

# Historical Aspects of Church Singing in the Field of Cultural Traditions of Russia

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**Abstract.** The article discusses the historical aspects of church singing, as well as church singing practice related to the activities of the Orthodox Church in Russia. It is shown that this practice has become a part of the global musical culture and a solid foundation of the national performing choir school. The activities of the great regents of the past - V. Orlov, A. Kastalsky, N. Danilin, P. Chesnokov, M. Klimov, A. Arkhangelsky and many others received world-wide recognition and gave a powerful impetus to the development of choral art. Particular attention is paid to the church singing practice, which today is a collection of regional regent practices that are relatively autonomous and often different among themselves. Therefore, it is most expedient to study them separately, taking into account the contextual peculiarities of a particular region. So, for example, the Voronezh region is a region in which different types of cultures coexist. Naturally, this fact creates a special situation in their interaction, including in the sphere of religious consciousness. The existence of multi-confessional church choirs "at the junction" of national cultures is extremely important in the context of the problems of modern society - the crisis of culture, spiritual relativism, aggressive propaganda of pseudo-religious sects, outbreaks of nationalism. Such a dialogue will be useful for the formation of tolerance, mutual understanding and understanding of the values of different cultures.

## 1. Introduction

Currently, we can observe a growing interest in the phenomena of church history, and in particular in church singing. The process of developing traditions of church singing is intense. With the opening of each new church, the organization of worship begins with liturgical singing. Mastering melodies of church hymns is associated with overcoming all kinds of obstacles: the lack of specially trained singers familiar with modern tradition, the lack of sources and often the lack of understanding of the specifics of liturgical singing. At the same time, the study of the church singing of our time is just beginning. This phenomenon creates a number of problems associated with both the collection of material and its analysis.

The modern tradition of church singing covers the period of the second half of our century. At the same time, this tradition is based on the sources of the end of the XVIII - XX centuries, which indicates its continuity, the desire to preserve the ancient melodies. The melodies of modern church singing belong to canonical chants - Znamenny, Kiev, Greek, Bulgarian, as well as local melodies, including monastic ones [1].

At the same time, this phenomenon is regional in nature - each region has its own singing tradition, one way or another comparable with other regional traditions and having individual characteristics. In connection with this material of our research is a full circle of chants, currently performed in the temples of Voronezh and the Voronezh region. [2].

## **2. Methodology**

The article discusses the methodological techniques of the functional approach, models of analysis of the significance of the phenomenon of culture, developed in the traditions of the phenomenological and systemic approaches, which involve consideration of the whole complex, the studied material, as common elements of the systems. To solve the problems of this article, the following scientific methods were used: classification, periodization, systematization; historical-genetic, comparative-typological and morphological studies. [3].

## **3. Discussion**

Since this work contains a large musical and historical component, it is necessary to mention those researchers whose work helps to understand the causes of the emergence of new musical and creative processes, the logic of their shift. Individual works cover the content of musical directions and the activities of composers in the field of church musical culture. Among these works are the ideas of B.V. Asafyeva, N.M. Nikolsky, Yu.V. Keldysh, N. Findezena. These works are historical and cultural studies that reveal the genre, stylistic, ideological and artistic features of the composer's directions, including in the church singing tradition [4].

A special role in understanding the problem of research was played by works directly related to the study of regional church singing culture. This is the work of K.B. Dergunova "Religious musical culture of the provinces of Russia in the second half of the XIX century", in which the author explores the religious musical culture of the provinces as a sociocultural phenomenon and an integral part of the spiritual life of society [5].

At the end of the 20th century, some authors made efforts to generalize the conductor and choral experience, however, given the specifics of the existing works related to the choice of the illuminated phenomena and personalities, these works cannot provide a comprehensive information base for full understanding with the further implementation of a special church-choir, as well as general music education (V. D. Bulgakov). [6].

## **4. Results**

The formulation of the methodological and conceptual problems of the research, as well as their solution, are aimed at creating a general idea of the development of choral art in the Russian culture of the twentieth century. It was during this period that the Russian choral art flourished, therefore the study of choral singing as a phenomenon of musical culture in the strict sense of the word and the study of this phenomenon as a phenomenon of historical science in general are one and the same. Although Russian choral art existed even before the XIX century, in particular, in forms of church liturgy or in forms of folklore singing, it is this period as the heyday of choral art that makes it possible to adequately understand its nature, its essence and its functions [7].

In addition, since this period of the flowering of choral art is a period of its professionalization, an analysis of relevant educational programs is necessary to complete the disclosure of choral singing as a phenomenon of Russian culture. The task of studying the practice and theory of conducting and choir education should be understood in the context of common efforts aimed at reviving the national culture. The history of the Russian conducting and choral school is worthy of study as a special unique socio-cultural phenomenon. The study of domestic educational traditions and their introduction into the modern education system contributes to the preservation of the identity of our culture [8].

The theoretical generalization of the artistic experience accumulated by the history of choral art should be structured with the obligatory account of the diversity of its manifestations, its individual characteristics characteristic of the national musical culture. Such a generalization is especially

important, because until now the study of conducting and choral education in Russia as a single structure has not been conducted. Therefore, today it is extremely important to activate the scientific and theoretical development of information leading to the registration of information experience of outstanding masters of choral art in our country. The richness and diversity of the traditions of Russian choral culture determine the value of the position it occupies in the general context of the history of Russian national and world art [9].

The central controversy of the crisis of the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries lies in the fact that, on the one hand, it was the period of the greatest flourishing of the performance of church singing and church compositional art. On the other hand, this take-off in the performing and compositional art of church singing reflected the continuation of the process of departing from the principles of canonicity in church singing. In the works of the composers of the “new direction”, a new style of church music is being formed and established, which is based on the Old Russian monody and focuses on the revival of the traditions of Orthodox Russian singing. [10]. Strengthening and accentuation of the national dominant in church singing and in all other types of church art from this period certainly constitutes a positive aspect of the “new Russian revival” [11]. However, the “new Russian style” in sacred music did not solve the tasks set by the history of the Russian Orthodox Church and, specifically, church singing [12]. The composers of the “new direction” use traditional stylistic methods of Old Russian liturgical singing, the melody is based on the ancient church singing, the rhythm is close to the verbal rhythm of church monody, musical forms are often determined by the structure, of the liturgical text, the principle of antiphonic singing is used. But all these techniques in the works of the “new” church music turn into the sphere of artistic expression, serve as a means of creating an artistic image [13]. Church singing loses its main feature - worship, ceases to be a prayer and becomes an artistic image of prayer. In musicological science and church usage, the term “church music” appears and is used, which is used for the spiritual and musical works of the author, replacing the term liturgical singing [14].

## 5. Conclusion

Prospects for the further development of this research problem appear to be productive for several reasons: first, the aspect of a comparative analysis of the levels of interaction and the dynamics of musical tendencies that occur and are manifested today in the modern composition of church singing; secondly, at the level of the processes of mutual influence of the Russian and foreign Orthodox churches in the conditions of the church-singing tradition [15]. Thus, the stated research problem, in its various aspects, is of great research interest and perspectivity [16].

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