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www.anastasis-review.ro

ISSN 2392 – 862X (print); ISSN-L 2392 – 862X ; ISSN 2392 – 9472 (on-line)

The Research Center of Medieval Art “Vasile Drăguț”

ANASTASIS
Research in Medieval Culture and Art

Volume XII, No.1/May 2025

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The Worldview of the Ukrainian People in the Artistic Images of Ukrainian Folk Songs

Lyudmyla M. Sbitnieva ^{*}
Olena F. Sbitnieva ^{**}

Abstract: *The history of Ukrainian musical art shows that a folk song is its most important component, existing since ancient times. It is a living chronicle, where each image reflects the worldview of the Ukrainian people, their dreams, hopes and experiences. Folk fantasy, using simple rhythms and rhymes, conveys deep spiritual values that have been formed over the centuries. Ukrainian folk songs, with their bright images and melodiousness, especially express love for homeland and its people, and also reflect universal human values that are relevant for all times and peoples. Ukrainian folk songs are a priceless treasure that is passed down from generation to generation. They are not only a source of aesthetic pleasure, but also an important source of information about the history, culture, and worldview of the Ukrainian people. The purpose of this article was to study the worldview of the Ukrainian people in the artistic images of Ukrainian folk songs.*

Keywords: *worldview, Ukrainian folk songs, folk music, artistic images of songs, folk song genres, folk vocal and instrumental creative work, Ukrainian folklore.*

The entire treasure of vocal and instrumental melodies from the earliest times of mankind's existence, due to oral transmission from previous to subsequent generations, we attribute it to folk music, which plays a very important role in the cultural life of peoples. Folk music is a collective form of creative work, and in its very beginning, it was also an individual creation

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that, over time, spread among the masses and became the property of the people. Folk song, which dates back to ancient times, is an important part of Ukrainian music and Ukrainian culture. The Ukrainian people have been creating courageous and harsh, yet extremely lyrical poetry for centuries, which reflected the worldview of the Ukrainian people at every stage of historical development. Many famous Ukrainian composers, ethnographers, and culturologists have studied the history of Ukrainian folk songs development, among whom it is worth mentioning: Ivan Kotlyarevsky, Yuriy Fedkovych, Ivan Franko, Lesya Ukrainka, Pavlo Tychyna, Maksym Rylsky, Mykhailo Stelmakh, Sofia Hrytsia, Halyna Verkhovynets, Anatoly Avdievsky and many others. This topic has been the subject of study of composers from other countries (the Hungarian composer Béla Bartók, the Finnish composer Ilmari Krohn, the Czech historian Zdeněk Nejedlý, and others). The researchers noted that Ukrainian folk songs conveyed the rich inner life of Ukrainians; according to Nejedlý, they were in some ways close to both the Eastern group of Slavic folk songs and Western European folk songs. But, undoubtedly, the artistic images of Ukrainian folk songs mainly reflected the worldview of the Ukrainian people.

Ukrainian mythology, which influenced the worldview of the people and was reflected in folk creative work, is one of the links of the pan-Slavic and world mythology, which has its roots in ancient times, in distant prehistoric and pre-Christian times. The scientific study of Ukrainian mythology began in the middle of the 19th century, it was studied by M. Kostomarov, M. Maksymovich, O. Potebnia, M. Sumtsov, I. Nechuy-Levytskyi and others. They believed that the basis of ancient Ukrainian mythology, as well as that of European mythology, was the same phenomenon: celestial bodies, a sky studded with stars, the sun, the moon, stars, clouds, wind, rain, thunder and lightning. In the ancient Ukrainian mythology of pre-Christian times, we find the forms (real images) taken from the earth, because it was close to a man. Ukrainians took all the images of ancient religion from nature, which was nearby, and in their mythology they transferred them to heaven, that is, everything that happened in heaven had happened on the earth. That is why we see in the images of myths the sky, which sometimes appeared as a field, sometimes as the sea, sometimes as a maple leaf, and the clouds appeared as forests, rocks, etc.¹.

Folk creative work, which reflected the ideas, aspirations and ideals of the people, occupied an important part of Kyivan Rus era aesthetics. The main role in ancient Ukrainians' aesthetic ideas formation was played by folklore genres and, first of all, the calendar and ritual cycle. It is the calendar and ritual songs from ancient times to the present day that have shaped

¹ Nechuy-Levytskyi, Ivan, *Svitohlyad ukrayins'koho narodu. Eskiz ukrayins'koyi mifolohiyi [The Worldview of the Ukrainian People. Ukrainian mythology outline]*, Oberehy, Kyiv, 1993, pp. 3-7.

