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**DRAMATURGICAL DEVELOPMENT  
AND SPECIFICS IN THE ORNAMENTATION  
AND THE PROCESSING OF AUTHENTIC FOLK SONGS  
FOR CHORAL FOLK ENSEMBLES**

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The dissertation consists of an introduction, four chapters and a conclusion as well a list of references and two appendixes. The latter include 13 pages of scores, which are integrated in the methodological model.

The body of the text forms a volume of some 176 pages. The referential material includes 143 sources of which 135 are presented in Cyrillic, 6 in Latin and 2 are hosted on the Internet.

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**TITLE: DRAMATURGICAL DEVELOPMENT AND SPECIFICS IN THE ORNAMENTATION AND THE PROCESSING OF AUTHENTIC FOLK SONGS FOR CHORAL FOLK ENSEMBLES**

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## INTRODUCTION

The processing of authentic choral folk songs is a remarkable genre within the Bulgarian musical culture and the national choral folk ensembles are a true cultural phenomenon having no equivalent on the Balkans and, indeed, in any European country. Its specifics are derived from the preserved authentic technique of sound extraction and sound formation by the folk singers and the unique ornamental style of our national folk music. Bulgarian composers of all generations strive to attribute a decisive creative expression to their admiration for our folk music through its polyphonic transformation into a number of different genres. Since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the work of the song and dance folk ensembles has become a mainspring of inspiration for an entire galaxy of artists who, by processing these works, have created inimitable musical masterpieces of our musical culture. Such musical phenomena – the Bulgarian folklore and the choral folk song formations – are, undoubtedly, a source of great pride, enthusiasm and patriotic feelings for every Bulgarian. But they have also been admired by all who have become familiar with this unique art all over the world regardless of their nationality.

The motivation for engaging himself with this particular subject matter of investigation is the personal, creative commitment of the author to the sphere of folk music as he himself is a composer, a conductor of a folk choir, a performer of processed Bulgarian folk music and a teacher. This complex amalgamation of artistic and pedagogical interests has given rise to the development of a scientific interest targeted at the problem of musical dramaturgy. At the core of the **development of this interest lies the author's thesis that the territory of the phenomenon called “musical dramaturgy” is the meeting point of the creative quests and artistic achievements of composers, conductors and performers, all working together to find the true path to the hearts of the audience.** In view of the relatively active theoretical and methodological interest in the more general aspects of the issue discussed in the present work, musical dramaturgy has still not become a topic of an independent research which determines the relevance and significance of the proposed study. The various issues which naturally refer to the major problem of musical dramaturgy are of a profound interest to every musician and composer who has devoted his professional life to Bulgarian folk music and its realization. And this determines the purpose, the objective and the major tasks of the present dissertation.

- **Purpose:** *The main purpose of the study is to offer a set of practical techniques for working with folk chorus formations in order to improve the musical and dramaturgical development and construction of the processed musical compositions for folk choirs.*
- **Object:** The object of the investigation is the processing of a cappella compositions of Bulgarian folk songs as a repertoire and as an interpretative task for the folk choirs.
- **Subject matter:** The subject matter of the investigation is the musical dramaturgy in the processing of a cappella compositions as the ultimate artistic goal and the basis for the overall staging of folk choirs.
- **Tasks:**
  - To systematize the information on the history of the genre and the basic terminology used in the study on the basis of the related available scientific literature.
  - To clarify the concept of "musical dramaturgy" and to trace the means of expression through which it is achieved in the a cappella musical composition processing for folk choirs.
  - To present the multifunctional role of the conductor whose creative concepts and pedagogical work is a decisive factor for the artistic construction of the musical piece.
  - To generate a methodological model for the staging work of the members of the choir on the basis of musical dramaturgy relating to processed musical choral compositions.

- To explore the musical ornamentation, its stylistics and transition from solo to choral compositions and the adequacy of ethnographic affiliations as a factor in the construction of the composition's musical dramaturgy.
- To select appropriate examples from the musical literature which may serve as objects of analysis in support of the major theoretical assertions and methodological techniques.
- **Working hypothesis:** *By creating the necessary conditions for understanding the dramaturgical construction of the processed folk choral compositions, a qualitative change can be achieved in the overall sound of the folk chorus, as a vocal ensemble via the employment of appropriate methodological approaches in the course of the creative staging and interpretation of the musical composition.*

This development was made possible via the use of a **methodology** which includes the following methods of investigation:

- **The analytical method:** this is applied when working with scientific literature, in the process of comprehending the results from the completed qualitative research and as a specific method – the musical **analysis** employed in the study of the selected artistic musical pieces;
- **Qualitative research methods applied by the conductor when working with the folk choir:**
  - inclusive observation: applied throughout the methodological model;
  - discourse: the main method during the initial phases of the model;
  - demonstration: the main method employing adopted innovative techniques in the auditory-imitative learning of a new song when working with a choir of non-professionals;
  - self-reflection: a permanently engaged method for the analysis and understanding of the author's compositional ideas and the conductor's activities;
  - **systematization of the empirical data obtained from the qualitative study;**
  - **modelling;**
  - **expert questionnaire-interview.**

## CHAPTER ONE. FOLK CHOIRS AND THE GENRE CALLED “PROCESSING OF A FOLK SONG”

**1.1 Defining the problem. The concept of "processing".** Traditionally, in the Bulgarian musical practices the concept of "processing" has been understood as a type of creative work involving authentic national musical material. In its very substance, this concept contains the idea of adapting and transforming an authentic song, or an instrumental model, for a concert or a stage performance through various musical means of expression which are selected on the basis of the creative attitudes and aspirations of the composer, without deviating from the task of preserving the prototype to the greatest possible extent. Here, it is extremely important to note that part of the choral works of the first Bulgarian composers which were intended for performance by classical choirs can, essentially, also *be likened to the genre characteristics of folk song processing*. The major principal difference in the processing of the songs for folk choirs from the previous examples is the preservation of the *sound extraction mode, the resulting limited ambitus of the singers as well as the preservation of the ornamentation*. Despite these fundamental differences the historical prerequisites, related to the work of the first Bulgarian composers and the classicists, have largely determined the trends for the future development of the genre which arose sometime around the mid forties and the early fifties. On the one hand a new choral genre was born and on the other a greater in depth consideration was given to the creative interaction between the composers and the folklore.

With time, certain types of approaches to processing as a creative activity have established themselves and on this basis a number of classifications have been made, some of which are presented and compared in the present dissertation. We will begin their description with the “two types of musical folklore” as a distinction made by Prof. Dr. Bozhidar Abrashev in his work entitled "Processing and orchestration of Bulgarian folk music" (Part one, 1990) as follows: "*Non-processed* or presented in the form of an authentic, non-professional national musical piece" and "*Processed* or presented with an enriched system of expressive means with frequently altered compositional structure in the form of a polyphonic composition and an identifiable author..." (Abrashev, 1990:6).

For the purposes of the present investigation, it is important to identify the typology of the phenomenon, presented by B. Abrashev, as “*processed folk*”. The typology of musical processing includes a complex of characteristic features touching upon the composer's approach to the authentic example. *In any case, the determination of the type of processing depends on the degree of the composer`s intervention.*

- Bozhidar Abrashev`s typology treats processed folk music in the following way: *Harmonization, Actual processing and Author's processing*
- Levando constructs his analysis by dividing the "Choral processing" genre into three types, based on the degree of impact on the musical material (with conditional names): *ordinary processing, expanded processing and free processing* (Levando, Pavel (1974). *Проблеми хороведения. Ленинград: Музыка* )
- Typologies of the composers' interventions in authentic musical pieces have been offered by a number of Bulgarian prominent theoreticians and composers, such as *Manol Todorov, Nikolay Kauffman, Michail Bucharestliev, Kiril Stefanov, Stefan Kanev.*

As far as we are concerned, the problem of crucial importance is to find the criterion which could pinpoint the borderline between processing, "music by" (as per Stefan Kanev), author's processing (according to Abrashev) on the one hand, and the author's song on the other. Obviously, the "quantitative factor", used to explicate the degree to which the composer has intervened, is an uncertain, very thin controversial division line. What is needed is a **qualitative typological indicator**. An indicator of this type is formulated by Kurt Sachs in his book "Our Musical Heritage. A short history of music" (1948). In the chapter entitled "The Orient", section "Models", this eminent scientist describes and compares the West European composer as someone expected to create melodies of a decisively individual character with the Orient, where the composers are forced to adhere to a specifically set framework and patterns. Without imposing the difference, indicated by Kurt Zacks, on the entirety of the works of all Bulgarian composer's working in all genres, we can make sense of his thesis in regard to the composition practices in the Orient in **terms of processing**. It is exactly this "sticking to" the modal, formal, metric, ornamental, etc., **regional specifics** which is the criterion on the basis of which we can assert whether - regardless of the degree of intervention - the composer creates a form of processing. By abandoning the “regional specifics” model, the composer is now able to pursue his creative intentions, his type of musical thinking and this is where he can create own unique musical product even when it is based on folk music.

The term "processing" is viewed in a broader context as opposed to another, commonly used term – "arrangement". The examples given include "Russian Music Encyclopedia", the "East Slavonic folk. A dictionary of scientific and folk terminologies", and the terminological justifications forwarded by M. Medvedeva, P. Levando, and N. Romanovsky.

The development of the genre named "processed a cappella music for a folk choir" gave an extremely great impetus to the creation of many works at a time when the first national and world successes of the "State ensemble for folk songs and dances" went public. The acquisition and mastering of new musical layers, taken from the Bulgarian folk heritage, has been largely embedded in our national cultural policy for a period of almost half a century. Having started decades ago, the trend to set up professional ensembles with the status of state run institutions by a number of municipalities throughout the country gave a completely new, powerful boost to the development of processed music for folk choirs. To some extent this aroused the interest of many authors and motivated them to create music within the genre. It became a form of creativity which has successfully served as a our country`s logo all over the world.

**1.2 Historical preconditions and a review of the emergence of the genre "processing music for folk choirs" in the context of the Bulgarian choral traditions.** In order to explicate the musical and dramaturgical specifics of musical processing for folk choirs, we should first discuss the historical preconditions and the specific path to the emergence of the genre. Without doubt, this can be done only through the revealing of the founding processes on which Bulgarian art of choral singing is built. *Among the fundamental pillars and factors for its development are the ancient church traditions and singing practices; the preservation of our musical folklore over the centuries and its transmission from generation to generation.*

The present dissertation examines the different stages in the development of choral musical culture in Bulgaria. From the establishment of the Bulgarian state to the emergence of the first professional folk ensembles and choirs. The unequivocal and clear indications, coming to us from centuries past, are a clear evidence that the uniqueness of the Bulgarian musical environment possesses huge power and charge which has left its lasting, ardent imprint on Bulgarian musical culture.

From the very beginning, the characteristic features of our national choral singing distinguishes it greatly from other countries in Europe exactly because it stems from and develops on the basis of the folk song.

**1.3 Emergence of professional folk choirs and ensembles.** The rich folk song traditions and the rise the art of Bulgarian choral singing, presented so far, have created a solid basis for the emergence of the new genre called the "Choral folk song". Philip Kutev is considered its progenitor but this new phenomenon in the development of the art of music in our country was born of many preceding acts of creative courage and foresight. The process of the emergence of ensembles and folk choirs in the country has been discussed in its chronology, as too is the history of the first secondary specialized schools and higher educational institutions teaching folklore arts. In essence, the Bulgarian educational system was able to lay the methodological foundations for training in folk singing. Gradually, the overall artistic level of the professional ensembles went on the rise; the same positive development was paralleled by the composers who wrote the musical compositions for these ensembles. Thus, the genre of "Choral folk song" found itself at the center of cultural life during the 20<sup>th</sup> century and went on to develop and inspire the creative energy of many a generation of Bulgarian composers.

