

## **TRADITIONS OF CHORAL CONCERT IN THE PSALMODY OF H. HAVRYLETS**

**The purpose of the article.** The article analyzes the choral works, based on the psalm texts, by Hanna Havrylets, the famous Ukrainian composer, laureate of the Shevchenko National Prize. Ukrainian composers of past epochs repeatedly referred to these texts, using them to create their choral concerts. In the works of H. Havrylets, the psalm texts receive a new musical interpretation, enriched by the modern interpretation of genre traditions and innovations of the musical language. **The methodology** of the research is a comprehensive approach to the study of this phenomenon. It is based on the reference to the historical and analytical methods. The historical method provides grounds for identifying several traditional features that can be found in choral concerts written over the past time. The analytical method allows making reasonable conclusions regarding the peculiarities of the implementation of the psalm texts in large concert compositions for the choir. **The scientific novelty** of the work is in resolving the range of issues by critically analyzing of already known regulations regarding the genre of a choral concert in the works of Ukrainian composers of past epochs and modernity. It is noted that in H. Havrylets's choral works, based on the psalm texts, she offers different plot-dramaturgical and musical interpretation of the content of these texts, shifting attention from the individual to the general. **The conclusions** indicate that the subject of the article extends to the field of modern Ukrainian choral music and reflects one of its tendencies related to the interpretation and modernization of the long-standing traditions of choral singing in the musical art at the turn of XX – XXI centuries.

**Key words:** creative work of H. Havrylets, choral concert, Psalm, concert cycle, choral fugue.

*Варакута Марина Іванівна, кандидат мистецтвознавства, доцент кафедри історії і теорії музики Дніпропетровської академії музики ім. М. Глинки*

### **Традиції жанру хорового концерту у псалмоспівах Г. Гаврилець**

**Мета роботи.** У статті аналізуються хорові твори, написані на тексти псалмів, відомої української композиторки, лауреата Національної премії імені Т.Г.Шевченка Ганни Гаврилець. До цих текстів неодноразово зверталися українські композитори минулих епох під час створення своїх хорових концертів. У творах Г.Гаврилець тексти псалмів одержують нове музичне прочитання, збагачене сучасним трактуванням жанрових традицій і новаціями музичної мови. **Методологія** дослідження полягає в комплексному підході до вивчення вказаного явища і ґрунтується на застосуванні історичного та аналітичного методів. Історичний метод надає підстави для виявлення традиційних рис у хорових концертах, написаних протягом останнього часу. Аналітичний метод дозволяє зробити обґрунтовані висновки щодо особливостей втілення текстів псалмів у великих концертних композиціях для хору. **Наукова новизна** роботи полягає в розв'язанні порушеного кола питань шляхом критичного аналізу вже відомих положень стосовно жанру хорового концерту у творчості українських композиторів давніх епох та сучасності. Зазначається, що в своїх хорових творах, написаних на тексти псалмів, Г.Гаврилець, пропонує інше сюжетно-драматургічне і музичне трактування змісту цих текстів, переносючи центр уваги з індивідуального на загальне. У **висновках** зазначено, що тематика статті поширюється на галузь сучасної української хорової музики і відображає одну з її тенденцій, пов'язану із переломленням й осучасненням давніх традицій хорового співу у музичному мистецтві рубежу ХХ-ХХІ століть.

**Ключові слова:** творчість Г.Гаврилець, хоровий концерт, псалом, концертний цикл, хорова fuga.

*Варакута Марина Іванівна, кандидат мистецтвознавства, доцент кафедри історії і теорії музики Дніпропетровської академії музики ім. М. Глинки*