Ukrainians' ideas about beauty and moral values. Folk was manifested in many plots and was realized in folk coloring, interpretation, assessment, figurative vision. Ukrainian folklore, the scientists believe, was the starting point from which the cultural history of the Ukrainian people began. Undoubtedly, folk music played an extremely important role in the cultural life of nations; it was the beginning of the musical culture of the Ukrainian people.

Ancient Ukrainians-Slavs spiritualized nature and attributed to it all the experiences characteristic of humans. This was reflected both in the poetic text and in the musical language of the songs. It should be noted that we have no written musical records from ancient times. But, for example, from Arabic sources of the 9th century, chronicles from the princely era, drawings of Bulgarian manuscripts, the 11th century frescoes of St. Sophia's Cathedral in Kyiv and from the famous epic poem "The Tale of Igor's Campaign" we get known that already in those ancient times there existed not only a song culture, but also Ukrainian instrumental music that accompanied the song. It is known about military bands and simple musical instruments such as trumpets, flutes, tambourines, bagpipes, reed-pipes, harps, 8-string Slavic lutes, two-elbowed pipes, etc. From the epic poem "The Tale of Igor's Campaign" it is known about the legendary poet-singer Boyan, and from The Galician-Volhynian Chronicle we got known about the singer Mitus' (during the reign of King Daniel). From historical records, we also know about the existence of professional musicians and singers who were the authors of humorous and satirical songs in the "folk spirit". The Kyivan Chronicle of the 12th century mentions the folk singer Manuel. Unfortunately, only a few monuments have survived to our time, testifying to the folk singers and musicians who lived in ancient times. Unfortunately, only a few documents have survived to our time, testifying to the folk singers and musicians who lived in ancient times².

In St. Sophia's Cathedral in Kyiv, one of the oldest bandurist's images has been preserved on a fresco located on one of the choir aisles, where the bandura has its original appearance, at first glance it resembles an Italian lute with strings only on the neck. These few pieces of information assure us that even in the most ancient times there were singers and musicians who sang about military campaigns, performed in princely courts and at folk festivals.

The oldest and most ancient types of folk music are the melodies of ritual songs, which date back to the pre-Christian period. These are songs related to annual holidays or household events (carols, Shchedrivka, Haivka, Vesnianka, Kupala and harvest songs), or songs that are related to certain significant events (wedding, baptismal or funeral songs). They also tell about

² Krypiakevych, Ivan, *Istoriya ukrayins'koyi kul'tury [History of Ukrainian Culture]*, Lybid, Kyiv, 1999, p. 635.

the life of animals, birds, plants³. In rituals and customs, in carols, in Shchedrivka ('lavish') and Vesnianka ('spring') songs, as well as in spring games, in Kupala songs, in proverbs, etc., we see ancient Ukrainians' worldview manifestations regarding natural phenomena that struck the imagination, thoughts and fantasy of the people, who created pagan 'gods' with similar psychological characteristics to themselves. The antiquity of these melodies is evidenced by the musical language peculiarities. For example, in the world-famous "Shchedryk" song we find the repetition of the same motif in the minor third volume, or in "Oy, kolyada-kolyadnytsya" ("Oh, carol, carol singer") adjacent pitches alternate in the major second volume. It should be noted that these melodies have signs of old church modes.

