

## THE MODERN PERSPECTIVE OF TEACHING MUSICAL FOLKLORE DISCIPLINES IN COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY

СОВРЕМЕННЫЙ РАКУРС  
ПРЕПОДАВАНИЯ ДИСЦИПЛИН ПО МУЗЫКАЛЬНОМУ ФОЛЬКЛОРУ В  
КОЛЛЕДЖЕ И ВУЗЕ

ASPECTE CONTEMPORANE DE PREDARE A DISCIPLINELOR  
DE FOLCLOR MUZICAL ÎN COLEGII ȘI INSTITUȚII SUPERIOARE  
DE ÎNVĂȚĂMÂNT ARTISTIC

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CZU 781.7:372.8

*The article will consider the topical problems of teaching folk music in the middle and higher levels of vocational education on the example of the Moscow State Institute of Music named after A.G. Schnittke. Particular attention should be paid to the formation of a holistic view of the national traditional culture in the student. The awakening of genetic memory and awareness of ethno-identity in a modern urbanized person is carried out through the study of folk musical culture. The intangible heritage of ancestors is the foundation of Russian and foreign music. Intent attention to the traditional national musical culture is necessary for the training of professional musicians of the XXI century.*

**Keywords:** musical folklore, ethno-identity, patriotic education, modern education

*Articolul analizează problemele actuale de predare ale muzicii folclorice în colegii și instituții superioare de învățământ profesional, pe baza exemplului Institutului de Stat de Muzică A.G. Schnittke din Moscova. O atenție deosebită se acordă formării la studenți a unei viziuni holistice asupra culturilor naționale tradiționale. Dezvoltarea memoriei genetice și conștientizarea etno-identității unei persoane moderne, urbanizate, în sensul larg al acestui cuvânt, se realizează prin studierea culturii muzicale populare, adică a folclorului. Moștenirea spirituală a strămoșilor fiecărui popor constituie pilonul fundamental al valorilor muzicale ale acestui popor. În cazul dat, se face referință atât la moștenirea culturală a poporului rus cât și la valorile naționale ale altor popoare. Studiarea minuțioasă a culturii muzicale naționale, în special, a folclorului și a elementelor naționale, este necesară pentru formarea intelectuală a viitorilor muzicieni profesioniști ai secolului XXI.*

**Cuvinte-cheie:** folclor muzical, etno-identitate, educație patriotică, educație modernă

### Introduction

„Does a modern musician need to understand musical folklore if the sound space is already oversaturated? In concert halls, on radio and television, on the Internet, there is a countless amount of classical, avant-garde, jazz, pop music. Is there in the modern educational process in the preparation of vocalists, instrumentalists, conductors and theorists the prospects for training personnel brought up in the national melos, who are aware of the fundamental role of folklore in the musical world?” the discussion, developed on the pages of the scientific almanac „Traditional Culture” on this theme, has been going on for more than one decade [1 p. 3].

In colleges and universities in Moscow, hours for teaching subjects in musical folklore have been reduced many times over. Distance learning over the past year required a significant adjustment in the methods of teaching folk music in various specialties at all levels of professional education: school – college – university – master’s degree.

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The article will consider the topical problems of teaching folk music in the middle and higher levels of vocational education on the example of the Moscow State Institute of Music named after A.G. Schnittke. In college, the discipline of folk musical culture is taught in all specialties, theorists have hours in folk musical creativity, and folk vocalists in regional singing styles. General courses at the university study musical folklore for one semester (16 hours: 8 lectures, 8 seminars). Musicologists-journalists, folk vocalists comprehend the discipline in 32 hours (respectively – 16 + 16). Folk singing styles are taught only to vocalists for two semesters. Folklore and ethnographic practice, as well as decoding of folk songs and tunes, is no longer provided for in the curriculum.