### **Традиції жанру хорового концерта в псалмопєнях А. Гаврилець**

**Цель работы.** В статье анализируются хоровые произведения, написанные на тексты псалмов, известного украинского композитора, лауреата Национальной премии имени Т.Г.Шевченко Анны Гаврилець. К этим текстам неоднократно обращались украинские композиторы прошедших эпох, используя их для создания своих хоровых концертов. В произведениях А.Гаврилець тексты псалмов получают новое музыкальное прочтение, обогащаясь современной трактовкой жанровых традиций и новациями музыкального языка. **Методология** исследования заключается в комплексном подходе к изучению указанного явления. Она основывается на обращении к историческому и аналитическому методам. Исторический метод дает основания для выявления целого ряда традиционных признаков, которые можно обнаружить в хоровых концертах, написанных на протяжении последнего времени. Аналитический метод позволяет сделать обоснованные выводы относительно особенностей воплощения текстов псалмов в крупных концертных композициях для хора. **Научная новизна** работы состоит в разрешении указанного круга вопросов путем критического анализа уже известных положений относительно жанра хорового концерта в творчестве украинских композиторов прошедших эпох и современности. Отмечается, что в своих хоровых произведениях, написанных на тексты псалмов, А.Гаврилець, предлагает иную сюжетно-драматургическую и музыкальную трактовку содержания этих текстов, перенося внимание с индивидуального на общее. В **выводах** отмечается, что тематика статьи распространяется на область современной украинской хоровой музыки и отражает одну из ее тенденций, связанную с преломлением и осовремениванием давних традиций хорового пения в музыкальном искусстве рубежа ХХ-ХХІ веков.

**Ключевые слова:** творчество А.Гаврилец, хоровой концерт, псалом, концертный цикл, хоровая fuga.

Relevance of the research topic. Lately, Ukrainian composers have taken a significant interest in choral music, which has become a leading direction in the development of Ukrainian musical culture. The proof of this fact is a large number of works for various choir compositions written over the past two decades by prominent Ukrainian composers whose creative career began in the 1960s and by the representatives of the new generation of Ukrainian musicians, whose creativity has started during Ukrainian independence. In these works, one can find the continuation of the ancient traditions of Ukrainian musical culture, which for a long time was predominantly a singing one and had a well-developed choral performance. At the same time, one can observe a tendency to modernize these traditions, to introduce new means of the musical language and technique of composition, in accordance with the general processes of development of contemporary European and Ukrainian musical art.

A peculiar mirror reflecting the trends in the development of choral music at the present stage of development of musical art is the work of Hanna Havrylets (born in 1958), the famous Ukrainian composer and the Shevchenko National Prize winner. In 2018 in honour of H. Havrylets's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, it was organized and conducted a number of concerts, in which many interesting and in many respects original choral works were performed. The formation of the unique artistic world of H. Havrylets's choral work was influenced by and based on the transformation of the features of Ukrainian religious music and Ukrainian folklore, as the composer was born in the Carpathian village of Vydnyv, and she had the opportunity to learn the culture from the very childhood. The researchers of H. Havrylets's creative work note that a folkloric fundamental principle was laid down in a composer's thought, and this is most fully manifested in the choral work. The composer doesn't miss choral traditions of ancient Ukrainian professional music, which appeared in the genre of the choral concert in XVII – XVIII centuries and are now reviving.

H. Havrylets's choral work is the embodiment of an integral artistic world which was formed under the influence of the transformation of traditions, which gained an individual manifestation in the composer's work. This can be found in the works of any subject – secular, folklore, or religious. In the article, we focus on what the artistic world in the choral religious music is and how the transformation of the traditions of the genre of the choral concert occurs.

The aim of the research is to analyze the so-called psalmodies – religious works, created by H. Havrylets, who put the psalm texts to music. Ukrainian composers of past epochs have repeatedly appealed to these texts to create choral concerts. In the works of H. Havrylets the texts of psalms receive a new musical perception, enriched with modern interpretation of genre traditions and innovations of the musical language.

The analysis of research and publications. In the recent years, the scholars have heightened their interest to the choral works of H. Havrylets. She was mentioned in the articles by O. Korchova [2], Yu. Puchko-Kolesnyk [4], H. Stepanchenko [5], and others. Since 2016, two theses have been defended, which subject matters include the choral religious works. These are the theses by T. Sukhomlinova (Kharkiv, 2017) [7] and T. Maskovych (Odesa, 2018) [3]. Both researchers study religious works written on canonical texts and texts of psalms in the aspect of “new sacrality”, fitting them into the context of contemporary culture, to which the musical language of these works prompts.