In Ukrainian mythology, we find ancient forms of patriarchal and agricultural life, as well as the transfer of the form of family life from earth to heaven. In Ukrainian carols and Shchedrivka songs the images of the father-master, the mother-mistress, the daughter-maiden and the beautiful son-gentleman can often be met. Also we meet images of Ukrainian mythology characters: pagan Master god, goddesses of the Sun, goddesses of Dawn, goddesses of Clouds, goddesses of Spring. The change of summer and winter, heat and cold, day and night, light and darkness, the eternal struggle of light and dark forces touched the human imagination of those times. All these nature manifestations struck the imagination and awakened thoughts. Ancient Ukrainians glorified 'the bright heavenly forces', as we see from the ritual songs, to have their favor, which would contribute to the appearance of a large number of lambs, calves, so that the frost would not freeze the rye, wheat and so that trees would bear fruit in the gardens and poultry breeding would be successful in the farmsteads. Carols and Shchedrivka songs, in which young people praised the "master" and which were performed at Christmas, were one form of Ukrainian myths. The soul of an ancient Ukrainian could not yet think logically and therefore had to call on the help of the 'imagination'. Ancient Ukrainians glorified the 'light heavenly forces', served the 'dark forces', to attract the favor of heaven, to contribute to the achievement of practical goals. The purpose of the Ukrainian people's appeals to the 'heavenly forces', like of other peoples of the world, was practical: they asked the pagan 'gods' for all kinds of necessary things. The artistic images of these carols and Shchedrivka songs contained a rich language, and the pictures of folk life revealed the unique flavor of the ancestors' original world. The poetic content of these works reveals to us a picture of the folk life of their ancestors, who were attracted by images of the starry sky, the sun, the change of seasons and so on. But in the images of these songs we also find the family of 'bright' pagan gods of ancient

³ *Ibidem*, p. 623.

Ukrainians, which is the 'heavenly family': the clear Moon, the clear Sun, the fine Rain, the small Stars, etc. Such musical works show the secular spirituality of the people and the centuries-old traditions of their unique culture. The musical and poetic material of the songs allows us to create in the imagination a lyrical picture of the Ukrainian landscape, in which the beauty of nature is in harmonious unity with the structure of the peasant family. The ancient Slavs spiritualized nature and attributed to it all the experiences that a person had, and this was reflected in the poetic content of their works.

We see in the artistic images of the songs that the Ukrainian people imagined their pagan gods in the most attractive form for them, i. e. in the image of a rich landowner-farmer's family. The most common plot in Ukrainian carols and Shchedrivka songs describe the master's household, his oxen, cows, sheep, bees and his field which is covered with thick stacks. In later images of the songs, we already see the everyday life and color of the princely period, the image of the pagan god as a warrior, a warrior-prince, a princely son with his army, and female ones are shown as the images of a princess or a princely daughter. During the period of Christianity introduction, its ideas provided the content of cultural, educational and artistic values development process, which began to emerge and develop in ancient Ukrainians' religious life new forms. In the Christian period, when church singers and liturgical books appeared, we find that a Christian flavor took the place of Ukrainian people's mythology, where pagan gods were replaced by images of Lord Jesus Christ, Saint Peter (the Apostle), Saint Nicholas (of Myra and Bari) and the Holy Mother of God (the Blessed Virgin Mary).

The folk-poetic material of the songs, possessing a unique artistic and figurative element, has always contributed to the development of the emotional sphere and the ability to see the beauty of the world around. The enchanting artistic image of the songs, in which birds and animals, trees and wind reign, give us an understanding of the deep humanity of the Ukrainian people, their lyricism and sly folk humor. The artistic images of Ukrainian folk songs carry the human imagination into the enchanting world of fairy tales, and through the means of poetic allegory, people, especially children, learned about nature and human life. We can say that in this way, the worldview and attitude towards the surrounding world of future generations were largely formed.

Researchers believe that the 16th-18th centuries became an important era in the development of Ukrainian folk song. It acquired characteristic features that began to distinguish it from the folk songs of other peoples. A new form of Cossacks' dumas (epic ballads), historical songs and lyrical-epic musical works of an improvised-recitative nature appeared, which reflected the struggle of the Cossacks with the Turks and Tatars and other wars with

enemies. From this period, the creative work of folk singers: kobzars, bandurists and lyre players (often organizing themselves into singing fraternities), spread throughout the land. The further development of folk music showed its closeness to the European musical system, in which there was a division into major and minor in the specified mode, but there were also specific signs of national originality, for example, the development of 'subvocals'. Due to these elements, Chumak's (means 'a traveling salt merchant'), Burlak's (means 'a river boat or barge puller'), Kolomyika, bachelor's and different love songs were filled with the private experiences of an individual person in various life situations⁴.