In the process of teaching these disciplines in this educational institution since 1987, I have developed a corresponding curricula so that college and university students comprehend both the theoretical component of Russian ethnomelos and the practical side of folk music: they were able to sing folk songs, perform tunes on their instruments, if desired, they can lead round dances and navigate in a folk costume. However, the 21st century student has changed conspicuously. The collection of songs or anthology obtained from the library were replaced by screenshots and photographs of particular samples. The advantage of finding songs by Agrafena Ivanovna Glinkina (1898-1971) or Olga Fedoseevna Sergeeva (1922-2002) on the Internet gives the possibility for you to sing their archaic songs from hearing. You can effortlessly download Andrei Tarkovsky's film „Nostalgia”, where the voice of the Pskov singer – Olga Fedoseevna Sergeeva – sounds like a symbol of „Russianness”. Thus, the technical capabilities have clearly expanded.

The ethno-identity of a student in an urbanized society is becoming an essential factor. Studying mainly Russian folk musical creativity, it is important for each student to remind about his roots, be it Mordvin or Chuvash,

*„I gordyy vnuk slavyan, i finn, i nyne dikoy  
Tungus, i drug stepey kalmyk” [2, p. 586].*

*„A son of Slavs, a Finn, and presently unlettered  
Tungus, a Kalmyk — friend to steppes” [2 p. 586].*

Under the influence of globalization, the specifics of urban, especially metropolitan life, people sometimes do not realize their national roots. In order to prevent this from happening, it is compulsory that students of a music college compose a genealogical tree of a kind. Everyone does it individually, creatively. At the same time, the work should represent the national, regional, social, professional characteristics of relatives. Information about the traditional culture and, of course, the music of this or that ethnic group is especially valuable. Having passed this stage, the most talented students are delegated to the competition „Poyu Moyo Otechestvo” („I Sing My Fatherland”), where they have to demonstrate to the competitor their scientific, performing and design abilities, telling the expert council information about their small homeland and its traditional musical culture.

This year, the State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Education of the city of Moscow Moscow State Institute of Music named after A.G. Schnittke holds the Sixth International Online Competition „I Sing My Fatherland” May 11-17 [3]. It is attended by contestants of various nationalities from music universities in Moscow, Mias and Chelyabinsk, the Republics of Sakha (Yakutia), Kazakhstan and Moldova as well as the United States of America.

**The formation of a holistic understanding of the national traditional culture** occurs in a student in many aspects, due to a course of lectures and seminars, where expedition materials are demonstrated. It is immensely valuable if the teacher himself recorded them, deciphered them, and performs them, passing on the tradition „by mouth to mouth”. I happened to be the leader of dozens of folklore and ethnographic expeditions to the Chelyabinsk, Vladimir, Ryazan, Belgorod, Kostroma regions. As a student of V.M. Shchurov (1937-2020), I became expert in the methodology of collecting activity,

which was formed at the Moscow State Conservatory named after P.I. Tchaikovsky, which absorbed the discoveries of K.V. Kvitka (1880-1953) and A.V. Rudneva (1903-1983), N.N. Gilyarova and N.M. Savelyeva.

An important factor in understanding ethnoculture is not only knowledge of authentic samples, but also contact with material heritage. Therefore, folk costumes and household items, musical instruments are demonstrated in the audience, which can not only be observed, plunging into the ethnographic context, but also held in hands, played on them, imbued with the beauty, man-made and functional objects of folk life.

As part of independent study, students regularly receive assignments on musical folklore presented in the multimedia space. These are YouTube versions of the TV programs „Mirovaya Derevnya” („The Global Village”), „Stranstviya s Sergeym Starostinym” („Travelling with Sergey Starostin”).

For more than a year, radio „Russia-K” has been broadcasting every month within the framework of the Russian Radio University, which is hosted by writer, journalist Dmitry Konanykhin, together with a folklorist, laureate of international competitions, professor of MSIM named after A.G. Schnittke by Elena Aleksandrovna Zaitseva. The programs are dedicated to the music of the folk calendar. From them you can learn about folk holidays, rituals, beliefs, instrumental and vocal folk music sounds. Russian musical folklore is presented in the context of world art culture. Thanks to its multimedia capabilities, the program is released both in radio version and in visual version on YouTube. A unique in its kind radio course on folk art for the whole country allows you to listen at a time convenient for a person, in whole or in part, any of the fourteen radio programs of the series [4].

