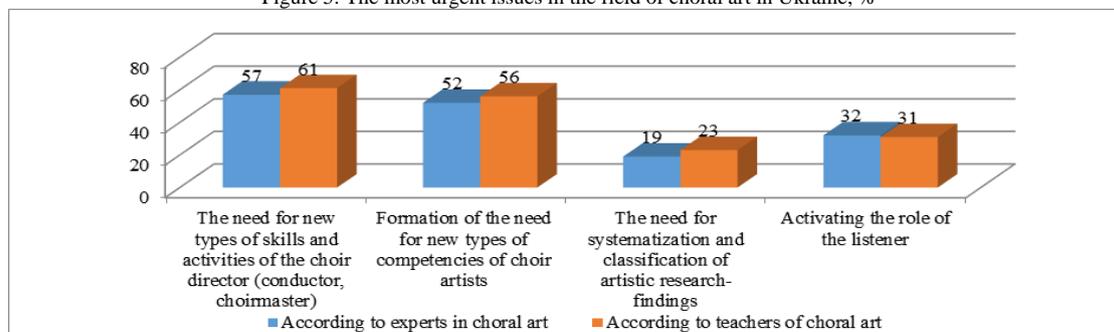
choral activity promotes holistic perception and assimilation of knowledge about the multifaceted palette of the art. It is an effective means of forming the creative potential of its participants, developing skills, inclinations, and talents, and socializing them with their further objectification in the individual sphere of life creativity (Jiao, 2022).

Figure 4: The most dynamic features of modern Ukrainian choral art, which are the advantages of modern Ukrainian choral creativity, %



Source: constructed by the authors.

Figure 5: The most urgent issues in the field of choral art in Ukraine, %



Source: constructed by the authors.

The analysis of scientific literature has made it possible to identify specific functions of amateur choirs. They reveal its pedagogical potential aimed at the intellectual and creative development of participants, contributing to the individual accumulation of one's own cultural and personal experience.

Choral activity as a type of cultural and leisure activity performs an educational function. Its implementation takes place in the process of professional activity and provides for the achievement of artistic results that are important not only for its participants but also for their future listeners.

Musical education and musical and aesthetic education of the society through concert activities is also a demonstration of the creative achievements of the amateur choir. For many people, it becomes more understandable than the performance of professional groups. The musical repertoire by its genre, figurative and emotional content of musical language, and

popularity to some extent meets the musical requirements of both participants and audience (Xu, 2021).

6 Conclusions

Thus, the analysis of scientific literature on the research topic and the results of the survey showed that Ukrainian choral art is a socio-cultural phenomenon. It is characterized by national and stylistic originality, and has historical and artistic forms (professional, amateur, experimental), revealing its specificity in artistic and stage interpretations based on musical folklore and the appropriate manner of performance. Due to its deep spiritual essence, folk choral art plays an influential role in the revival and renewal of artistic values, integration, and cultural development of Ukrainian society. Ukrainian folk choral art, as an integral part of Ukrainian folk art culture, actively responds to changes in all spheres of society. Involving a person in the process of creativity and communication, Ukrainian folk choral

art reflects these processes in cultural and artistic creativity, thus representing the national communicative, meaningful cultural component of a dynamic socio-cultural phenomenon.

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