It is also possible to distinguish such a feature of folk music that remains the property of a few, such as songs by professional folk singers: kobzars, bandurists, lyre players, etc. It is known that during the Cossacks' period of Ukrainian history, the kobza was widely used; not only Cossacks (warriors) but even girls played it. The torban, a musical instrument that is not much different from the kobza, was also widespread. Musicologist Vasyl Yemetz points out that both the playing and singing of different kobzars could differ significantly when performing the same song. This depended on singers from different regions of Ukrainian land performance specifics. But the content of the songs was common. This was especially true of dumas, peculiar epic songs, many of which had such a feature as the presence of melodeclamation. Musicologist Filaret Kolessa, who studied the phenomenon of dumas, believed that дума was a melodic recitative with a free rhythm and a variable improvisation form. He emphasized that the Dumas were not available for every musician to be performed correctly: "Only talented professional kobzars and some lyre players can sing the Dumas"⁵.

There were special military kobzars who composed regimental music. It is known that Hetman Ivan Mazepa played a torban, the neck of which was inlaid with his personal coat of arms. This musical instrument made of palisander and ivory was kept in the V. V. Tarnovs'kyi Chernigiv historical museum until its recent loss.

In 16th and 17th centuries tax collection registers with singers and 'musicians' were in operation on the territory of contemporary Ukraine. These registers are a valuable historical source that allows us to study the musical life of that time. It is believed that the heyday of kobza occurred in the 17th and 18th centuries. Already in the second half of the 17th century, 'musician's guilds' appeared in the country, evidence of which was the statute of the Kyiv Musician's Guild since 1677. An interesting phenomenon

⁴ Ohienko, Ivan, *Ukrayins'ka kul'tura. Korotka istoriya kul'turnoho zhyttya ukrayins'koho narodu [Ukrainian culture. A brief History of Ukrainian people's cultural life]*, Dovira, Kyiv, 1992.

⁵ Yemetz, Vasyl, *Kobza ta kobzari. Repryntne vydannya [Kobza and Kobzars. Reprint edition]*, Muzychna Ukrayina, 1993, p. 30.

of the 18th century was the existence of singing and instrumental choirs in manor estates, which also contributed to the development of musical art in Ukraine. Considering the musical abilities of the Ukrainian people, it was in Ukraine that a singing and music school was founded in the city of Hlukhov in 1737.

The people created dumas and songs that were not detached from reality, because this would contradict the very nature of folk poetry. In *The Travels of Macarius, Patriarch of Antioch*, we find information that the 17th-century Arab traveler Paul Za'im (Paul of Aleppo), who traveled through Cossack Country, was impressed and captivated by the spiritual potential of the Ukrainian people. He wrote that there were a lot of children in Ukrainian towns and all of them, even orphans, were taught to read.

There were many widows and orphans in Ukraine, because it had been so long ago that survival and persistence had been the most important problem of the Ukrainian people for centuries. The people, having a spirit of rebelliousness, an eternal desire for freedom and independence, did not lose their spiritual strength in the continuous wars for independence. And this important trait, the attraction to spirituality, is undoubtedly inherent in the Ukrainian people. Ukrainian songs and epic ballads are one of the manifestations of this attraction. Historical songs and dumas, previously called Cossack songs or venerable songs, accompanied the long path of the liberation struggle. They arose as a genre of folk poetry based on the best achievements of folk poetic creativity in the 15th - 16th centuries. A significant role in their emergence was played by folk historical, social and everyday Ukrainian folk songs. They are known in the world as original epic and lyric-epic works, performed to the accompaniment of a kobza, bandura or lyre⁶.

It is well known that the end of the 18th century was a period of complete enslavement of the Ukrainian people, when the Hetmanate was abolished and the Zaporizhian Sich was destroyed. It was during this period that the decline of the old kobzar tradition was observed⁷.

There is an opinion that the Ukrainian folk song is not only the best manifestation of the spiritual qualities of the people, but it has repeatedly been a means of national revival. Kobzars were highly respected and often performed as people who traveled throughout Ukraine and, with their singing and playing the kobza, fanned the sparks of popular anger, calling on the people to fight against the oppressors ruling Ukraine. Considering only the 17th - 18th centuries, some of the most famous names have come down to us: the legendary Marusia Churai, Semen Klymovsky, Yavdokha Zuikha and

⁶ Talanchuk, Olena, *Ukrayins'ki narodni dumy ta istorichni pisni [Ukrainian folk epic poems and historical songs]*, Veselka, Kyiv, 1990, pp. 5-9.

