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## STYLISTIC FEATURES OF THE COMPOSER'S HANDWRITING OF THE TEACHER-ARTIST HRYHORII LEVCHENKO

*The article analyzes the musical heritage of Hryhorii Levchenko – a modern famous choral conductor, composer, teacher, scientist, folklorist, public figure, founder and artistic director of the folk choir «Kalyna» in Poltava V. H. Korolenko National Pedagogical University. The characteristic features of the arranging heritage and author's works of the teacher-artist are determined (reliance of author's songs on folk traditions, which are harmoniously combined with modern methods of thematics and symphony of musical thinking); the original genres of choral art on the basis of folklore (lyrical-dramatic poem, choral symphony, choral fantasy, choral triptych, Concerto for Ukrainian folk choir, orchestra of folk instruments and piano).*

**Keywords:** *Hryhorii Levchenko; musical heritage; arrangement; folk song processing; translation; genres of choral art.*

**Introduction.** Domestic pedagogical education is characterized by constant updating of methodological approaches to the professional training of future specialists, the results of program training of which would meet international standards. In this process, it is valuable not only to innovate, but also to preserve the best achievements of domestic system of teacher training, including music. In view of this, there is interest in talented representatives of Ukrainian music and pedagogical education, which is more than half a century form in student youth spiritual, cultural, moral values in their national sense.

A bright representative of the pleiad of ascetics of Ukrainian music and pedagogical education is honored worker of culture of Ukraine, Honored Worker of Arts of Ukraine, Professor, Head of the Department of Music of Poltava V. H. Korolenko National Pedagogical University (hereinafter referred to as the PNPU), Excellence Teacher in Education of Ukraine, choral conductor, composer, folklorist Hryhorii Levchenko. In a multi-colored palette of achievements of an

outstanding teacher-artist, his musical heritage deserves careful study, in which H. Levchenko's creative disposition is realized.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** A thorough approach to determining the methodology and methods of analysis of musical works is covered in the works of D. Vechir, O. Klekovkin, I. Kokhanyk, V. Moskalenko, etc. (see O. Klekovkin, 2017). The life and creative path of H. Levchenko was revealed in scientific and popular articles of L. Vicenia, V. Haidamaka (2004), V. Hirchenko, T. Holoborodko, N. Demianko, O. Lobach, N. Sulaeva (2011, 2013), N. Pavlenko, T. Pruhlo, M. Shevchenko, etc. (see Yu. Komyshan, 2021); analysis of his musical creativity was carried out by L. Hnatiuk (2001), a holistic analysis of the musical and pedagogical activities of the choirmaster was first done by Yu. Komyshan (2021).

**The purpose of the article** is to represent the results of art analysis of H. Levchenko's musical heritage and summarize the stylistic features of the artist's composer's handwriting.

**Research methods:** general scientific (analysis, synthesis, comparison, generalization, abstraction) in order to summarize the directions of H. Levchenko's activities; art history – spiritual and historical, which made it possible to identify the spiritual and ideological guidelines of the teacher's musical heritage; culturally made it possible to clarify the sociocultural foundations of the artist's musical and creative activity; formal and structural-semiotic – in order to determine innovations of musical work of the composer and arranger.

**Presentation of the main material.** H. Levchenko began his creative and teaching career as an assistant to the Head of the student brass band at the craft school (Town Ladan), later continued it in the following positions: inspector of the district cultural department (Town Kamin-Kashyrsk); artistic director of the Poltava garment factory; teacher of theoretical disciplines in the children's music school; Head of folk choral groups «Reshetylivka embroiderers», «Horlytsia» «Barvinok», «Kant». Since 1979, Hrigorii Semenovych has been working at the Pedagogical Institute (now – PNPU named after V. H. Korolenko) as an Artistic Director of the Ukrainian folk choir «Kalyna», Senior Lecturer (1981-1987), Associate Professor (1987-1992), Professor (since 1992), Head of the Department of music and singing (1982-2004), Head of the Department of music

(since 2011). His name is listed in the book «Artists of Ukraine» (1994), the encyclopedic reference book «Pyriatyn region gave them wings» (2000), to the book «Names of Ukraine» (2002), to the biographical reference «Who's Who in Poltava Region. Outstanding Countrymen» (2004) and to the biographical directory «International Who's Who in Musicians' Directory» (Cambridge: The International Biographical Center, 1996), published in England since 1936 (Komyshan, 2020).