The scientific novelty. Despite the attention of the researchers, some important issues, especially regarding the continuity of traditions in religious music, have not yet received sufficient clarification and require additional, in-depth study, which became the main argument for choosing the topic and determined the scientific novelty.

The basis matter. Psalms, as an old musical genre, which became the textual basis of part concerts and choral ones in XVII – XVIII centuries, continues to attract the attention of contemporary composers. The genre did not pass H. Havrylets's creativity over. The composer repeatedly appealed to the poetics of the Book of Psalms, thus the following works were written:

- 1) “Blessed are those, who have regard for the weak” for female choir (Ps. 41);
- 2) “In you, Lord my God, I put my trust” for male choir (Ps. 25);
- 3) “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” for mixed choir (Ps. 21);
- 4) “Truly my soul finds rest in God” for mixed choir (Ps. 61).

The most famous work written on the texts of the Book of Psalms is the Easter choral concert “May God arise” for mixed choir (Ps. 67). The work was chosen as the research object of the article.

The tradition of using psalms as a text base for large, polyphonic cyclic compositions was formed in the Baroque era. Both the authors of part concerts and composers of the second half of XVIII century used their liturgical texts in their religious concerts. The most important place among them was given to the Book of Psalms, which highly artistic texts reflected a wide range of human emotions and feelings – from joy and happiness to suffering and despair.

There is a freer attitude to the poetic texts of the Book of Psalms in the works of composers of the second half of XVIII century (M. Berezhovskiy, D. Bortnianskiy, A. Vedel). This was determined by the efforts of the composers to individualize the interpretation of the content of the psalm; therefore, choral concerts often made attempts to transform its text in a variety of ways – from the singling out of the integral fragment

and the use of the full text with small abbreviations to a combination of accurate and free presentation of the text of a psalm (with possible permutations of the lines, shortening of phrases, inserts of another text, etc.) and contamination of the lines taken from the texts of other psalms.

Psalms are not homogeneous in content and have several figurative and emotional lines – penitential, revealing, lament, and thanksgiving. All these sentiments were reflected in religious concerts, so the works had different types and figurative-emotional state. For example, the musical content of concerts written on the texts of the lament psalms was lyrical and dramatic, sometimes even sorrowful. Such concerts were about life and death, about the moral self-improvement of a person who appealed to God with requests for protection against evil forces and enemies. On the basis of the lament psalms in the second half of XVIII century, a large number of lyric and dramatic concerts, marked by emotional openness, filled with emotional honest, were created. There are real masterpieces of the concert genre, such as: “Do not cast me away when I am old” by M. Berezovskyi, minor concerts by D. Bortnianskyi, the series of concerts by A. Vedel, which substantially updated and enriched the figurative content of religious music of that time.

On the texts of the thanksgiving psalms, festive and solemn concerts are created, in which the affections of joy prevailed, and a man is embodied, who lauded the Lord. A large number of such concerts are written for double choirs (for example, by D. Bortnianskyi and S. Dehtiarov).

In order to continue the traditions, the choral concert “May God arise” by H. Havrylets is written on the texts of the thanksgiving 67<sup>th</sup> psalm (in the Ukrainian translation). The appeal in this psalmody to the genre of the choral concert is fixed through a multilevel system of associations – from the chosen means of reproduction of musical and poetic content, in which, despite the modern musical language, the principle of baroque contrast dominates, to the peculiarities of the composition structure, organized on the principle of cycling.

The concert is sung on Easter, and the composer retains the ritual significance of the psalm, selecting the first three lines for her work. They reflect the main – prophetic – idea of the psalm – the Resurrection, the punishment of sinners, the joy of the righteous:

1. *May God arise, may his enemies be scattered, may his foes flee before him.*
2. *May you blow them away like smoke – as wax melts before the fire, may the wicked perish before God.*
3. *But may the righteous be glad and rejoice before God, may they be happy and joyful.*

In general, this psalm refers to the resurrection of Christ, the salvation of the humankind, and the death of the enemies.