⁷ Yemetz, Vasyl, *Kobza ta kobzari. Repryntne vydannya [Kobza and Kobzars. Reprint edition]*, Muzychna Ukrainina, 1993, p. 45.

others. History has left us the names of blind kobzars whose fame spread in Ukraine at that time: Andriy Shut, Ivan Kravchenko-Kryukovsky, Khvedir Hrytsenko-Kholodny, Arkhip Nikonenko, Ostap Veresai and others⁸.

Experiencing the artistic image of such songs, in which the heroic resonates with the lyrics, the sincerity of courageous and strong people who completely love their country, we feel a variety of emotions: pride, admiration, love, anger, etc. Mykola Hohol emphasized that the Ukrainian folk song showed the entire history of the Ukrainian people, their pain and suffering, love for their own land, love for their mother, women, as well as faith in a bright future. It can be argued that Ukrainian folk creative work is the starting point from which the history of the Ukrainian people's culture has begun. Vivid poetic and musical language emphasizes the closeness and organic unity of man and the surrounding world, their inseparable connection. The folk song reflects the traditions of family upbringing, a deep sense of attachment to own family, respect for elders, maternal love, etc. The love lyrics of Ukrainian folk songs celebrate the beauty of a Ukrainian woman, the depth of her feelings for her beloved, her loyalty, tenderness, and strength of spirit. The feeling of deep love for own motherland, for own people, is especially vividly sung. The national in these songs is closely connected with the universal human's.

It should be noted that Ukrainian folk art has a distinctly vocal character, although since ancient times the Ukrainians have used many musical instruments to accompany singing. The oldest Ukrainian musical instruments are: from plucked instruments first was the harp (several strings that were stretched on a square frame), and later the kobza and the bandura appeared; the tsymbaly from percussion string instruments; bowed string instruments were the violin and the basolia. Of the ancient woodwind instruments, the sopilka was very popular, and in the Western Ukraine (mainly Carpathian Mountains) the reed-pipe and the trembita were also widespread. The tambourines and the kettle-drums were used as rhythmic percussion instruments. The kobza is one of the oldest national musical instruments. In its original form, as we can see on old drawings with Cossack Mamai's portrait, it had 3-5 strings, later in the 18th century it had 12 strings, and now it has 35 strings. Its shape has also changed. The kobza (or bandura) is a wooden musical instrument made from willow. In the old days, the strings were made of guts, or there was an alternation of gut and metal strings. The kobza has an old structure of Greek origin, with an admixture of other influences. At first, according to the historian Alexander Rigelman, the kobza and the bandura were different musical instruments, but later both got the same name and an attitude as to the same instrument. There are several versions regarding the origin of this musical instrument. One states that the

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 48.

kobza (bandura) is of Asian origin⁹. According to it, the kobza is an old musical instrument, which was widespread among the Cumans (Turkic nomadic people from Central Asia) in the 12th century, who occupied the steppe expanses in the south-east of Ukraine at that time. Later, kobza was borrowed from the Cumans by the Tatars, and only then it appeared in Ukraine. It should be mentioned that the Turks also use a musical instrument similar to the kobza which it is called the kobyzy (qobyzy). There is also another opinion that in the 15th century the kobza came to Ukraine from the Crimean Tatars, who lived on the Crimean Peninsula at that time. Regarding the origin of the bandura, some researchers have concluded that it first appeared in the Arab-Persian East, and later, around the 15th century, it reached Ukraine through Greece. Others believe that the bandura first appeared in England in the 16th century and was called the mandore. This musical instrument was distributed in European countries (first in Spain, where it was called the bandurria, later it began to spread in Italy, then it reached Poland, and only then it ended up in Ukraine). Bandurist chapels were formed in Poland at the king's court. There is an opinion that the bandura became a more popular musical instrument from that time and replaced the kobza. The bandura was outwardly similar to the kobza, so the people also called the bandura a kobza, which is precisely what explains the duality of the name of this Ukrainian national musical instrument. A historian Mykola Sumtsov believed that the bandura appeared in Ukraine thanks to the Serbs, who were the first teachers of Ukrainian military musicians and singers. There is no doubt that the kobza has long been widespread in the cities and villages of Ukraine. The 16th-century Polish historian Bartosz Paprocki gives examples of Cossacks who not only skillfully shot, but also "sang and played the kobza"¹⁰. Other researchers emphasize that the kobza (bandura) has been a national Ukrainian musical instrument since ancient times, because as early as 1580 in Ukrainian scientific sources there are mentions of bandura players. For example, it is known that Prystrunky (additional strings placed on the bandura's soundboard, which expand its range and capabilities) first appeared in Ukraine, as it can be seen on a drawing from 1785. But although it is still not entirely clear where the kobza (bandura) came from, one thing is clear: for centuries these instruments have served the Ukrainian people. They were not only entertainment, but also a part of folk creative work, in which, through the means of kobzar songs, they told about the struggle of Cossacks against enemies, about the glorious Zaporizhzhia and other pages of Ukrainian history, and, thus, awakened national feelings. Dumas (epic ballads) about Morozenko, Petro Sahaidachny, Marusia Bohuslavka, about the people's glorious past reveal truth and falsehood, preach spirit's cheerfulness, assure life's importance.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 16.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 17.