**1.4. An overview of the theoretical studies on musical processing for folk choirs and working methods.** The present dissertation examines the scientific interests and directions in which renowned Bulgarian conductors, teachers and theorists have worked, the comprehensive scientific works they have created in relevance to the subject matter in question and their contribution to both the development of the genre and to the scientific explanation of the phenomena and the problems associated with folk choirs. Among the numerous works of particular importance are Ivan Vulev`s "Folk choirs and some problems related to them" (1972), the discussions held on the pages of the "Bulgarian Music" magazine during the period 1972 – 1974, "Processing and orchestration of Bulgarian folk music" by Dr. Bozhidar Abrashev (1990), "Theoretical, artistic and analytical problems in working with a female folk choir" by

Vasilka Spasova (1994), "The art of folk chamber and vocal ensembles" (2004) and "The mystery of the Bulgarian voices" (2007) by Dr. Dora Hristova, "Chronology and characteristics of the "Songs for folk choirs" genre (2009) by Rada Slavinska, "Krasimir Kyurkchiyski's songs for folk choirs – specifics and significance" – a PhD thesis from 2012 by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rada Slavinska, "Scat technique in the works of Bulgarian composers for folk ensembles" (2015) Assoc. Prof. Dr. Georgi Petkov.

**1.5. Possible future developments within the genre.** Defining the place of the genre in our contemporary musical culture and its possible future development are among the main goals which attribute a meaning to the present theoretical and practical development. In line with the opinion expressed by professionals working in this sphere, analyses were made and the observed achievements and problems were clearly outlined. It is a matter of great responsibility to employ the numerous opinions expressed and studies performed to propose ways to overcome these problems as well as to show the opportunities for the future development and promotion of the genre.

## CHAPTER 2 MUSICAL DRAMATURGY IN CHORAL FOLK SONGING– THE THEORETICAL ASPECTS

### 2.1 Definition of “Musical dramaturgy”

**The objective** of the present dissertation is to explore the techniques by which **musical dramaturgy is built in the processed musical *a cappella* pieces for folk choir ensembles.** Clarifying the meaning of the term "*musical dramaturgy*" will enable us to discover and analyze - to the fullest degree - the approaches adopted by all participants in this creative process (composer, conductor, choral group and the audience).

The problem of musical dramaturgy in the processing of folk songs is very specific and extremely complex. In the process of creating the musical composition, at its center the composer places a completed authentic musical piece having its well-shaped melody sequences set in a certain mode and ending each stanza with a repeated final; the variations are achieved via improvisation relating – predominantly – to the ornamentation. Depending on the potential of the poetic base and the melody itself, but above all according to the creative invention of the composer, the act of processing allows for the development of an original dramaturgy which often affects the development and organization of the musical form itself by means of harmony and texture and also by including other means of expression. On his part, the conductor has the opportunity to process the work in couplets and thus to achieve a decisively interpretative musical dramaturgy by employing the effects from the dynamics and the intensity of the musical process. Based on this, we will accept the author's understanding of musical dramaturgy as follows:

*Essentially, the dramaturgy of any musical work is expressed as an interaction between the meaningful interconnections within the structure and organization of the musical material. In the vocal arts, the main driving forces and vehicles of the dramaturgy are music and speech and via the unity between the poetic and the musical means of expression they are the factors underlying the musical and dramaturgical integrity of the work.* From this point on we may identify the fundamental importance of the interdependence between the poetic fundament and the musical means of expression integrated in a creative and interpretative concept. In the process of analyzing musical dramaturgy through the organization of the means of expression, we have to follow the characteristic features and intensity of the musical events, the rise and fall in the degrees of tension, the location of and distance between the climaxes.



**2.2. Syncretism and the synthesis of speech and melody in vocal folk music. Effects from the text on the selected means of expression in the processed musical piece and its interpretation.** Both music and speech are generated and perceived audibly and visually through their common denominator – the sounds. Exhibiting themselves homogeneously, however, in vocal music they cannot remain as independent entities but form something of an “alloy”, which is clearly visible in other arts - like the theater, cinema, opera, ballet, etc.

In Bulgarian folk music **Syncretism** is omnipresent and clearly visible. In syncretic folk creativity all components are unified from the very beginning. It is a kind of simultaneous creation of lyrics, melody and dance as well as their undeniable integration in rituality and custom. To a considerable extent, Middle Age folk music was imbedded in the ancient and primitive cultures of Europe, but as a result of evolution the different types of arts gradually emerged from this original “alloy”. As time went by they separated only to start interacting again in an effort to find a new form of **synthesis**.

Speaking of the relationship between text and music - regardless of the levels of syncretism or synthesis – one cannot ignore the issue of **prosody**. *In musical theory, prosody is seen as the correspondence between the strong metric tenses of the melody with the stresses and the stressed syllables in speech. Their inconsistency leads to an erroneous prosody and, hence, to the incomprehensibility of the lyrics in a given vocal part.*

In the *authentic Bulgarian folk songs* which, as early as their infancy, were syncretic the prosody between music and text has fallen under the influence of a number of different processes. The mere fact that they were created intuitively by artists with distinctive singing and musical talents often highlights them with a different inner balance of the prosody. One of the main factors effecting these prosodic specifics are the dialects and ethnographic musical specifics on the basis of which they are created. In some dialects, the stress in certain words does not conform to the rules of the Bulgarian literary language and this has directed the intuition of their authors along different paths in their efforts to combine melody with lyrics. This explains the numerous prosodic problems regarding the principles on the basis of which the professional composers build their vocal compositions.

The most common practice employed by the authors of processed musical compositions for folk choirs is to quote the specific song pattern with intact melody and lyrics, which shows their true respect for the authentic musical piece. In the cases when they have permitted themselves the freedom to edit some elements of the lyrics, the effected changes effect the meaning of the text and do not relate to prosody. Such a vivid example of professional interference in the authentic texts of folk songs, processed by Philip Kutev are the works of Maria Kuteva /his wife/ and assistant in the activities of the DANPT (*National ensemble of folk songs and dances*, Bul.). In itself, this alone makes the very genre called "Choral folk song" truly unique. On the one hand, we have the artistic work, and on the other, this it is a creation based on authentic vocal material which is not always processed within the norms of musical prosody.

*The text plays a key role and has a decisive impact on the structure of the vocal musical product.* The influence of the text on the musical form is clearly explicated in the works processed for folk choirs. Both for the performers and for the composer who creates the vocal music, the structure of the textual content is of paramount importance. And it is this basic source from which the selection of the means of expression, during the different stages in the development of the musical dramaturgy of the work, should be derived. *Indeed, it is the greatest masterpieces of our choral literature in which we can see the composer`s conscious search for a specific sonoric atmosphere called to support and complement the content of the text, to follow the dramaturgy and the inherent emotional processes in it as well as to reinforce it with numerous musical messages by employing all of the other means of expression.*

## 2.3. Musical means of expression and musical dramaturgy

**2.3.1 Mode and melodic bases.** The great color and diversity of the modal and melodic foundations of Bulgarian folk music are among its brightest and most characteristic features. This uniqueness is due to both the diverse melodic structures and to their specific tone ratios. The rich melodic and rhythmic diversity has been preserved thanks to an entire constellation of great Bulgarian musical folklorists who have laboured to search out, collect, record and decipher national musical gems from all over the country.

The very task of processing a folk melody, as we have already illustrated, is primarily aimed to use it as a base for the creation of a musical composition having a polyphonic (harmonic, polyphonic, etc.) texture, based on the principles underlying the creation of musical art. *Harmonization is directly dependent on the melodic profile and the modal basis of the authentic prototype and together they create a variety of emotional messages building, essentially, the musical and dramaturgical integrity of choral singing.*

The authentic songs from the different ethnographic regions in Bulgaria, have integrated certain modal trends which are typical of the respective region and, in general, their melodies are constructed on four-row, triple row and twin row stanzas, separated by a caesura. The structure of the melody is consistent precisely with these phenomena which - in turn - could lead to the application of various musical means of expression used by composers and interpreters in the course of their processing. *It is precisely this point of transition where a song departs from people's daily life to become a piece of musical choral scenic art based on folk basis which is the subject matter of the present analysis.*

Undoubtedly, the specific melodic line, characteristic of Bulgarian folk music, is a fundamental precondition for: *non-traditional sequences and even the widely varying harmonic styles in the country's different ethnographic regions; (b) the rich metro-rhythmic palette and the various emotional states resulting there from; colorful ornamental styles with no equivalent in any other traditional culture anywhere in the world; a dynamic color originating from the variability of the modal and melodic structuring and the content of the lyrics.*

These observations clearly outline the specifics of the Bulgarian folk melos and largely explain the creative impulses of many Bulgarian composers and processors who have worked in the genre called "Choral folk song". In the course of the investigation we will reveal the methods and means employed by the artists and the interpreters for constructing the musical dramaturgy of a musical choral composition based on an authentic folk song. By analyzing the musical means of expression, the appropriate creative and interpretative approaches will be clarified, and they will be applied to the methodological model for processing musical works for folk choirs based on authentic musical material.

**2.3.2 Harmonic techniques.** *Harmony is one of the key means of expression in processing folk songs and their transformation from an authentic song into an artistic production for presenting on stage.*

In the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and shortly before the advent of the State folklore ensemble, the first processed authentic songs for folk choirs were created, but it was Philip Kutev's creative approach which crystallized the trend and outlined the foundations of the genre called "Choral folk song". In his early works, the harmonization of the melodies was driven entirely by the modal and tonal foundations of the authentic melodies which he processed. Through the use of their classical *consonant harmony the road was paved for the transition of our traditional songs from the ritualistic and customary to stage performances thanks to the correctly chosen specific approach to harmonization which gives them a whole new life.*

One important prerequisite for determining the level of complexity of the harmonious language, specific for this musical genre, is the fact that in the beginning the singers had no

professional musical education and were oblivious to the tradition of listening to the European music achievements on the polyphonic principles of which these works are built. The process of improving the professional qualities of the performers gave rise to aspirations for a richer artistic development of the processed musical pieces, for the growing complexity of the language of harmony and the process of constructing musical dramaturgy consistent with their thematic basis.

Harmony is one of the important indicators determining the composer's contribution to the translation of the song from a solo to a choral performance which requires the creation of an entirely new overall concept. **The tonal plan** is among the main structural and building elements of the process and from this point of view they can be divided into monotonal and modulated musical compositions. *When processing with modulations, we mean a tonal plan of the piece*, which is being built and depends on the process of unfolding the melody and the motives in the different couplets, as well as within the entire work. *These techniques and processes should be used and identified consciously.*

**The functional variability in the harmonization of the melody** (referred to with the term "pre-harmonization") is a reflection of the composer's combinative and variational thinking and can be of great benefit in building the overall concept and dramaturgy of the work. *Having mastered these methods and techniques, through his imagination the author - and the performers - can build the processed piece of work and generate a feeling of a constantly evolving environment of sound and harmony, offering listeners different emotional perceptions and experiences.*

**The structure of the chords** is an important indicator of the composer's style and determines, to a considerable extent, the successful transmission of the choral music's emotional message. In current day practices, among the processed choral folk songs the greatest share is occupied by chords of the triad construction. With its high achievements, European musical culture has handed down to us a crystallized harmonious language and golden rules for proper voice guidance and balance in the choral ensemble. And it is these rules which have built the bridge between our unique traditional music and the experience accumulated by the European musical culture.

*Nonacords* are also triad constructed chord verticals. In some cases, the authors use them as a complete structure and sequentially arranged tones within the composition of the chord, and in others - with switched, close knit tone locations. *Being present in the musical language of the authors, this type of harmonious techniques and distribution in the choral score can serve as successful instruments for a specific dramaturgical construction. From the interpretative viewpoint, such harmonic instruments can create intonational difficulties in the course of the interpretation which may lead to a change in the ensemble's mode of singing. One of the necessary conditions for their successful use is to achieve and move away from these sonorities through a smooth and gradual shift of the voices thus creating the needed intonational stability of the choral ensemble. The human voice cannot - and should not - be treated as a musical instrument which is capable of jumps and dissonant intervals with ease. It should rather be treated as a sound apparatus assigned to perform easily achievable and comfortable vocal performances.*

It is of decisive importance to underline that in the course of developing creative practices, *triad arranged chords in musical processing are but only one of the instruments of harmonization.* Some of the works composed for folk choir singing demonstrate an interaction between different harmonious styles which create a diverse musical language and colorful choral parts. Last, but not least, they also act as a kind of musical suggestion which – one way or another – is the very essence of every creative endeavor.