Ukrainian composers, from M. Berezovskyi and D. Bortnianskyi, have repeatedly addressed the text of the 67<sup>th</sup> psalm to write their religious concerts. H. Havrylets continues this line and gives her work the genre name “concert”.

“May God arise” has a cyclic structure and consists of three parts (I part – *Maestoso*; II part – *Andante*; III part – *Allegro*). In this work, the solemn, festive character prevails, and in Part II there is a dramatization of musical content, and it is connected with the text content of the corresponding line in the psalm. One more figurative-emotional component of the concert is lyrics that come out as a way of achieving a contrast – a mandatory component of the genre of the choral concert.

In Part I of the concert, the prophecy of the Resurrection of God is verbalized, which implies the end of the earthly world and the beginning of the Kingdom of God. The peculiarity of the verbal text is the comparison of opposite figurative spheres – good (God, righteous) and evil (enemies of Christ and sinners). The composer separates contrasting spheres of image and, at the same time, compares them and combines them due to peculiarities of dramatic development of the musical texture.

A distinctive feature of Part I is a text repetition of the phrase “May God arise” during the initial musical construction and return to it in the last bars of the part. Also, other words that are bearers of the main images (“God”, “enemies”, “foes”, etc.) are separated from the text. In the musical embodiment of the initial phrase and other phrases and words related to the image of God, the solemnity of the event of the Resurrection and divine semantics is emphasized – the dynamics *f*, an upward melodic motion, the chord texture, the long rhythmic durations, etc., are used. As a result of the splitting of the choral unison, in the very first musical phrase the word “God” forms a cluster that sounds for three bars (bars 2-4), and then it appears again when the initial phrase of the text is repeated.

There is a preference for the text, which is always followed by the music, in the construction of the entire Part I. The initial line of the psalm is divided into four phrases, and on the basis of this four charters are built up. The first chapter is based on the repeated proclamation of the words “May God arise” (bars 1-21), in the basis of the second one is “may His enemies be scattered” (bars 22-57), in the third one is “may His foes flee before him” (bars 58-77), in the fourth one the composer returns to the original phrase “May God arise” (bars 77-110).

The system of contrast comparisons, inherent in the genre of the choral concert, penetrates already into the first topic. In it, for four bars, a choral unison is found, based on the ascending melodic motion on the tones of the scale *e-moll* (within the tonic third), and semitritonus clusters from the tones *c* and *b* passing into the triad of *a-moll*. Both constructions are united by accelerated dynamic growth, so the climax occurs in the

second bar. In the transition from the choir unison to the cluster in the soprano part, there is an ascending jump to the sixth; it enhances the feeling of a solemn-festive sublimity.

The second 13-bar sentence is based on the imitational development that occurs between the directions of the soprano and tenors (they also include basses). The imitation is an integral part of the genre of the choral concert therefore its appearance in the very first musical construction of the analyzed concert of H. Havrylets is quite logical.

The second chapter of Part I consists of three sentences and begins with the unfolding of the musical texture from unison to the 6-voice chord vertical, from *p* to *f*, with a rhythmic increase, enriching of voices with chromaticisms and imitation interchanges between parties of altos and tenors, and the continuity of melodic motion and development.

The subject of the second chapter is related to the musical material of Part 3. It is in a modified form, and the distinctive feature is the accumulation of flat tones (*Ces-dur*, *Ges-dur*, *as-moll*, *Es-dur*).

The final chapter of Part I is marked by the reappearance of the first phrase of the psalm text "May God arise", which opens the concert. There is no musical reprise here, and the presentation is based on the intonations from the second chapter, which are set forth in details. The melodic line consists of the ascending forth with subsequent downward motion in small seconds. It is performed in the soprano part, and then the third is lowered in the alto part, whereas in the parts of tenors and basses in high tessitura it is given an upward motion in small seconds which induce the tension increase. Three levels of the upward sequencing lead to a climax, where the number of voices reaches eight. Musical reciprocity is manifested in the return of a cluster consonance with long durations on the word "God" (bar 94).