Hermeneutic analysis of the legacy of H. Levchenko testifies that his musical and creative activity can be divided into composer's and arrangemental. The composer's creative output is mostly author's songs. In each work the author pleases the listener with interesting discoveries. Thus, the author's inner need to sing about his native land prompted him to create the most famous song by H. Levchenko «Red Viburnum – Poltava Land»: «Native lands [for teacher] are steppes, boundless fields, this is a glorious harvest, flowering gardens, these are skillful strong hands of a worker» (H. Levchenko, 2000, p. 9). About the «conceptual significance of the work», as L. Hnatiuk says, it testifies, that the song gave its name to the entire collection of the artist's works, is a kind of musical «calling card» of Poltava region, which represents the most picturesque region of Ukraine at numerous concerts of the Ukrainian folk choir at home and abroad. The traditional couplet form begins with a chorus, not a chant; a kind of «hemiol» type of the ratio of the rhythm of the text and the melody of the beginning of the song; stylistic inertia is overcome in a harmonious language, where «the folklore character of melodies is naturally synthesized with a melodic-figurative variety of the multi-voiced texture of the choir and the accompaniment that ... paints the musical canvas with rainbow colors» (H. Levchenko, 2000, p. 9). Song «My native land» on the words of M. Boyko is close to the previous theme, content and musical vocabulary.

«Ballad of sons», created in co-authorship with the famous Ukrainian composer O. Chuhrai on the words of L. Vernyhora, is a deeply tragic work, written in the genre of socio-historical ballad as an eternal protest of a person against the war, which resonates with modern socio-political events in our long-suffering Ukraine. Folklore influences can be traced in this song through the association of sons

with ash trees. According to musical vocabulary, the ballad is close to epic folk works: epic theme, drama, dissonances, intonations of crying sighs, choral texture, choral instrumentation.

«Spinners-wonderlands» and «We are spinners-poltavky» to the words of A. Pashko has the opposite artistic image – optimism and joy of work, which the author embodies by original musical means: polyradovity, transmitting the game to light shade, the absence of «conflict» harmony, structural variability, a multi-voiced presentation as a characteristic of folklore and a parallel-variable system, which are combined with methods of professional elaboration of topicalism in instrumental accompaniment.

«Sowed bluebottles» on folk words and «From village to village» on the poems of T. Shevchenko represent dance, humorous in the content of the songs, where in a humorous musical picture skillfully reproduces a bright folk flavor. The author's deep knowledge of the rich folklore traditions of Poltava region is evidenced by the proximity of the type of melody of these works to folk dance songs, variability, traditional periodicity, simplicity of harmony, parallel-fretful variability, singing and singing structure, comparison of solo and choral presentation.

The song «I will wait to my lover» for the words of A. Pashko is close to lyrical folk songs and romances, as evidenced by the peculiarities of musical language: a variable number of voices, background voices, natural-fret harmony. The same genre includes one of the most popular songs of H. Levchenko on the folk words «Oh, grove, mother, grove», where he reverently preserves the original folk color and figurative-style nature: a typical romance texture, the use of ancient intonation sources, an insightful dialogue of the soloist and choir, characteristic of folk group singing.

Innovative are the choral works of a large form – «On the Cossack Adventure», «People's Symphony», «Ukrainian Fantasy», «Smear of Street Tricks», which represent the original genres on a folklore basis, started by H. Levchenko, where the features of different genre types are combined: lyrical-dramatic poem, choral symphony, choral fantasy, choral triptych. The musicologist concludes that these genres are characterized by «symphonism of musical thinking (seriousness of content, globality of ideological idea, end-to-

end development of themeism, the use of the principle of cyclicity in formation, the use of complex methods of processing thematic material), the author managed to synthesize with typical for folk polyphony compositional and performing principles» (H. Levchenko, 2000, p. 12).

The arrangemental activity of H. Levchenko has always been distinguished by a freer interpretation of musical works. It was caused by the need to diversify and update the choral repertoire of the Ukrainian folk choir «Kalyna» and its performing capabilities. Among the types of arrangement, the artist preferred translation, actual arrangement and processing:

translation – presentation of a musical work for another in comparison with the original instrument or composition of performers;

- arrangement – a) creation of instrumental accompaniment to the melody of the song for different compositions of the performers (the number of escorts depends on the complexity of the original texture, creative imagination and taste of the arranger), and it can also duplicate the melody, be independent or combined (Ovcharova, 2013, p. 37); b) a facilitated presentation of a musical work for the same composition of performers, which is carried out by transposing, moving average voices, simplifying or complicating the texture, as well as mixed (combined) way (Markhlevskyi, 1986, p. 14). In comparison with translation, the arrangement implies greater freedom in the processing of musical material;

- processing of folk songs is a kind of free interpretation of the original. This type of creative work depends on the level of the author's composer's skill, his artistic taste, the ability to create new variants of sub-voices, new musical images, having as a basis only the melody of a folk song (Ovcharova, 2013, p. 42).