**Fourths and fifths harmonic constructions** in musical processing for folk choirs are a common practice and are frequently met in the harmonic language of all generations of

composers who have worked in this genre. In some choral processing this type of chords are used as a "pad" underlying the melody, forming the entire style of the choir's texture; in other cases they serve as the expositional presentation of the theme or as a fragmentary harmonic solution. Their use creates the impression of an intonational kinship with Bulgarian folk which has registered a number of such authentic practices.

There are also cases of *parallel fifths and fourths in the accompanying voices, and in the performance of the melody*. Although fifths are, in their substance, *obvious parallelisms obtained during their unidirectional movement*, their use is well justified when they become the key means of expression and the major constructive musical language in the processing of the work or - albeit - of only a certain part of its structure.

**Types of choral score distribution and voices** in a homogeneous female choir are analogous to the principles relating to the classical choral groups. The unified nature of women's voices implies their definition as homogeneous timbres which is why we have termed them "*homogeneous choirs*". Considering the working volume of folk choirs from "d-e" to "h<sup>1</sup> – c#<sup>2</sup>", it isn't hard to see that the possibilities for the wider placement of chords are, in general, rather limited - especially in the homogeneous four voice choirs. This explains why the most often met chord placements are "narrow" and "mixed". Their selection depends entirely on the author, who's work is directed by the artistic expression and the desired musical dramaturgy. *Practice has indicated that by combining the different placements in one processing the texture and the overall sound acquire color and a saturated variability in the movement of the voices.*

**The use of "divisi"** has a direct bearing on the internal balance and density of the choir's sound. In essence, the division of the vocal party into two parts (sometimes even more) reduces its intensity and puts the balance of the ensemble in a somewhat delicate position irrespective of whether it is choral or instrumental. The use of "divisi" should be accompanied by an analysis of the registers into which the individual parts will fall. If necessary - and if possible - a given musical moment can be dynamically strengthened, or softened, with the goal being to make the compact choral sonority appropriate to the desired artistic effect.

**Transferring the melody to some other voice** is also directly related to and affects the harmonic concept of the work and its dramaturgical construction. It is another great opportunity to create a new sound environment which corresponds to the artistic idea and the emotional construction of the part. *When the thematic core shifts to one of the inner voices, the surrounding choral parts strive to reflect the melody adequately in order to be able to build a consciously supported idea of a new atmosphere. In such cases, the parts form harmonious relationships on a higher, acoustically complex harmonious level.*

**Melody modulation and its realization in other tonal centers** is one of the most commonly used compositional approaches when processing pieces for folk choirs and it often appears as a major structure-forming factor in the very concept of the form. Verbal messages are of the utmost importance and they should be the prerequisite for one or another tonal realization of the melody and the structuring of the format rather than an end in itself. *In practice, the most often met approach is the fourths and fifths transfer of the melody ascending or descending, but the transposition can be done at all possible intervals - ascending or descending – relevant to the main tonal center of the theme. Violating these compositional stereotypes gives authors the full range of expressive tonal possibilities in the course of constructing their choral musical compositions.*

**The process of melody chromaticization and harmony of the processed musical works** is essential both for their artistic expression and for the exact intonation and structure of the ensemble. This approach essentially creates a diversity and texture in the work, builds the dramaturgy and an overall general impact. *When tonal modulations are created by a master musician and hard work, in effect, a musical work begins to - kind of - "swim" in widely varying tonal "waves" without posing any serious intonational challenges in building its meaningful*

*foundation and ideas in different musical colors. In the chromaticization of individual choral parts, this process can acquire a dual nature for each singer or choral part. On the one hand, the full tonal palette gives unlimited opportunities for melodic movements and replenishment of the harmony, with which we can depict rich contrapuntal movements of the voices and on the other one can place certain intonational challenges before the performers.*

In conclusion we should note that the means of expression, known as "harmony", are among the main building blocks when processing musical pieces for choral singing. *The process of working with choral groups, the elaboration of a unison and a balance of the choir as well as the composer's creative approach are strictly specific. The use of smooth voice keeping, the finding of the correct and convenient register, the sound of the unison in the individual choral part and the ensemble as a whole are all signs of the professional training and an intimate, in depth understanding of this genre by all musicians for whom choral music is an expression of their emotional being.*

**2.3.3 Polyphonic techniques.** Although the examples of entirely polyphonic texture in the processed works for folk choirs are but a few, polyphony has its important place and influence on this genre. With its diverse manifestations it enriches the means of expression in choral music, brings new textural diversities and influences the creative approach followed by many Bulgarian composers. *With polyphony, a diverse creative atmosphere can be achieved, the application of which influences the emotional and dramatic impact on the processing of any musical work and becomes one of the successful ways to build that work.* In addition to the bright contrapuntal line of the voices, a qualitative sign of polyphony in the choral work is their mobility and the possibility of adaptation within the vertical structure. In the sphere of a cappella processing of music for folk choirs, among the most frequently used polyphonic techniques are:

*Imitative polyphonic techniques* which possess huge opportunities for application in processing. In fact, they are among the authors' most often used techniques taking the form of canonical imitations, met forms, simple, complex, crustaceous, mixed-composite and other varieties. Imitation can be built not only on one motif of the melody, but even on one single ornament;

*Ascending construction and withdrawal of the tension* - through the gradual entry and retreat of each voice from the texture a natural increase and decrease of the dynamic characteristics is achieved;

*The comparison between a harmonious and polyphonic texture* is a means of dramaturgical construction, through which it is possible to create bright contrasts in the musical work following its emotional plan dictated by the contents of the underlying text.

*The contrapuntal profile of some of the secondary voices* can be built rhythmically and contrastingly in intonational terms with a counter directional motion which generates an internal activity and a diverse movement in the voices resembling the passthrough of the harmonic movements.

*Achieving a sense of harmonious growth of the texture by polyphonic means* is a technique, particularly suited for which the non measured songs. The unshakable linearity of their melodic graphics can lead to infinitely interesting intertwining voice contrapuntos simultaneously building both polyphony and harmoniousness. The effort put into making each of the voices melodiously and linearly shaped is also a sign of the polyphonic maturity of the musical work.

*One obligatory condition for the author and the conductor when creating or interpreting the choral piece is the performance of an individual test of each of the participating voices.* This method of verification applies to songs having a polyphonic and to those with homophonic texture to an equal degree and it helps the building of a smooth voice guidance and its logical interpretation. In this way one can find the best and most colorful options for the melodic profile

of the contrapunto, for its vocal elaboration and for the staging and interpretation of the musical product.

The art of polyphony contains an array of rich, expressive opportunities for the purely musical and dramaturgical development of the musical work. With its diverse manifestations, polyphony enriches the choral means of expression and introduces novel textural varieties.

**2.3.4 Dynamics.** A crucially important instrument used in the building of the emotional impact and the dramaturgy of every choral musical piece is *dynamics*. With its potential, one can present the story told by the original author in the authentic musical piece and in the choral part in vivid coloring and a deeper relief thus bringing the emotional message of the music much closer to the hearts of the audience.

Practice has shown that because of the folk singers` naturally inherited open chest singing, folk choirs *demonstrate a relatively lower amplitude of the dynamic nuances*, especially the contrasting ones. In the very beginning, when the first professional folk choirs were being set up, the singers had a decidedly forceful approach to the performance of the song. This is explained by the life of the folk song in the very lifestyle of the choir - the "sedya" - (or "home gathering" in the English tradition) as well as in the village square, the field or anywhere where to hear the sound meant that it had to have a powerful thrust; to be penetrating and overwhelming. This centuries old mode of existence of our authentic folk songs is the basis for the manner of sound extraction, formation and the functioning of the vocal apparatus of the Bulgarian folk singers.

*The aspirations toward and the requirement for dynamic coloring as the stylistic features of every solo performer - or ensemble - are strengthened after our folk music "hit the stage".* In this new environment, Bulgarian folk music had to be viewed against other musical genres and performing arts, where dynamics are among the major means of expression. *Over the years the choral folk groups gradually began to use the full range of dynamic nuances.*

One interesting fact is that in the choral folk songs which can be found in some *old editions of the National Academy of Art, dynamic designations are not to be found in most of the published musical scores.* In itself this indicates that at the beginning of their existence these formations were perceived as ensembles with a poor dynamic reflection. *In any event, the creation, or interpretation, of a musical part implies a clear professional strategy regarding dynamics.*

On the other hand, *dynamics is a key factor in building the very form of a musical composition.* Through the dynamic concept, both the author and the performers build the structure and make music both expressive and impressive; they outline the limits of the individual parts and define the connections and intermedia between the different thematic and meaningful cores. The contrasting comparison of the dynamics outlines the relief of the choral work and can be a key technique for building dramaturgy.

*The conductor balances the dynamic stability and activity of the ensemble and is responsible for the responsiveness of the performers to his gestures.* In the process of his work, the conductor becomes familiar with the individual dynamic specifics of each participating voice and thus determines the intensity of the musical part and the entire composition. The overall level and the outer dynamic boundaries are determined by the ability of all singers to successfully sing their individual parts without roughness and without distorting the entire sonority.

In a considerable part of the processed musical works for choral folk singing one may notice that the individual couplets are built of one and the same musical material. *The possibility to consciously and logically diversify the dynamic nuances in each separate couplet is very realistic but it must be made to follow the content of the song and on that basis to elaborate the creative concept.*

It is also important to discuss the topic of *quiet dynamic signs in the high registers and the stronger signs in the lower tones in the ambitus of a given part*. These are extremely specific vocal zones which – because of being located on the outskirts of their tonal range - enjoy limited opportunities for bringing in a dynamic nuance. *In order to be able to place such requirements toward the strength of the voice, it is of vital importance to assess the current general dynamic level carefully and to decide on how to balance the voices in order to obtain the sonority desired by the composer or the conductor.*

In some parts, the composers include mixed sound formation techniques - filling and falsetto - which imply a change of timbre and often contradict the very basis of folk singing. For example, *the only way to sing high tones outside of the register of a folk choir is falsetto singing, while the low tones are achieved via additional "bass" compaction*. The examples given relate more to the exceptional rather than the rule but in actuality they do exist in the musical literature written for folk choirs and the approach to them - both by composers and performers - should be methodically correct.

The *interdependence between dynamics and pace* is also developing in a very *interesting way*. Experienced conductors and composers are well aware of the difficulties and challenges posed by the relationship between these means of expression. The stronger the dynamics, the more complex it is managed at a faster pace. At such moments, and in order to achieve a beautiful sound and at the same time adequate rhythmic performance, it is recommended *to carefully assess the possibilities for the dynamic amplitude of the choir and the individual scores*.

In reality, *dynamics are clearly related to all available means of expression in the musical and dramaturgical construction of the composition*. Its relative presence is directly dependent on harmony, polyphony, rhythm, tempo, character, etc. The art of creating a dynamic palette in the composed and interpreted choral musical works corresponds directly with the most exalted conception of the divine principle in music and the importance of the messages sent by this supreme art form.

**2.3.5 Tempo, rhythm and metro rhythm.** In discussing the processed musical compositions for folk choirs we have to place the emphasis on rhythm and metro-rhythm among their most characteristic features hosting the codes which distinguish this genre from the artistic achievements of all other nations. The richness of the *compound meter and its numerous combinations are a phenomena with the greatest diversity in Bulgarian folk music*. In themselves, they have become a powerful means of expression in the process of constructing musical imagery and atmosphere along with harmony, polyphony, dynamics, etc., and due to a number of physiological and aesthetic reasons they exert a strong influence on all other means of musical expression.