The kobza (bandura) is a musical instrument that has always been loved by the Ukrainian people. But there is no doubt that whether they were the creation of the Ukrainian people or had come from abroad, these instruments reminded Ukrainians of their glorious past and awakened dreams of a bright future.

Not in vain, understanding the significance of the kobza, the outstanding Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko, who glorified the beauty of his own land, the greatness, kindness and patience of his people, called his poetry collection as “Kobzar”. In each poetic line of “Kobzar” the poet’s suffering for the pain of his people can be felt. It is said that it is impossible to imagine T. Shevchenko without Ukraine, but it is impossible to imagine Ukraine without T. Shevchenko. For Taras Shevchenko, folk songs were a school of wisdom and truth, a living history, a faithful and sincere advisor in his life and creative work. Panteleimon Kulish, another famous figure of Ukrainian culture, called entire Ukrainian literature as ‘kobza’.

Over the centuries, the Ukrainian people have created a huge number of historical songs and dumas, which were performed by folk singers. The people created epic ballads and songs that told about the unadorned surrounding them reality. The artistic images of these songs, most of which were characterized by strict and courageous poetry, depicted for us the life and hopes of ordinary Ukrainians, their struggle for independence and a better future life. Ukrainian folk songs and dumas reflect moral norms and views, aesthetic tastes of Ukrainians, so they will never lose their scientific and cultural significance. From the historical songs, whose artistic images portray courageous and strong people, it is evident that heroism is almost always closely intertwined with lyricism. Listening to Ukrainian folk songs, the audience involuntarily begins to think about human destinies, about a person’s experiences and loneliness, and a deep sense of empathy arises.

The 17th century marked the beginning of Ukrainian folk songs artistic elaboration period. Lyre players, bandura players, and kobzars traditionally traveled through the villages and cities of Ukraine, performing historical songs and songs about the difficult daily life of the Ukrainian people.

The artistic images of Ukrainian folk songs have significant potential to influence the worldview of children's personalities, to awaken the strong energy resources of each person. In different historical times, folk pedagogy used children’s folk songs to form a certain type of worldview, moral and aesthetic attitude towards the world and people. The artistic images of Ukrainian folk songs taught children to feel and understand beauty, and aroused a desire for artistic creativity. From mother’s heartfelt lullaby, which sang nature, love and tenderness, humanity and goodness, the process of children’s awareness of the beauty of the world around them began. Children become aware of a folk song’s artistic and figurative essence through the

emotional experience of a musical and poetic artistic image, awareness of poetic content. Ukrainian folk-poetic song material has a unique figurative element that contributes to children's ability to experience emotionally, monitor the development of artistic images, find something new, appreciate the melody's beauty, and also develops auditory and vocal qualities. The musical images of fairy-tale songs reveal a fantastic, yet beautiful world, where children's imagination meets sincere humanity, gentle lyricism, and witty humor. The fabulous, magical image of the songs, in which birds and animals, the forest and the wind rule, tells children in an allegorical form about the human existence essence. A simple rhythm and a beautiful melody, the deep content of the works provide an opportunity to develop in children a sense of musical form, the ability to think in images, awakens creativity. Images of folk poetry genre works carry the imagination into the magical world of a fairy tale, where due to a poetic allegory, watching the song heroes' lives, children get to know about nature, human life, because in songs characters' images, various traits of people's temper are met. Acquaintance with songs makes children proud of creative work, the history of their people, which is permeated with wisdom. The vivid and poetic language emphasizes the integral closeness of a man and the surrounding nature, their inextricable connection. Songs that were created by the people many centuries ago are still popular among the people today: "Shchedryk", "Oy ye v lisi kalyna" ("Oh, there is a viburnum in the forest"), "Kosari" ("Mowers"), "Zhuravel" ("Crane"), "Idy, idy doshchyku" ("Let it rain"), "A vzhe vesna" ("And it's already spring"), "Dobryy vechir, divchyno" ("Good evening, a girl"), "Oy, syvaya ta i zozulen'ka" ("Oh, gray cuckoo"), "Nad richkoyu-berezhkom" ("Above the river bank"), "Divka Yavdoshka" ("Eudokia maiden") and other. The musical and poetic images of these songs evoke moral emotions and introduce children to the rituals and traditions of the Ukrainian people, because the folk song reflects the family upbringing peculiarities, deep and pure relationships between a person and its family, respect for elders, and especially maternal love. Folk songs, through musical intonations, encourage and enable young people to experience various shades of human emotions.