**The awakening of genetic memory** in modern youth by means of musical folklore is perhaps the most effective method of patriotic education in a multinational country and the world as a whole. However, it should be borne in mind that the intonation base of different ethnic groups is specific, and sometimes radically different even from the ethnomelos of neighboring peoples. Slavic anhemitonic and diatonic scales are not identical to the Tatar pentatonic scales. The melismatics of the Terek Cossacks is different from that in the Smolensk songs of A.I. Glinkina and Pskov songs of O.F. Sergeeva. The fifths in the polyphonic chants of the Western regions of Russia have a different semantics in contrast to Georgian singing, although the Kremanchuli in many ways resembles a Cossack „dishkant”. The untempered intonation of the peoples of the North of Siberia and the Far East will evoke a feedback in the perception of a modern musician, if he at least acquaints with this in the musical folklore class. Yu.I. Sheikin in the article „On the issue of the educational discipline of folk musical creativity in a music university” noted that it is „a discipline of comparative musicology” [5 p. 4]. „In this connection”, the scientist pointed out, „a fundamental question arises: do we have the right to limit the knowledge of Russian musicologists only to information about Russian folklore? It is true that Russians are a state-forming people. It is also true that Russian folklore belongs to one of the most developed and methodologically mature sciences of folklore. Despite of that, the attention to other musical and folklore cultures of the peoples of our Motherland is an essential norm that will make the Russian musicologist more universal” [5 p. 4]. One cannot but agree with this statement.

However, the universality of not only musicologists, but also professional musicians in general is associated with the development of the musical and poetic language of folklore in dialogue, on the one hand, and the relationship, on the other, with respect to academic, modern and jazz music. Folklore must be known as a kind of golden fund, since it is **the foundation of domestic and foreign musical culture**.

Back in 1919, having just emigrated from revolutionary Russia, while in Philadelphia, PA, S.V. Rachmaninov, in his article „The Connection of Music with Folk Art”, expressed his views, which are relevant to this day: „It should be clear to American musicians that there is a strong and close con-

nection between the music of many of the greatest European masters and the folk music of their native countries. It is not like these composers took folk themes and „re-potted” them into their works (whereas this often happens), but they were so imbued with the spirit of the melodies inherent in their native people that all their works had a look just as distinctive and characteristic of this nationality, as the taste of national wine or fruit” [6 p. 70].

In order to understand the role of folklore as the foundation of world music in general, it is necessary to bear a half of national melodies. They should be sung, played, it is better to memorize them with the text, and also find on the map or in the navigator the toponyms and hydronyms of the locus or area where the given melody was recorded by the collectors. If it was impossible in modern time conditions to ask fifty-six students of the course for the required number of Russian folk songs (requirements ranged from sixty-eight samples to seventeen, in accordance with the number of academic weeks in a semester), another form of reporting on folk musical creativity at the university was proposed. In the current academic year, the sophomore year students of MSIM named after A.G. Schnittke performed instrumental and vocal arrangements of musical folklore samples posted on the Internet – in a group. The recordings were made in video format either with the participation of other students, or otherwise the performer recorded himself many times, playing music on several instruments (xylophone, marimba, tambourine, bells), and then mixed the video tracks. Russian folk songs, sung traditionally a capella, sounded in a new interpretation vividly and surprisingly, reflecting the ideas of the musical imagery of Russian folklore in the reception of a person of the XXI century.

Musical folklore of any ethnic group has been and is a text that, for all its tradition, stability of elements, assumes mobility. It is all referring to **the variance and the improvisation**. This is absolutely a high art, to create here and now, relying on the national principles of musical thinking. Not only to reproduce authentic samples, adhering to the saving tendency, fundamental in ethnomusicology, but also to bring in your personal sense of time and ethnicity, which is necessary for a performer musician.

Summing up, **the conclusion** suggests itself that it is necessary to adjust attitudes, guidelines, methods and forms of teaching musical folklore disciplines. If it is impossible to change the number of hours for such an important subject in any country in the world, then an intensification of the learning process is needed. Motivation for knowledge can awaken in youth the disclosure of a powerful potential realized through The Great Art of Music.

The current state of the national musical culture requires close attention to the spiritual and material heritage of ancestors. It is all has significance for the training of professional musicians in the XXI century.

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