*The change in tempo breathes life and a specific texture to the music* and it will be an exaggeration to perceive the tempo of the composition as an object of absolute magnitude. To the contrary: the agogic nuances draw new musical pictures and spaces thus shaping the aura of the music. *A development of the tempo and the metro rhythm, with the support of the remaining means of expression, can build the culmination of the musical work and vice-versa: a drop will form a tempo-rhythmic (agogic) wave, which will facilitate the recreation of a variety of psychological suggestions and imagery.*

In poorly crafted choral works, the frequent tendency to increase the tempo- at "crescendo" and to slow it down at "decescendo" is clearly observed. The decisive role here is played by the concept itself, the rehearsal work done with the choir and the conductor's gestures during the performance.

*The crown (fermata) in choral art* is an artistically elaborate, tempo-rhythmical and - at the same time and in some cases - a physiologically substantiated technique. *It successfully*

*illustrates the beauty of choral sonority, harmony, proper breathing skills and dynamic sound control.*

Very often rhythm, metro-rhythm and the tempo appear to act *as a form-inducing factor* both in the large cyclic works but also in smaller and simpler musical forms. *With their help, we are able to “dissect” a musical form* but also to “weld” *different parts together*. Each of these possibilities is born of the creative imagination of the authors and conductors, but they can exert a palpable and overwhelming impact only when they follow closely the musical and dramaturgical concept and are supportive of the underlying emotional message.

The use of *polyrhythmia* as a means of expression enters and interacts simultaneously with several of the major means of expression. In the first place, the metro rhythmic indicators of each of the voice parts placed in juxtaposition create complex relationships with each other from the point of view of both performers and the conductor and presume a simultaneously autonomous and synchronized concept in one and the same realm. Any poly-rhythmic moment has to be considered both in rhythmic, harmonic and polyphonic terms since it inevitably leads to specific vertical or horizontal processes. Such an approach is justified if, and when, it brings added artistic value to the overall idea and basic design.

*The conductor should also direct his attention to the acoustic environment in which a choral work is presented. In order to avoid overlaying the reverse sound, slower pace should be given in rooms with large reverberation, which can be compensated by more vibrato in the voices. These acoustic principles exert an impact on the size of the choirs, considering that for smaller choirs intensive singing could be more effective especially when saturated with higher and brighter dynamic amplitudes.*

**2.4. Musical form.** The structure of each choral work can be clarified by analyzing the *structure of the musical concept* and its relation to *the content basis of the work*. It is with their help and inter connectivity that the artistic substance of the work is built and the compositional form, which is among the main drivers of a musical message, is being built.

Prof. Pencho Stoyanov outlines the important role of the musical form in the painting of the creative images and dramaturgy of each musical work. These qualities of the artistic musical culture are valid, to the greatest extent, in relation to the processing of authentic choral folk songs. *The original texts, created for specific occasions (a certain custom, ritual, occasion, celebration, etc.) are a strong and influential factor for determining the structure and creative strategy for the future choral processing and its interpretation.*

*Each song affects the audience emotionally with its two major components – the music and the lyrics.* It is through the interconnection between them that the structure and internal organization of the thematic musical material is being built. In any artistic vocal work, the correct structure of the musical form is, without doubt, entirely dependent on the structure of the verbal text which becomes the basis for the formation of each individual part.

*In their greater part, the Bulgarian authentic folk songs have the single-part form,* made up of periods, or sentences, with a repeated structure (in most cases literally). Some exceptions to this rule can most often be found in the non-measured songs where in one and the same couplet we may meet several different periods, or sentences, their variants and further developments of modified repetitions.

One may say that the use of the single meter form is the initial and most common practice when processing musical material for folk choirs. But the professional development of the Bulgarian folk choirs in particular and the desire of the authors to enrich the development of choral processing has gradually served as an impulse for improvement and the expansion of their form and structure. Thus, in creative practices the use of binary and ternary forms began to take shape via a variety of different paths. The major methods used for the formation of the second meter are:



- *thematic transposition, ascending and descending over different intervals;*
- *preservation of the tonal center, but with a change in the texture and means of expression in order to build a new contrasting time;*
- *exposure of the thematic material in a part other than the first time;*
- *preservation of the format in songs which, in their authentic form, are structured as binary.*

*It is the balance between the thematic and the structure, as well as in the means used in the exposition, the development of the middle time and the reprise which support the sustainability of the ternary musical forms which have given us wonderful examples of global and Bulgarian choral literature.*

Among the main methods used for the *construction of a triple meter form in the processing of music for folk choirs* are:

- *thematic transposition, ascending or descending over different intervals in a second meter, triple meter – literal, tonal or a-tonal, complete or incomplete reprise;*
- *preservation of the tonal center in the second meter, but with a change of the texture and the means of expression in order to build a new developing or contrasting part, triple meter – literal, tonal or a-tonal, complete or incomplete reprise;*
- *construction of an author's new second meter in the appropriate intonational environment, triple meter - literal, tonal or a-tonal, complete or incomplete reprise;*
- *exposure of the thematic material in a different part in the second meter, triple meter – literal, tonal or a-tonal, complete or incomplete reprise;*
- *preservation of the format in songs which, in their authentic form, were triple meter structured.*

Other common parts in processed musical pieces for folk choirs are the "*Codetta*" and "*Introduction*", which invariably influence the construction of the whole work and its musical dramaturgy.

In the sphere of folk music processing, the professional analyses of the styles of various composers highlight the name of Krasimir Kyurkchiyski, who often uses the codetta as the final and conclusive musical construction of his works for folk choirs. In our rich musical literature on the art of choral folk singing we find another type of final construction (the "cauda") which, in addition to being built on the basis of the musical atmosphere, *contains also the major textual plot of the song. It is precisely this word, or phrase which is the basis for building the concept of the acoustic atmosphere throughout the whole song.*

The introduction - as a part of the smaller forms - is the initial musical material preparing, or outlining, the general atmosphere of the composition. This can be achieved with the use of various motifs, characteristic intonational means of expression and harmonious structures leading one to the musical theme in an appropriate manner. *As part of the overall musical structure the introduction aims to create the best possible sound environment and open the required space in which the main melody will appear to shine and where the future musical and dramaturgical line will begin.*

In general, the "a capella" choral music resides in musical forms of shorter duration and this is due to a number of circumstances related to the method of sound extraction, breathing, dynamics, vocal condition, the capabilities and endurance of the singers all of which we have previously discussed in detail. In the course of processing musical works for performance by folk choirs, certain types of sonata thinking can also be encountered, but they are a matter of exception. As a rule, the more complex musical forms require more space for the unfolding of the compositional structure in time, which - to an extent - poses difficulties and risks for the performance of choral "a capella" music.

**2.5 Ornamentation. Stylization and transition of the ornamentation from solo to choral singing. The ethnographic specifics of the ornaments: factors for building the dramaturgy of the musical work.** The musical ornaments are among the most distinctive features of the Bulgarian folk songs and instrumental compositions. *Theirs is the exceptional contribution to the uniqueness of our traditional folk culture. The presence of such a rich musical ornamentation has a key influence on the overall emotional impact and perception of the processed works for folk choirs and is a marked contribution to the evolution of musical dramaturgy.*

By embedding artistic imagination in their works and interpretative solutions, in practice, our folk singers and instrumentalists have been able to apply the full palette of ornaments used by European composers of all generations. This is confirmed also by Al. Motsev in his 1961 theoretical work entitled "Ornaments in Bulgarian folk music".

Each song, or instrumental composition, possesses its own architectonic constructions, where the small components sound in cohesion and symmetry. In most cases, the ornaments *play a key role in connecting and differentiating the elements of the melodic musical material, outline the boundaries of the musical phrase, create connections, balance the parts of the melody and shape the climaxes by appearing at important, logical and symmetrical points in time.* Participating in these structural processes, they become part and parcel of the general musical dramaturgy of the song and its processing and exert a decisive influence on its overall emotional and stylistic mien.

The overwhelming presence of ornaments in Bulgarian folk music is an indication of the degree of their *organic belonging to melody such that they have interconnected and are molded together into an indivisible whole.* Thanks to the aesthetic criteria and emotions of the performer, his intuitive sense of musical form and structure the *ornaments enrich the melody by finding their exact locations in the melodic line, decorating the tone and making it more prominent, accentuated and emphasized.*

Ornaments are a *factor in shaping the metric texture of the melody.* Falling on a strong or weak metric moment, on an extended or short note duration they emphasize, reinforce or accentuate the rhythmic configuration in the tact. In this way, the ornaments express the specific tone duration, input a specific energy to the metro-rhythmic appearance and play an important role in the overall emotional message emitted by the melody.

*Each ornate moment in the melody is in a simultaneous motion with the lyrics and jointly they create the characteristic charge of the tone, energize the melody and shape the musical dramaturgy emotionally.*

***The complex ornamentation of a solo song makes it difficult and, at times, impossible to build a perfect unison and joint vocality in the ensemble and the choral part.*** In such cases, and *at certain moments*, the ornamentation in the choral interpretation ***has to undergo a process of consolidation and stylization*** (an exact, detailed recording and learning by all according to their technical capabilities) in order to unify and achieve a perfect unison between the voices included in the score.

In order to present the beauty and richness of the *melisma* in the most complete way, ***a second way out of this specific situation is also available*** and very often it is used by Bulgarian composers: ***assigning the melody to a soloist.*** It is a problem concerning both performers and conductors but also the composers. *Of course, the process of stylization and consolidation requires a lot of in depth knowledge of the ornamentation coming from the different ethnographic regions, which are among the most important, stylistically determining factors for any song.*

The songs from the 20<sup>th</sup> century which are registered in notes by the Bulgarian folklorists and, sometime later, by the methodological schools of folk singing make it possible to observe in detail and to correctly describe the composition of each ornament making it possible to select

the appropriate methodology for its study and staging. However, some of the ornaments are strictly individual and unique to each artist because of the specific method of sound formation and extraction.

*Ornamentation in folk music is a dynamic and developing matter which does not succumb readily to strict classification and stylistic frameworks. However, in order to be used freely by a performer, or by the musical processor, it is an imperative that the latter must be very familiar with the specifics of the folk region to which the melodic material belongs.*

**2.6 Sound formation and sound extraction.** In folk singing, sound formation is among the most distinctive features of the genre named "Choral folk song". Since their birth, the Bulgarian polyphonic folk choirs have created a new and different timbre color in the art of music which has inspired many authors from different generations.

The specificity of this new choral timbre is different from its popular classical choral sound which in the tradition of folk singing is different from the scholarly, academic performance. In their works, several key researchers - including Anka Kushleva, Dora Hristova and Svetla Kaludova-Stanilova - make a comparative analysis between academic and folk singing. Among the characteristic features they highlight, one should mention the open singing, chest breathing, the "hard" attack of tone, the use of the chest resonator, the low sound position (without the participation of the head resonator), the singer's posture as in ordinary speech, the relaxed larynx which helps in the implementation of a rich and technically complex ornamentation. *Taken together, these preconditions build the acoustic color of this type of choral ensembles, saturate the sound with new content, influence the musical dramaturgy and build the emotional aura of choral singing.*

In the process of sound extraction the factors of great importance are breathing and the volume of air used to build the phrase and the dynamics of the song followed by the fact that it is the interaction between the air and the vocal cords which is responsible for the peculiarities of folk singing. *In our authentic singing practices no evidence has been found of any aspirations toward enriching the songs with dynamic coloring. This can be explained with the fact that the efforts were directed at achieving a more sonorous, bright and penetrating singing style. Such artistic and performance-related requirements regarding the work of the folk singers began to appear only when our folk singing was oriented toward the stage where practically all of the requirements applicable to any works of art began to apply to folk singing too.*

The various dynamic shades can be achieved via alterations in the method of sound extraction which can change the style and character of the sonority. This is hard to achieve and it requires true mastery of breathing, perfect control over exhalation and can be achieved through the balancing of the attack of the tone which is decisive for the realization of any and all dynamic coloring.