Part II of the concert (*h-moll*) is the biggest one. It performs a function of a slow middle which contrasts with the extreme parts. At the same time, the composer shows it as an unfolded strictly dramatic choral fugue, in which the symbolism of the spell is embodied, the appeals to sinners for repentance, the intention that they "blow away like smoke". The emergence of the fugue as a slow part of the concert cycle is unusual for a classical choral concert, in which the slow parts were usually solo-ensemble and had lyric-arioso or genre features.

Fugue consists of three mandatory sections (exposition – development – reprise). The exposition has the obligatory holding of the subject in all choir voices, the big development is divided into four internal sections, each of which is the next phase of development and the reprise is significantly reduced. The polyphonic composition and the prevailing development sometimes are changed to the chord-harmonic sound of the vertical. Characteristic features are the oncoming melodic movement, sequencing of intermediate development and linear-contrapunctual voice leading.

The exposition of the topic in sequence from bass to soprano gradually covers the entire singing range. The first one-voice holding in the low tessitura symbolizes the image of sinners, whose voices seem to be sung from the bottom of the spiritual life. The syncopated, continuously changing melody and variable meter create a restless character that embodies the uncertain state of the sinful soul, its doubts and temptations, on the eve of God's punishment. The range of the topic is equal to the octave and its structure is a kind of prototype of the entire exposition.

The first phase of the development is based on a stretto subject, which is divided between the pairs of voices – alto-soprano, bass-tenor. The second subject is entrusted to the part of altos and basses. There is a new musical material that serves as a bond at the beginning of the second phase ("as wax melts before the fire", bars 46-54). In general, the second phase has the nature of constantly increasing tension which occurs due to the use of loud dynamics, high tessitura of voices, *divisi* of choral parts (8 voices), poly rhythms and tonal changes. The third phase ("may the wicked perish before God") has a mirror-holding subjects of the fugue; the main principle and the main feature of development is the imitation, which accelerates the climax. The development of musical texture on the element of the subject is a characteristic feature of the fourth phase of development (alternately in the part of sopranos and tenors, bar 83). The development of musical material leads to the general culmination of the entire Part II of the concert with the words "the wicked before God" (bar 93).

In the reduced reprise on the pedal of male voices in quiet dynamics the subject of the fugue in such parts as: soprano – alto, alto – soprano sounds. Such a combination of voices on the dynamics *p* gives a sound a special depth. The tone instability of the reprise section is reminiscent of the active pre-tone development that took place in the development. Both fugue and the whole part end in the tonality of *C-dur*.

Part III of the concert is the result of the previous dramatic development and apotheosis of the whole cycle. The final has the character of a general triumph and the composer again uses the form of the fugue, and in this case, it is typical for the ending of choral concerts. The subject of the fugue is based on the phrase "may the righteous be glad"; the meaningful emphasis is on the word "glad", which is singled out and repeated many times. The subject is gradually held in all voices (from S to B); it has an upward exclamatory forth intonation and consists of three bars. The fugue exposition takes 12 bars. The chord vertical is gradually established, which leads to a sense of harmony and gives the opportunity to listen to the text entirely. The first intermediate, appearing after the subject exposition, is large in scope (16 bars), it has inheritance which gradually leads to the expansion of the choral range.

The development is based on another text phrase “and rejoice before God”, bar 29) and is based on the development of a subject of fugue, which is conducted both in full and in reduced form. Along with the imitation of the introduction of voices, to the musical development are actively involved choral pedals in different parts.

In the reprise before the subject is finished (“may them be happy and joyful”, vol. 60, G-dur) and in the stretta as well a chord complex imitating solemn bells is added. The return of the original text line, “May God arise” (bar 77) with the musical material of Part I, has the function of the codes of the whole cycle and gives it the features of the arch end.

The conclusions and prospects for further research.

The Easter Concert “May got arise” by H. Havrylets is an example of the continuation and renewal of the traditions of the religious concert genre. The work is written on the text of the 67<sup>th</sup> psalm and is defined as a three-part cycle with two fugues, and its parts are organized on the principle of “slowly – slowly – quickly”. The composer does not limit frame herself with the tradition which is most fully manifested in the modern features of musical language. Prospects for further research are the discovery of the synthesis of traditional and innovative in concerts-psalmodies, written by contemporary Ukrainian composers.

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