In the arrangemental heritage of the artist to the translations, we attributed the choral version of the Concerto for Piano and Orchestra c-moll S. A. Shevchenko. Note that the translation process is a rather complex creative activity, which covers several stages: search, selection and determination of the artistic value of the selected musical material; analysis of the work (features of the composition, artistic and figurative and literary content, means of musical expressiveness); determination of means of processing and methods of development of musical material (relying on the laws of harmonization and features of

voice edging); translating a musical work in accordance with the characteristics of the collective (composition, range of the choir and each party, selection of tonality in order to preserve the natural sound of voices, etc.), but the «super-task» of the arranger is to express as vividly as possible the character and ideological and thematic content of the favorite work (Ovcharova, 2013, p. 42).

H. Levchenko did not have to look for the Concert of his teacher, it was offered by the teacher of the Department of Music and Singing I. Mostova, who found the archive, personally arranged by S. Shevchenko. The composer did not instrument his concerto for piano and orchestra c-moll for a symphony orchestra, but left as a clavier for two pianos (Levchenko, 2002). The author did not specify the date of its creation, probably the result of many years of creative work of his favorite teacher Hryhoriy Semenovych. The concert consists of three parts, epic in nature, technically virtuoso, with rich harmony, complex and diverse texture. H. Levchenko in the process of translating the work for the choir was based on the fact that the main party of his First part quotes the famous Ukrainian folk song «Oh in the meadow and even at the shore». In the choral version of the Professor there is a dialogue between a duo of soloists, a choir, a piano and a folk orchestra (the orchestration was fully prepared by Hrihorii Semenovych). Despite the fact that the professor modestly called the work a «choral version», we are consonant with N. Sulaieva that his genre novelty lies in «combining folk choral singing with a classical instrumental concerto» (Levchenko (Ed.), 2020, p. 207). Moreover, the artist created a new genre – Concerto for the Ukrainian Folk Choir, Orchestra of Folk Instruments and Piano. For the first time the work was performed at the Regional Interuniversity Festival «Student Spring-2003», and later decorated the program of the art report of the region «Spiritual Ode of Poltava Region» in Kiev on the main stage of the country in the Palace «Ukraine». The piano part was performed by Senior Lecturer of the Department of Music and Singing S. Hlushkova, and the future Honored Artists of Ukraine N. Sulaieva and N. Mizieva were performing solo (Levchenko (Ed.), 2020, p. 253). An active participant of the choir «Kalyna» V. Haydamaka characterizes this work figuratively and sublimely: «The concert is written on the basis of Ukrainian folk songs. It is a stormy sea of

music and feelings, a fusion of longing, despair, protest and obsession, a besieged, suffering and yet immortal soul of the people» (Haidamaka, 2004, p. 26).

Choral processing of folk song is the most popular genre of domestic professional art, because it is difficult to name a composer who would remain indifferent to him. For some, processing is only an episode of creative biography; for others – a significant work along with opera and symphonic works (M. Lysenko, S. Ludkevych, L. Revutskyi), and there are composers for whom the processing of folk song covers virtually all the work (M. Leontovych, O. Koshyts).

In musicology literature there are two trends in the processing of folk melody. The first requires to limit itself during processing to the possibilities that the song has in itself, being wary of the use of folk melody processing techniques not inherent in it (M. Lysenko, K. Kvitka). It dominated the 19th and early 20th centuries, when a national composer's school was formed and musical language required a clear fixation of national characteristics. The other is based on the need to enrich the song by using various means in its essence and expression capabilities (L. Revutskyi). It is typical for the further development of Ukrainian art, when the problems of the formation of the national style were solved (Hnatiuk, 2001).

It was believed that the first trend has exhausted itself and can not have a groundbreaking continuation in modern musical creativity. However, H. Levchenko, developing the principles of M. Lysenko, was able to creatively use the opportunities of careful attitude to the folk melody. The composer reached a significantly complicated means of modern compositional technique of musical language through the in-depth development of the performing traditions of folk choral art, a detailed study of the stylistic features of song folklore, awareness of the practice of its existence, the involvement of an extramusical performing context, taking into account the pedagogical, historical, everyday, philosophical and ideological aspects of the functioning of songs.