Trespassing the line above the highest tones within the limited ambitus of a folk singer (for female singers this is the nona, and for men - the decim), in folk choirs and soloists is also performed by changing the formation of the sound which alters its style, its power and timbre. In effect, this is *falsetto singing*, the approach to which should be very specific both in terms of the vocal work but also in terms of its manner of exploitation in the processing of musical material by the composers.

*Mixed sound formation.* Irrespective of all of the difficulties, the application of a mixed type of sound formation in any folk choir contributes to the expansion of its dynamic, artistic and expressive capabilities and – to an extent - expands the range of the high register in the choir's voice composition. *The overall musical "appearance" of the work is created together with and in balance between sound formation and all of the other means of expression as a mandatory condition for its ability to exert an emotional impact on the audience.*

Other important factors related to sound formation in folk singing and its emotional impact are *phonetics* (changing the sounding of the words and the compositional make up of vowels and consonants) and *articulation* (the formation of the individual sounds). Due of the various dialects in the different ethnographic regions, *the phonetical* structure of certain words differs as a composition and their articulation implies a specific intensity in the relationship between the phonetic components and physiological organs involved in the sound formation process: the larynx, the vocal cords, the airflow. *Each geographical folklore region has its own dialect and in music this is reflected in the specific methods of sound formation* as the means to convey various emotional states, to charge the melody of the song and the choral singing with unique emotional messages which help build the musical and dramaturgical individuality of the musical piece.

*The mastery and balance in the interaction between all of the above mentioned components of sound formation lay at the basis of highly expressive singing and the ability of the singers to experience for themselves and to express the meaningful content of the text in the course of the creative process. And this, and only this, can serve as one of the guarantees for the precise musical and dramaturgical interpretation of the song or its choral performance.*

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE CONDUCTOR'S METHODOLOGICAL WORK WITH THE FOLK CHOIR – A MODEL OF A STAGING PROCESS BASED ON THE DRAMATURGICAL PROCESSING OF A CAPPELLA COMPOSITIONS

**3.1 Introduction to the work of the conductor as a pedagogical activity.** On the basis of the existing literature treating the issue of working with choirs, the present section supports the thesis that considering a number of inherent parameters, the work of the musical conductor during the rehearsal process is, in its essence, a pedagogical activity.

**3.2. The conductor is the messenger and recreator of the idea of the composer and has numerous roles in the ensemble.** The professional contacts between the composer and the conductor are of extreme importance and great practical value. Many composers have said that when writing their music they are imagining a specific choir, the way it sounds, the technical capabilities of the performers and the soloists as well as the creative skills of the conductor and that they are confident in their work. For the success of this creative activity and its presentation before the audience the major responsibility lies with the conductor.

**3.2.1. The roles of the conductor.** The multifaceted activity and requirements toward the work of the conductor can be described as including a) the selection of the repertoire; b) self preparation, c) staging the musical composition, d) on-stage and recording activities, e) development of artistic qualities; f) personal merits and artistic perfection; g) organizing the choir's activities.

By revealing this complex set of qualities, skills and abilities which the conductor should possess, we get a clear view of the significance of his work and multifunctional role which is directly related to the final artistic result. In focusing our attention to the large range of competences of this vitally important figure we shall set a high criterion for all future professionals working in the genre called "Choral folk song".

**3.2.2. General characteristics and specifics of the model for a musical staging process based on the dramaturgical development of processed a cappella compositions.** The current model for a staging process, involving a folk choir, will be presented in principle and demonstrated with an example of two types of processing: 1) Couplet with constantly changing means of expression (*PPIS*, Bul.) of the song "Години, усилни години" as an example (*roughly translated as "Hard times"*, Bul.), processed by Marek Dyakov (*extended processing* according to the Levando classification); 2) Couplet with uniform means of expression (*EIS*,

Bul.) the example being Philip Kutev`s "Полегнала е Тудора" (*roughly translated as "Todora is in for a nap"*, Bul.) (*free Levando type processing*). **The system of processing is developed in six steps via specific training methods and the related methodological techniques.**

The choice of these particular songs to illustrate the model is not accidental. Firstly, it should be underlined that the inclusion of a work processed by the author of this dissertation and placing it next to Philip Kutev`s masterpiece is by no means a demonstration of excessive immodesty. Rather, the aim is to reveal yet another research method related to the self-reflective approach of the conductor to a song in relation to which he also has the personal self-reflection of a composer. This would enable one to observe the effects from the application of the model in its finest nuances. And why choose these particular pieces? The two songs simply offer two types of processing (expanded and free) so that the different approaches can be tested on different types of musical dramaturgy.

**Three of the steps – the fourth, fifth and sixth** – coincide only formally with the usual phases in the staging of a choral song, regardless of the ensemble`s type (studying the scores, collecting the voices, artistic elaboration of the musical work). The novelty of this model can be found in the following:

1. the specific work on the poetic basis and the subordination of the musical-dramaturgical idea of the song;
2. the conductor's efforts to ensure a high level of awareness of the choristers regarding the musical structure and dramaturgy of the studied work;
3. the specially conducted mastery of the ornamentation and sonority typical of the respective ethnographic region in a warm-up mode or during a complete rehearsal;
4. in the work on the separate scores, which is not technical, but constantly subordinated to the musical and dramaturgical idea.

These phases in the staging of the choral model also determine the specific course of the last three because a portion of the work usually done here is performed during the previous phases and this affects the overall content of the creative process at the higher levels (phase five and six).

Let us compare the initial study of the model, as per the thesis defended by maestro Ivan Valev, who divides the work on rehearsing choral songs into two stages: a) technical mastery; b) artistic mastery (Valev, 1972:20). One can say that this is the first significant difference between the established traditional approach and the model proposed in the present work, where as early as the technical mastery phase, in practice, work is being done on the artistic aspects too because in reality every "action" within the process is reflected in the idea and the tasks relating to musical dramaturgy.

In the course of presenting the model, each phase will be examined and compared with the musical compositions processed by Maria Kuteva, Ivan Valev, Vasilka Spasova and Dora Hristova, which relate to folk choir singing. It is on this basis that each new methodological idea has been highlighted to make the model different and to enrich the accumulated experience in this sphere of the art of music.

The results achieved by applying the method in practice are proof of the elaborated musical and dramaturgical construction of the work as well as the stylistic and ornamental interpretation of the musical pieces within the genre "Choral folk song".

### **3.3 Presentation of the methodological model**

**3.3.1 PHASE 1 (CI, Bul.) – The work of the conductor and the choristers on the poetic basis of the song.** During this initial stage, the work takes the form of a discussion between the conductor and the choristers regarding the content of the song. In the course of interpreting the *actions, conflicts and characters* in the folk song, it is possible for the

performers to get a clear picture and understanding of the overall atmosphere in the poetic event which has determined the dramaturgy elaborated by the author of the processed musical work.

It should here be explained why does the proposed model for working with a folk choir consider the disintegration of the syncretic prototype - the authentic folk song - its first phase. It is well known that in folk culture, speech and music form an indivisible whole and that in that whole music plays a mnemonic function. Our arguments, in support of this claim, are:

- the poetic expression in this case is the basis of the author's artistic concept;
- contemporary performers, including members of the folk choir, are not the direct bearers of the authentic model and the disintegration of the syncretic whole does not contradict the tradition;
- the speech connotations, which in tribal societies are "codes", are also lost to the modern generations because of the close connection between the *additional meanings of the words and people`s actual experiences*. Today, therefore, these connotations must undergo a special type of restoration and this substantiates the specificity of work with the said poetic basis;
- Due to the fact that both the musical and the poetic component in the processed work enrich the folk model by charging it with new messages it is necessary to approach the poetic element from the point of view of content in order to be able to understand the idea of the musical dramaturgy;
- As far as contemporary performers are concerned, it is extremely important for them to master the dialect in which the songs in the repertoire are created and the words unknown to them understood, plus the specifics of their pronunciation in order to be able to present the musical piece in the proper diction;

When placing for a rehearsal a familiar song with already established choral examples of interpretation and performance, very often the choristers look for intuitively imposed and popular interpretative approaches. In the cases where the conductor`s understanding of the lyrics of the song differs from the widely popular version, explaining to the singers the specific grounds for this conceptual change is of utmost importance. *One efficient method employed when working on the lyrics includes the effort to determine the desired acoustic atmosphere which most closely corresponds to the contents of the song but this is possible only under the condition that the choristers are able to disregard the musical means applied by the author and the well known popular interpretations*. In this way, the characters and actions included in the text are understood in depth and conditions for a creative process are created. On this basis, during the subsequent phases in the work, the author's artistic approaches and solutions are felt more deeply as well as the role of the conductor and the performers in this multisided process. Because of the absence of these prerequisites, the described method is significantly easier to implement if one is to work on lyrics unknown or new to the choristers.

- *To make the choristers feel most adequately the meaningful atmosphere set in the verbal text*. Referring to the book of the great Bulgarian literary scholar, cultural anthropologist and folklorist Prof. Nikola Georgiev "The Bulgarian folk song. Visual principles. Structure. Unity" the connotative and denotative meanings of folk poetics are being discussed in detail. The observations and generalizations made by Nikola Georgiev are absolutely valid in the case of the verbal components of the two songs under consideration.

*After the choristers become familiar with the concrete text, it should be interpreted during a discussion of its connotative meanings with the immediate emphasis on the fact that they will be closely followed by the musical dramaturgy*. This will be exhibited via the numerous repetitions of individual words, the much longer musical time in the process of unfolding the song and the variation in the solutions of each couplet leading to changes in the means of expression together with the melodic lines and rhythm of the separate musical scores.

### **Pedagogical actions (PD, Bul.) and innovative approaches (IP, Bul.):**

- *Clarifying the specifics of the dialect and articulation problems as early the starting phase – PD*
- *Helping the choristers become familiar with the function of the song – PD and IP*
- *Reproducing the lyrics of the song without a melody – ID*

The dissertation contains diagrams of the general characteristics of the processed songs as well as the textural features and the specific challenges in working on the lyrics with the required tempo and rhythm. A differentiated approach to two different methods for organizing the musical scores is proposed: the monorhythmic and the polyrhythmic.

The challenges posed by such processing of a cappella musical works are to show the specific vocal atmosphere in each of them and its contribution to the musical and dramaturgical construction of the piece. It is through the initial verbal and rhythmic reproduction *at tempo* that the form will be executed in the best possible way; the homophonic vertical will be arranged; the metro-rhythmic ratios between the scores will be organized and all problems of articulation and clear diction will find their resolution.

*The current methodological approach has the task of making the choristers feel the meaningful atmosphere in the verbal text in the most adequate way.* It becomes all too clear that the reasons behind the creation of these songs was different and in order for the performers to be able to recreate the underlying emotional states they shall have to “tune in” emotionally and to interpret correctly all of the details included by the author in the choral score. It is this approach to the text which can provide the required inner emotional attitude and subsequently to serve as a solid basis for generating the emotional effect on the audience.

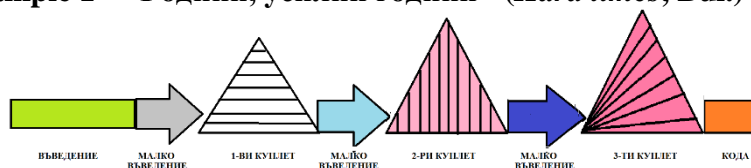
**3.3.2 PHASE 2 (C2, Bul.) – clarifying the structure of the song.** In vocal music, the main drivers of artistic development are music and speech. Merged into a meaningful unison, they have an effect on the concrete definition of the structure of the musical piece not only during the process of its composition but also during its interpretation.