It is with the help of Ukrainian song artistic means that people from time immemorial sought to fill labour with a special meaning, decorate everyday life and humanize relationships between people. It should be pointed out that, over the centuries, amid various environments and influences of other nations, the Ukrainian people manifested their individuality, crystallized those spiritual melodies, but only later did the collection and arrangement of this "extremely large and rich material" begin, as Vasyl Barvinsky notes in his article "Ukrainian music" in the book under the general editorship¹¹. In the songs' artistic images, we feel each character's

¹¹ Krypiakevych, Ivan, *Istoriya ukrayins'koyi kul'tury [History of Ukrainian Culture]*, Lybid, Kyiv, 1999, p. 623.

temper peculiarities. We believe that folk songs, which fully reflect the worldview and national self-awareness of the Ukrainian people, teach us to understand the creative wisdom of the people. Mykola Lysenko (a Ukrainian composer, pianist, conductor and ethnomusicologist) wrote that in Ukrainian folk melodies, mostly minor, with small intervals and characteristic bold increases, symmetrical pattern and regular rhythm, we see, that in these songs, as in a mirror, the type of the Ukrainian was reflected, who is calm and deep by nature, with an aesthetic ear and a philosophical mind¹².

Since the 18th century, many prominent composers have turned to Ukrainian folk songs in their works (Pyotr Tchaikovsky and other). Thanks to the arrangements of Ukrainian folk songs by Mykola Leontovych (about 200), many of them have gained wide popularity throughout the world: "Shchedryk", also known as "Carol of the Bells", «Oy u hayu pry Dunayu» ("Oh, in the grove near the Danube"), "Nich yaka misyachna" ("What a moonlit night"), "Ty zh mene pidmanula" ("You've tricked me"), "Yikhav kozak za Dunay" ("A Cossack was traveling across the Danube") and other.

Conclusions

A review of Ukrainian musical art history defines folk song as one of the important links that dates back to ancient times. Ukrainian folk song is a living history of the people, woven from their dreams, hopes and experiences, which sounds in every image.

We do not know exactly when certain songs appeared, because only some of them are associated with specific names and historic events. Unfortunately, we also don't know the names of those ancient songwriters, however, each song originally had a specific author. But even today, the song preserves the golden thread of memory, stands guard over those sacred springs that inspire the Ukrainian national revival.

The Ukrainian people have created a huge number of epic ballads and historical songs, the artistic images of which reflect the life, hopes, and struggle for the country's independence. These songs continue to be performed, although quite rarely. They are preserved for future generations of the Ukrainians, who should know about the glorious past of their ancestors.

The inexhaustible sources of folk imagination, through simple rhythms and rhymes, truly carry the golden grains of all the best that has been sown for centuries in Ukrainian folk oral creative works with its summits of spirituality and educational wisdom. It is folk songs, in the artistic images of which the national self-awareness and the worldview of the people are reflected, that are distinguished by their vivid content and enchanting melody.

¹² Yemetz, Vasyl, *Kobza ta kobzari. Repryntne vydannya [Kobza and Kobzars. Reprint edition]*, Muzychna Ukrayina, 1993, p. 5.

The feeling of deep love for own motherland, for own people, is especially vividly praised in them. It can be argued that through the artistic images of Ukrainian folk songs, we become aware of those universal and eternal values that are present in all ages and are inherent to all peoples of the world.

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