The genre of choral processing of folk song is the main one in the work of H. Levchenko. Based on the compositional and technical achievements of his famous predecessors, H. Levchenko created a number of wonderful musical pearls: «Wedding», a wreath of Ukrainian

folk songs «At the party», «Willows make noise at the end of the dam», «Green grove», «Gone oxen from the oak», «Cossack went for the Danube», «Near the mill, near the ford», «Do not cry, Rachel», «Oh for the grove of green», «Oh under the cherry», «Oh in the meadow cuckoo forged», «Oh in the meadow and even near the birch», «Pavlenkyvsky festivities», «There is a high mountain», «But there is no one worse», «Run, run, because I will styre», etc.

The processing of the folk song of his authorship by the maestro is often called an «intervention» and emphasizes that he always tries to preserve the «nationality» of the song, does not overload it with a variety of composer's techniques, but, on the contrary, prefers a deep penetration into the essence of the content of the songs. The ability to draw artistic images by modest musical means demonstrates the high composer's skill of H. Levchenko. The artist manages to preserve and convey the most important thing in processing – the soul of Ukrainian song, as evidenced by performances for foreign listeners. They, not understanding the Ukrainian language, not knowing the content of the works, experience the same emotions as the performers – crying, laughing, cheering, sympathizing, etc. Below we consider two characteristic for the composer processing folk songs.

The ballad «The mother seeing off her son sent to the soldiers» is recorded by H. Levchenko in the village of Rashivka, Hadiach district, Poltava region. As Hnatiuk thinks, the innovations of the work do not fit into the narrow boundaries of processing: «The author significantly dramatizes the song, builds it as a oratorical-opera scene with a role-playing painting of vocal parts» (Levchenko, 2000, p. 14). Here interact, firstly, the image of the mother-in-law (the original theme of a recitative nature, accented, chanted, rhythmically homogeneous melody, the party is devoid of developed instrumental support, dominated by the emotion of hatred); secondly, dramatically related musical portraits of the son and daughter-in-law (anxious questions-appeals and mournful vocalisms). The climax combines all thematic components (chorale, themes of mother-in-law, daughter-in-law and son), which skillfully depict the terrible consequences of crazy passions. The pedagogical and educational potential of the ballad lies in the fact that the family-household tragic situation in H. Levchenko acquires a social sound, because through the fate of the characters,



vital philosophical, traditional, social factors are revealed – war, the inability to protect his beloved wife from the arbitrariness of loved ones, «because according to the popular «moral code» the crime against a person connected by close family relations is an unheard of, exceptional crime» (Levchenko, 2000, p. 13).

The second work of H. Levchenko is a processing of the legendary Ukrainian folk song «Cossack rode for the Danube». The romance song has more than two hundred and fifty years of history. The song of the XVIII century gained great popularity not only in Ukraine, but also abroad, focused on ethnically different grounds. The author of the song is called Kharkov Cossack S. Klimovskiy, whom M. Karamzin put on a par with S. Polotskiy, F. Prokopovich, M. Lomonosov (Levchenko, 2000, p. 15). Numerous variations were created on the theme of the song: the Italian composer Tommaso Traetta (late eighteenth century); S. Davydov (1777-1826) used the melody of the song in the opera of the Viennese composer F. Cower «Das Donauweibchen» (1803); it became the leitmotif of the vaudeville opera by K. Kavos – A. Shakhovskiy «Cossack-poet» (1812); the song was processed for voice, violin cello and piano by L. Beethoven; well-known instrumental variances (S. Aksenov, O. Aliabiev, F. Baio, I. Berezovskiy, K. M. Weber, M. Vysotskiy, J. Hummel, M. Dalvimar, F. Lassel, O. Lyzohub, L. Meier, H. A. Preher, J. Fodor, F. Frendel, D. Shteibelt, etc.). X. A. Tidhe made a free poetic translation of the song into German (1808) and under the name «Shone Minke» it became popular in Germany. The song was published in Italian, Polish, English, American and other song collections of the 19th century.