The contents of the model’s second phase is not discussed in the studied literature. And where problems relating to the musical structure are discussed this usually relates to the theoretical studies of the works themselves, or - if mentioned somewhere at all – to the independent work of the conductor with the musical score.

*In the model presented in this dissertation, the second phase (C2) draws the choral ensemble to the idea that the song has to be structurally understood from the point of view of musical dramaturgy. Being well aware of the form, structure and the importance of the individual scores of the a cappella processing for a folk choir, the performers are able to have a better understanding of all parts of the piece in separate so as to be able charge them with the necessary emotional baggage at a later stage. With the help of the deeper awareness of the choristers of the constructive nature of the act of processing the musical piece conditions are being created for a much more successful interpretation and understanding of the musical and dramaturgical result. This pedagogical process can be made possible during a discussion preceding the rehearsal process or during the study of the scores and the vocal work on them.*

In the minds of choristers, the clear awareness of the structure of the processed musical piece arranges the placement of the text and the flow of the music in the respective form in the clearest possible way. A single color diagram is more than sufficient to visually depict the structure in question and to verbally explain it so that the choristers may see the basic construction in its entirety. The conductor should then use his fantasy to “invent” the best possible spatial image of the musical form and the dramaturgy. It is no coincidence that such “allocation” approaches to the distribution of music of this type are widely used in the scientific investigations of musical phenomena and in many textbooks on music.

### Example 1 - "Години, усилни години" (*Hard times*, Bul.) (IPS)



### Example 2 - "Полегнала е Тудора" (*Tudora is in for a nap*, Bul.) (ENI)



#### Pedagogical work and innovative approaches:

- Presentation of the structure of the musical piece through graphic depictions; (PD, ID)*
- Explaining the meaning of the individual parts within the context of the general musical dramaturgy of the musical work; (IP)*
- Presenting the existing correlations between the text and the form as well as their interconnection with the other musical means of expression; (IP)*

Revealing the dependencies between the form, the poetic text and the musical means of expression used in the piece contributes to its understanding at a higher artistic plain and contributes to the most effective and emotional performance guaranteeing, at the same time, the so needed psychological stability on stage.

#### 3.3.3 PHASE 3 (C3, Bul.) – the specificity of the ornamentation and the choral sonority typical of the ethnographic region

The specific ornaments, used in the various ethnographic regions, contribute greatly to the unique features of the Bulgarian traditional folk culture; they enrich and decorate the melody, they are embedded in its entirety and add a specific artistic value through the expression of different emotional experiences. They support the contents of the lyrics and in a characteristic unison build the overall emotional message of the song. On the other hand, the characteristic modes of vocal extraction, the vocal attack and the specific additional “touch” that singers give to the composition all come to shape a wide range of different singing styles. *The individual timbre and ornamental style of the singer are, in themselves, expressions of the performer’s trade mark but within the sound of a choir these phenomena acquire a new meaning. They now appear as the characteristic feature of all choristers in the ensemble.*

Phase three of this methodological model will be examine the approaches and techniques with the help of which the *ornamental unity and homogeneity in the choral score* is being built as well as the main factors contributing to the achievement of the *choral sonority characteristic of any specific folk region. The novelty in this model is the placement and solution of the ornamental problems and the region-specific sound formation at the initial stage of working on the musical piece – i.e., after having worked on the text and during the warming up of the choir.*

- *Main functions of the ornamentation in the processing of choral folk music:*

- ornamentation exerts a key influence on the overall emotional impact and perception of the processed works for folk choirs and it is a serious contribution to the construction of the musical dramaturgy;
- it is also a key factor in shaping the metric texture of the melody;



c) in a simultaneous motion with the lyrics and the melody, each ornamented moment inputs a characteristic emotional charge to the tone;  
d) it plays an important role in connecting and differentiating the separate parts of the melodic musical material, delineates the boundaries of the musical phrase, creates connections and balances the different parts of the melody. It also shapes the culmination points by appearing at important, logical and symmetrical points in time.

- *The common choral sonority specific for the ethnographic region (IP):*

Each folk region hosts a characteristic singing style, which is a combination of several major components, namely *the mode of sound extraction, the vocal attack, the specific coloring and a typical ornamentation*. The characteristic ethnographic choral sonority is based on several fundamental qualities which must be mastered by all of the singers in the process of interpreting the song:

a) *all choristers must achieve the characteristic sound formation typical of the region*. This is done with the use of specific methods described in the specialized scientific literature published on the topic. Achieving it with the ensemble will guarantee a truly stylish choral sonority.

b) *the characteristic ornamentation in the choral scores has to be mastered to perfection*. In transforming the solo performances - typical of our folk singing - into choral performances (as with the processed musical works in question), the monophonic performance of the melismatics by all choristers becomes mandatory. To accomplish this, the requirements of several important preliminary conditions have to be met: *clarification and understanding of the exact tonal composition of the ornament, rehearsing it with the choristers, setting the necessary additional "touches" to the work and the vocal attack when singing as well as its dynamic coloring*. It is exactly through the achievement of an ornamentally uniform, stylish and perfectly aligned interpretation that the choir can be able to produce a characteristically ethnographic choral sonority.

*There are serious grounds to accept all of this as pointing to a new direction and to invest efforts and energy in the achievement of a new, higher artistic level of the Bulgarian folk choirs both at home and abroad. A direction in which hard work will be needed for many years in the future. Thus, folk choirs will certainly move onto a new, higher plain in their development and will expand their professional skills.*

Of course, one of the ways in which both of these indicators can be achieved is the inclusion of a female singer who possesses a perfect mastery of the ornaments and the related challenges as well as the typical sound formation, dynamic coloring and the vocal attack adequate to the concrete musical piece. The other option focuses on the vocal pedagogue or the conductor who can illustrate and explain the performance. In any case, the definition of the approach must be based on the specific possibilities according to the level of complexity.

Phase three presents some specific ornamental models for the construction of the ornamentation specific for the selected songs, the specific techniques through which the characteristic ethnographic choral sonority in the ensemble can be built and the exact manner of organizing the rehearsal process.

Any type of ornamental challenge can be addressed as early as the warm-up phase of the choir during which the song itself is being studied and rehearsed. In directing this process, the conductor bears the responsibility for the result from the performance and on the basis of his professional qualities and accumulated knowledge he can build the ornamental style and choral sonority of the ensemble.

**3.3.4 PHASE 4 (C4) - Working with the scores.** Essentially, choral work begins with the study of the choral scores for the individual voices. This problem is presented as a special thematic focus in all of the works related to the conducting of choir music. Some of the approaches to the issue, applied by all conductors, shall be used in the current model. The

difference is that the choristers have already realized the metro-rhythmic construction of the phrases through the rhythmized recitation of the text and have a very clear idea of its overall dramaturgical construction. In other words, the work is not "stitched" together phrase by phrase but rather the syntactic units are gradually unified in a single musical concept. Because of this, the process flows with greater intensity and after being connected, the phrases immediately form the larger syntactic units.

In terms of dynamics, the model is based on the following concept and motives: the dynamics are mastered during the very first study of the phrases and not in general terms, but in their true magnitude where the motives are not psychological, but artistic. The study pursued is the one which achieves the musical dramaturgy of the work.

The construction of musical dramaturgy can be started in full even at this early stage of the work. *The novelty, offered by the current work methodology, is to include the dynamic construction of the score as early as this working stage.* The dynamics can also be emphasized during the previous stage related to working on the text, while the ornamental and vocal challenges are met and resolved during C2: in the present phase of the work they are to be refined and linked to dramaturgy.

- *The dynamic activity of the work; (PD and IP)*

In essence, the early dynamic approach to the staging work boils down to introducing dynamics into the process of preparing the scores indirectly and where during the work on the formation of the overall sound of the choir the ornamentation is interpreted with the necessary dynamic coloring.

- *Successful solution of the technical and intonational difficulties; (PD)*

The criteria for a true interpretation of the ornamentation and the characteristic choral sonority are, to a great degree, largely set in the "prototype" of the musical work and are tested in C2.

There are many cases where in processing a solo song into a choral performance some changes have to be made in the tonal composition of the ornamentation in order to achieve a perfect unity but the result will be successful only under the condition that the underlying reasons are justified and the process is realized with a good knowledge of the style. After all, our folk is a dynamic and developing phenomenon allowing for the creation of highly creative ornamental inventions by both the author and the performers as long as they are based on an in-depth knowledge and authentic aesthetic principles.

The present methodological work makes a distinction between two different approaches to the study of the musical scores depending on the type of the choir in question: the amateur and the professional folk choir.

According to the performing and artistic level of the ensemble, each musical work can pose different degrees of technical and intonational challenges in the process of the individual work on each vocal score. The selection of the repertoire is a matter of utmost importance and because of this the work must be analyzed very carefully before being offered for performance by a choir.

**Pedagogical activities and innovative approaches.**  
**Treating songs with a different musical dramaturgy**

- A) Elaborating the melodic graphics and ornamentation to a perfect unison and vocal uniformity;
- B) Clarification of the function of each score during the different phases of the work (melodic, ison, harmonic, unison) (IP)
- C) Incorporating the dynamics in the process of learning the score (IP);
- D) Sound formation (PD)
- E) Intonation and rhythmic elaboration of scores (PD)

The approaches of particular significance have been presented in tabular form in this dissertation and they include the dynamics in the process of learning the score as well as the differentiation of the choral sonority and ornamentation from the point of view of dramaturgy. Their presence creates a much better emotional receptivity and the necessary creative environment for the pedagogical process. The preliminary engagement of the performers' attention to these important details, during this phase of the work, creates the necessary prerequisites for the more successful arrangement of the voices and the subsequent musical and dramaturgical construction of the work. Often, an individual approach to certain choristers is also required; these are the people for whom the mastering of a certain, specific musical moment requires greater effort and the application of a different method. Such an individual rehearsal of voices may also turn out to be necessary during the subsequent stages of the work - sometimes even after the concert performances of the choir's repertoire.

**3.3.5 PHASE 5 (C5) – Joining the choral scores. Specific approaches according to the texture.** The joining together of the choral scores is the phase in which the choristers must jointly achieve the images set out in the choral score, to synchronize the metro-rhythm with the other scores during the singing process (so far this has been done through the choral recitation), to align the ornamentation, to achieve the necessary primary balance according to the already consciously developed function of each separate voice in the sonority of the entire vocal composition.

The classical methodological practices of working with a choir offer many well-established methods leading to the success of the process (for example, singing in pairs of scores during the first stage, three scores if the texture is made up of four voices, etc.). *In the presently presented methodology some of the approaches are of an innovative nature and they are tailored to the different types of musical dramaturgy. Others are adapted to the specifics of working with a folk choir.*

The strategy of the conductor, regarding the parts with which the composition will start, is of utmost importance. Prof. Dr. Al. Kuyumdzhev defines this approach as the "Mosaic method" (Kuyumdzhev, 2010:130). Practice has indicated that this is different for each separate song and that it is consistent with the intuition and confidence of the conductor regarding the degree of technical freedom of the choristers in the part and in the ensemble.

Speaking of the different types of choral texture (homophone, polyphonic, aleatory, etc.), the methods of gathering scores together have to be different. Their selection is determined by the preliminary analysis made by the conductor which makes it possible to foresee and rank the complexity of the various challenges posed by the choral score. Experienced conductors are able to give priority to a specific method and to set the exact point in the musical composition when they must start joining the choral scores together. *Here, the pedagogical and innovative activities are differentiated and presented in tabular form on the basis of a homophonic and polyphonic texture and - where necessary – for amateur and professional folk choirs.*

#### **General approaches**

- *Making the choristers knowledgeable about the function of each musical score (IP)*
- *Uniting the voices in pairs and in different combinations (PD)*
- *Development of specific harmonic consonances, their rhythmic organization and intonational stability (PD)*
- *Purposeful clarification and elaboration of the vertical arrangement of the text (PD) as a comparison between the scores. Given the presence of such specific moments, the work on them strengthens the rhythmic construction, the power of the textual messages and the intonational stability.*
- *Uniform ornamentation (PD and IP)*

- *The comparison of the different textural types (IP) – Their presence is an indication of a great opportunity to change the musical and poetic imagery of the musical composition. One should be able to think of them as a contrastingly compared musical material which has been searched for and consciously applied by the author. The clarification of these details in the diversity of the work is a great contribution to the construction of the musical dramaturgy of the processed musical work.*

*The joining together of the voice scores in the choir presupposes a clear planning of the activities and the use of effective methods, rather than improvising during the rehearsal process. Via the above described specific methodological recommendations, and in careful consideration of their seriousness and importance, one may create the necessary conditions for the successful artistic work on the score, for the artistic behavior and presence of the choristers.*

### **3.3.6 PHASE 6 (C6) – Artistic treatment of the whole song.**

The artistic construction of the choral work unites all of the previous stages into a single entity and its main objective is to prepare the work for its performance on stage. It is here that the level and thoroughness of the work performed during the previous pedagogical activities is manifested as well as the unique creative trademark of the conductor.

The main pillars on which everyone's attention should be focused are a complex set of criteria and requirements aimed at achieving a vivid recreation of the musical and poetic imagery of the work. During this phase, the new elements in the here-presented methodology are aimed at a more in depth attitude to the musical and dramaturgical body of the work and its construction through:

- Specifying the magnitude of the breaths and fermatas and building the phrases as the basic structure-forming elements of the artistic interpretation (PD)
- Determining the exact tempo, consistent with the individual characteristics of the song's pattern, the ethnographic area of origin and the optimal capabilities of the choral formation (PD and IP)
- Artistic behavior and characteristic presence of the choristers and the conductor (PD and IP)

The adequate artistic behavior and characteristic presence of the performers in correspondence with the theme of the song and its musical-dramaturgical concept, is absolutely necessary. *Taking into account the content basis of the text and the exploited musical means of expression, the conductor needs to find and demand the truest stage presence and condition of the performers.* These are some of the most direct paths to the emotional world of the audience. Even in sound recording environments, the characteristic presence, atmosphere and the ability of the interpreters to incarnate the different images and emotional states must be strongly felt. The characteristic presence and artistic behavior of the choristers and the conductor, during the performance of each song, implies an emotional responsiveness suitable for the recreation of the theme. *Following closely the conveyed verbal and musical messages, all participants in the artistic process must build the appropriate emotional suggestion in unity. Because it can effect the process of correct sound extraction, the facial expressions must be constantly and consciously mastered rather than being a matter of spontaneous stage improvisation. The inclusion of body gestures and other movements is subject to specific requirements and the song should always be performed in the same way.*

***But above all, the main task of the conductor is to develop a creative atmosphere through the rehearsal and pedagogical process, to ensure a relaxed emotional communication, engagement with the work and responsiveness on the part of the chorists; to speak in terms, concepts and terminology understandable to the chorists expanding, at the same time, their musical culture and skills.***

**3.4. Applying the model in the musical education at school.** By virtue of Ordinance No 5, dated 30 November 2015 on the issue of general education schools (incl. the additions and amendments from 2020), "the educational subjects of fine arts and music provide opportunities for the creative presentation of ideas, experiences and emotions by various means and are directly related to the acquisition of cultural competences and skills for their expression through creativity" (Art. 3, item 6). Along with this basic task "Music", as a subject in the Bulgarian schools, helps develop other key competences.

The model here presented relates to Bulgarian folk music, to the creativity of the Bulgarian composers in the sphere of musical processing and to poetic speech thus providing a wide range of possibilities for their application.

In the first place, the model is in tune with two specific objectives of the educational process in primary and in the earlier secondary school stages:

- Emphasis is being placed on knowing Bulgarian folk music and the musical traditions of other ethnicities.
- The students become familiar with the Bulgarian professional musical creativity after Liberation and right up to the 21<sup>st</sup> century as well as with one of the objectives pursued during the initial high school educational terms: „Formation of a sustainable interest in the Bulgarian performing arts and the contribution of Bulgarian folk music to global society“ (Ordinance No 5).

Here, we shall consider three forms of application of the presented model:

**I. The out-of-school environment:**

Ample opportunities exist for visiting concerts and folk choir or ensemble performances. The currently fashionable trend to set up partnerships with various cultural institutes provides an opportunity for the organizing of meetings with conductors who can present their ideas on the building of the dramaturgy in the processed musical compositions by provoking an interest in the poetic folk texts and the musical means of expression - like *dynamics, register, texture*.

**II. Optional studies and activities based on individual interests:**

The most direct application of the model under discussion could be obtained in the event that a school folk choir, or a vocal group has already been set up. Should the artistic director decide to apply the phases of the model in practice, a strong connection will be made with the key competences in the sphere of Bulgarian language and learning skills and, at the same time, the success rate of the process of creating cultural competence will, doubtless, be on the rise. The model can stimulate a more successful and intensive mastering of the repertoire allowing for more frequent concert performances of the choral formation. Moreover, even joint concert performances with established choral groups can be organized.

**III. The educational process and the subject of music:**

The "Curriculum in the subject of music for VI graders (general education)", topic No 5 - "Bulgarian folk music" contains the requirement that the terms "traditional folklore" and "ison" are to be introduced as new concepts and theme No 6 - "Music and society" – now includes the new concept of "processing". Among the anticipated positive results is the acquisition of the following competences:

- The mental connection is being made between two processed songs with a concrete composer and a performer.
- Description of the specific relationship between folk song composers and performers in professional music and in the amateur circles.

On such a sound basis, the model and the issues relating to musical dramaturgy may enable teachers to draw the attention of their students to the composers' solutions in processing musical works based on the authentic model; knowledge in the sphere of „Elements of musical expression“; the possibilities for attributing sound to the poetic folk components in the

respective metrum and rhythmic; musical dramaturgy based on the form of the undertaken musical processing.

## CHAPTER FOUR.

### RESULTS FROM THE APPLICATION OF THE METHODOLOGICAL MODEL AND APPROBATION OF THE MAJOR IDEAS IT PRESENTS BY CONDUCTORS, COMPOSERS, PERFORMERS, MUSICOLOGISTS AND JOURNALISTS

**4.1 Elaboration of the model in the process of a qualitative investigation based on the results observed.** Chapter three proposes a methodological model for the performance of a choral song by a folk choir on the basis of musical dramaturgy which is generated via the application of the method of qualitative research and in the so-called "qualitative experiment" mode. We have to remind ourselves that as a result of delving into the qualitative side of the objects and phenomena of interest, this approach enters the sphere of pedagogy. The methods of qualitative investigation include observation, direct dialogue, an in depth interview and field work. The principles of openness, communicativeness, reflexivity, variability are observed and this allows for a much closer and detailed observation of the manner of thinking and the reactions of the individuals included in the survey. *Indeed, new theories are formed not on the outside and following a process of investigation, but rather within the process itself and on the basis of collected empirical data; not by deduction but inductively through the accumulation and generalization of the available data" (Bizhkov, Georgi; Volodar Krajewski. (2002). Methodology and methods of pedagogical research. Sofia: University of Economics "St. Kliment Ohridski" Bizhkov: 133) The model presented in chapter three has been elaborated in conformity to this principle.*

#### 4.2 Approbation of the model in the process of its creation

**4.2.1 Organization and design of the study.** The opinion of prominent Bulgarian conductors of folk choirs, composers of processed musical works, musicologists, folk choir performers, journalists working in the sphere of folk music has been received and it contains their views on key issues related to the processes investigated in the present dissertation. They will be extremely useful when placed against the theoretical and practical analyses of musical dramaturgy in the processing of musical pieces written for choral folk ensembles. In addition, they will also confirm the conclusions reached in the course of the investigation.

**4.2.2 Diagnostic toolkit.** The diagnostic toolkit used is a **questionnaire-interview conducted with three groups of experts:**

- **Expert Group A - conductors, composers** - Nine eminent conductors of folk choirs, some of which are also composers, musicologists and scientifically competent experts<sup>1</sup>;
- **Expert Group B - performers singing in folk choirs, journalists** – This group includes seven performers from the most popular folk choirs in the country <sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Prof. Dr. Kostadin Buradjiev - conductor, composer, lecturer at AMTII; Prof. Dr. Georgi Petkov - conductor, composer, lecturer at NBU; Mihail Delchev – conductor; Krasimir Kondov, composer – Chief Artistic Director of ANPT "Ivan Valey"; Ivanka Paunova – conductor of ANPT "Pazardzhik"; Iliya Mihaylov – conductor of "The Great Voices of Bulgaria"; Ilian Yuruchki – composer, conductor of vocal ensemble "Ezerets"; Gancho Gavazov – composer and conductor of "Cosmic Voices from Bulgaria"; Stoimen Dobrev – conductor of ANPT "Pirin".

<sup>2</sup> Ivelina Dimova – longtime chorister and soloist at NFA "Philip Kutev", quartet "Judith", trio "Seitsa"; Darina Zlatkova – longtime chorister and soloist at NFA "Philip Kutev", quartet "Judith", trio "Seitsa"; Dimana Boyanova – a longtime chorister and soloist at the Pirin Film Festival; Sonya Chakarova – longtime chorister and soloist in the Vanya Moneva Choir; Diana Teneva – longtime chorister and soloist in the Vanya Moneva Choir; Tsonka Dimitrova - longtime chorister and soloist in Trakia Ensemble; Rumyana Filkova – a longtime chorister and soloist in Trakia Ensemble;

- **Expert group C - journalists, folklorists** - The group is made up of four well known journalists and musicologists<sup>3</sup>.

The three expert groups are joined by representatives from the entire spectrum of this artistic process – from the creation and public presentation of the works to the opinions expressed by critics and journalists (composers, conductors, performers, journalists, musicologists). Being directly engaged in these processes, their positions on the key issues of this investigation are of great importance. The whole group of participating respondents consists of twenty individuals (total for the three groups).

**4.3 Analysis of the results obtained from the questionnaire-interview with composers and conductors, folk choir singers, journalists and musicologists.** The questions included in the survey were compiled in order to provide clarity about the guild's opinions on the issues under consideration and, based on that, to outline in greater clarity the trends in the musical genre "Choral folk song" in several specific directions: *musical dramaturgy; relationship between the texts and the musical means of expression in the processed musical pieces; the guild's understanding of the concepts of "processing" and "arrangement"; the preferences of the performers and the audience regarding the repertoire policy of the ensembles; ornamentation and its transition from solo to choral singing; the status of the genre at present and the possible directions for its future development;*

The results from this questionnaire-interview are of great importance for the current investigation and confirm the need of a multi-directional analysis of the genre "Choral folk song". The published opinions can, doubtless, serve as sources of information and adequate orientation for conductors, composers and folk choirs (professional and amateur) and they can be of assistance in their more complete creative and organizational work. *The interviews (published in the appendix to the dissertation in full) were conducted during the June to the December period of 2021.*

- "What do you think "dramaturgy of a choral musical piece" actually means?"

#### EXPERT GROUP "A"

The composer's recreation of the authentic text, the melody and his use of all appropriate artistic and expressive means - **K. Kondov**; It is the text which is the plot and the libretto of the song and it must be followed by all other means of expression - **G. Petkov**; The song must be assembled and arranged in such a way as to tell a story and to exert an emotional impact with all of its qualities - **G. Gavazov**; The text and its reflection in the musical form - **M. Delchev**; The skillful handling of all compositional techniques, the sense of taste and knowledge of the respective folklore region - **I. Mihailov**; The achievement of completeness of the effect and the message sent by each artistic performance is an indication of the presence of dramaturgy - **S. Dobrev**; It is contained in the text. One can look for dramaturgy in the musical construction too which may not always be related to the text - **K. Buradzhiev**.