Despite the huge number of musical versions of the song «Cossack went for the Danube», H. Levchenko created a wonderful musical pearl. Without changing either the melody or the words of the song, the artist rethought the interpretation of its content. Usually, previous authors have emphasized the patriotic aspect of the plot, turning it into a bravura march. L. Hnatyuk emphasizes: «G. Levchenko is attracted by the other side of the plot: the separation of a Cossack warrior from his beloved girl, her longing for love, mourning his fate, even protesting against loneliness. The conflict between public and personal interests, contrary to tradition, is resolved in favor of the latter» (Levchenko, 2000, p. 16). Innovative are not only the interpretation of the meaning of the work, but its musical embodiment: the original quote from the song «Winds are blowing, wild winds» in the words of

I. Kotliarevskyi in the introduction, dialogical presentation of musical material, ostinato leitmotif singing based on «cavalry» rhythm throughout the work the use of undertones, repetition of the theme of the introduction at the end of the work, which gives it integrity and completeness. The art critic comes to a conceptual conclusion: «H. Levchenko managed to free the song from many years of layers of bravura and marching and present it to the audience in its original beauty and skillful and natural decoration. The tragic concept of processing is due to the author's worldview principles, which, in turn, are based on folk philosophical principles. Considering human life to be of the highest value, the artist cannot accept the circumstances under which it is worthless – war» (Levchenko, 2000, p. 17).

**Conclusions.** Thus, the works of H. Levchenko are characterized by sincerity of feelings, chanting humane and national values (love for their native land, patriotism, courage, peace, beauty, goodness, joy of work, true love); the influence of author's songs on folk traditions (a natural combination of epic-majestic, lyrical and dance-humorous intonations of folklore samples, variability, polygladity, folklore character of melodics, folk polyphony, etc.), which are harmoniously combined with modern methods professional elaboration of the theme and symphonism of musical thinking; creation on folklore basis of original genres of choral art – lyrical-dramatic poem, choral symphony, choral fantasy, choral triptych.

The following features are characteristic of H. Levchenko's arrangements: dominance of arrangements of Ukrainian folk songs in the artist's work; continuation of the principles of processing folklore material initiated by M. Lysenko; complication of musical language by deepening the development of the performing traditions of folk choral art; creation of a new genre of choral music – Concerto for Ukrainian folk choir, orchestra of folk instruments and piano; taking into account the pedagogical potential and philosophical and ideological meaning of the song during its choice for arrangement.

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**Олена Лобач, Юлія Комишан, Володимир Яковлев**

### **СТИЛІСТИЧНІ ОСОБЛИВОСТІ КОМПОЗИТОРСЬКОГО ПОЧЕРКУ ПЕДАГОГА-МИТЦЯ ГРИГОРІЯ ЛЕВЧЕНКА**

*У статті проаналізовано музичну творчість Григорія Левченка – сучасного хорового диригента, композитора, педагога, науковця, фольклориста, громадського діяча, засновника і художнього керівника українського народного хору «Калина» Полтавського національного педагогічного університету імені В. Г. Короленка. Грунтуючись на дослідженнях його спадщини (В. Гайдамака, Н. Дем'янка, Ю. Комишан, Н. Сулаєва та ін.), зокрема й результатах мистецтвознавчого аналізу композиторського спадку митця Л. Гнатюк, узагальнено стилістичні особливості його композиторського почерку.*

*Автори доходять висновку, що творам Г. Левченка притаманні щирість почуттів, оспівування гуманних і національних цінностей (любов до рідного краю, патріотизм, мужність, мир, краса, добро, радість праці, вірне кохання); опертя авторських пісень на народні традиції (природне поєднання епічно-величальних, ліричних і танцювально-жартівливих інтонацій фольклорних зразків, варіативність, поліладовість, фольклорний характер мелодики, народне багатоголосся тощо), які гармонічно поєднуються із сучасними методами професійного опрацювання тематизму та симфонізмом музичного мислення; а також створення на фольклорній основі оригінальних жанрів хорового мистецтва – лірико-драматична поема, хорова симфонія, хорова фантазія, хоровий триптих. Аранжування педагога-митця вирізняються такими властивостями: домінування обробок українських народних пісень; продовження принципів опрацювання фольклорного матеріалу, започаткованих М. Лисенком; ускладнення музичної мови шляхом поглибленого розвитку виконавських традицій народного хорового мистецтва; створення нового жанру хорової музики – Концерту для українського народного хору, оркестру народних інструментів та фортепіано; урахування філософсько-світоглядного смислу пісні під час її вибору для аранжування, її педагогічного потенціалу та можливостей хорового колективу, очолюваного ним.*

**Ключові слова:** Григорій Левченко; музична спадщина; аранжування; обробка народної пісні; перекладення; жанри хорового мистецтва.

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