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<sup>3</sup> *Prof. Rumyana Tsintsarska* – folklorist, ethno-musicologist; *Daniel Spasov* – journalist at the Bulgarian National Television, longtime soloist in "Mystery of the Bulgarian Voices"; *Eva Valentinova* – journalist at the Bulgarian National Radio, longtime soloist and chorister in various choirs; *Julia Gadderova* – journalist at the Bulgarian National Radio, longtime chorister and soloist at the Pirin FA, National Art Arts "Cosmic Voices from Bulgaria" - Quartet "Judith";

### EXPERT GROUPS "B" and "C"

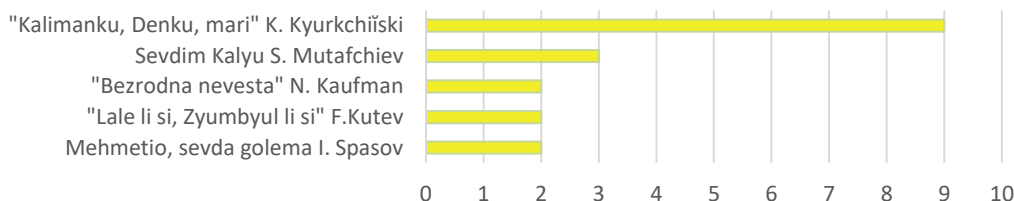
What do you think "dramaturgy of a choral musical piece" actually means?  
Expert groups "B" and "C":  
MUSICAL-DRAMATURGICAL FEATURES OF THE CHORAL WORK



- "Could you name some a cappella choral folk songs to which the author's approach has been dramaturgical and by what means has he achieves it?"

### EXPERT GROUPS "A", "B" and "C"

Songs with an applied dramaturgical approach by the composer, mentioned more than once by the participants in the two expert groups



- "Do you think musical ornamentation influences the dramaturgical construction of a processed choral folk song?"

100 % of the expressed opinions confirm the influence of ornamentation on the dramaturgical construction of the processing of a piece of choral folk music.

### EXPERT GROUP "A"

They are an important element in the dramaturgical construction of the songs, and contribute to a stronger emotional impact

G. Petkov

The specific manner of singing, such as voice shaking and hiccup singing carry a dramaturgical charge which can be skillfully used by composers

I. Yuruchki

Its influences is an integral part of the melody

M. Delchev

Unconditional influence. The ornaments form the style and dialectics of the song

S. Dobrev

Yes, if it is skillfully used and masterfully executed

I. Mikhailov

Of great importance is the overall performance of the song.

I. Paunova

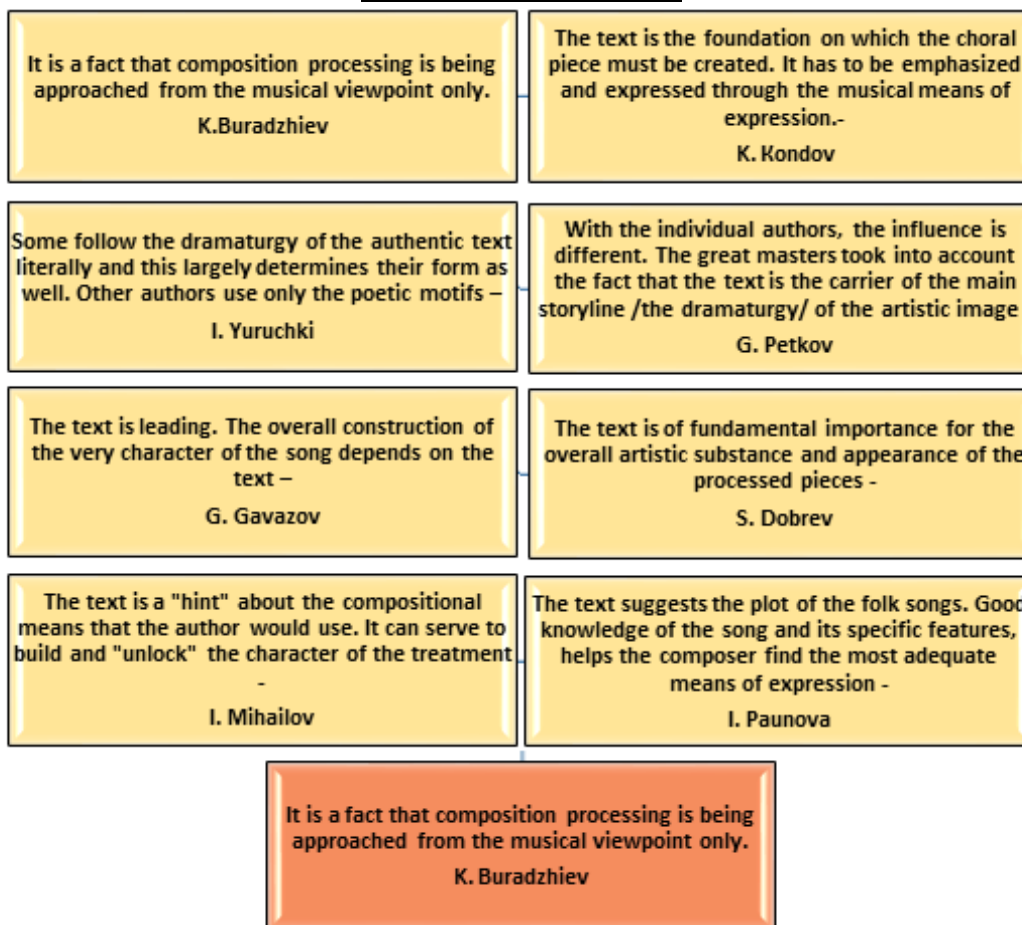
The performance of the soloist influences dramaturgy the most

K. Kondov

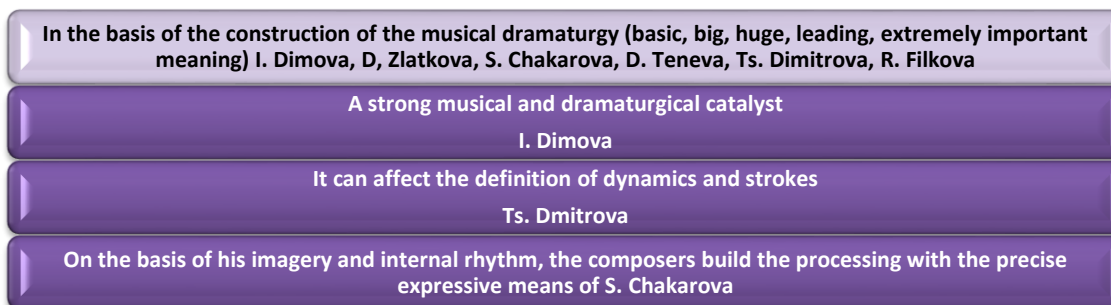


- How does the text effect the compositional means of expression used in a processed choral folk song?

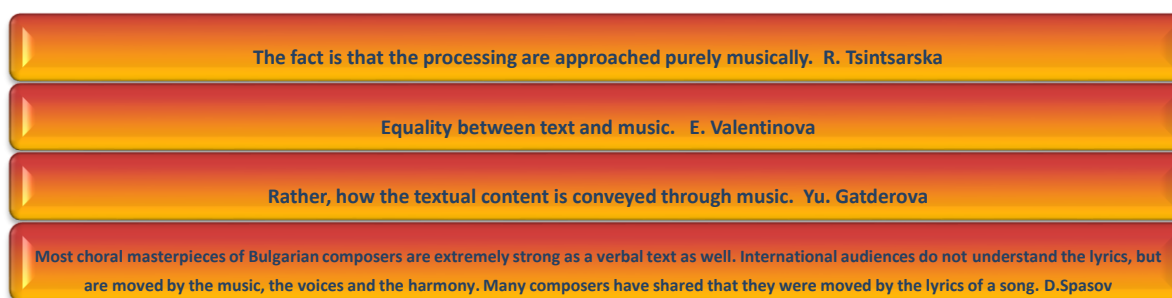
### EXPERT GROUP "A"



### EXPERT GROUP "B"

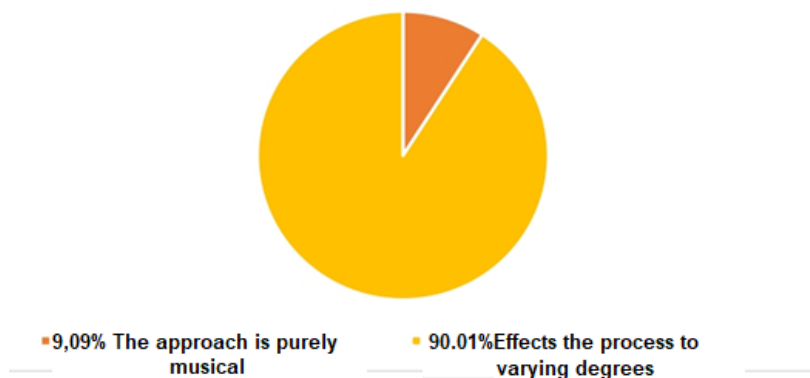


### EXPERT GROUP "C"



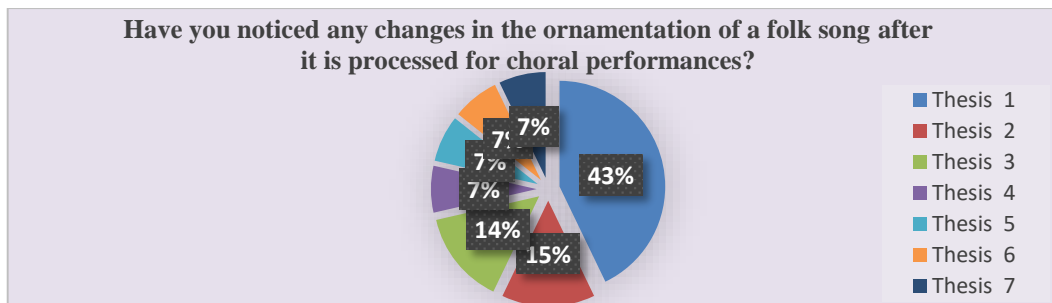
Of the respondents, 90.01% express their opinion regarding the influence of the text on the compositional means of expression used by composers to varying degrees ("fundamental", "leading", "at the core", "it is everything", "it is different with each individual author", "it suggests the compositional means of expression"), and 9.09% share the view that the processing of the musical pieces is a matter of musical approach only, and that not much attention is being paid to the text itself.

**The effect of the text on the compositional means of expression in the processed choral folk songs.**



„- Have you noticed any changes in the ornamentation of a folk song after it is processed for choral performances?“

**EXPERT GROUPS "B" and "C"**



**Thesis 1** - Yes, in order to unify the ornamentation in the choral score – D. Zlatkova, S. Chakarova, Ts. Dimitrova, R. Filkova, Yu. Gatterova, D. Spasov – 42.85%

**Thesis 2** - Many of the ornaments are written by the authors schematically (conditionally) I. Dimova, S. Chakarova – 14.28%

**Thesis 3** - The process of deciphering is important – I. Dimova, S. Chakarova – 14.28%

**Thesis 4** - Sometimes detailed note writing makes it difficult for performers. An easier method is the auditory-imitative – D. Teneva – 7.14 %

**Thesis 5** - Yes, when it is technically difficult for the choir – D. Boyanova – 7.14%

**Thesis 6** - Of major important is the role of the conductor - I. Dimova – 7.14%

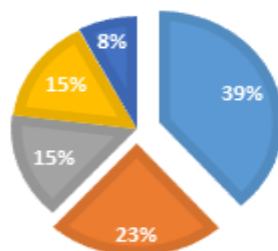
**Thesis 7** - Unification of the ornaments is one of the most difficult processes – S. Chakarova – 7.14 %

## EXPERT GROUP "A"

HAVE YOU NOTICED ANY CHANGES IN THE ORNAMENTATION OF A FOLK SONG AFTER IT IS

PROCESSED FOR CHORAL PERFORMANCES?

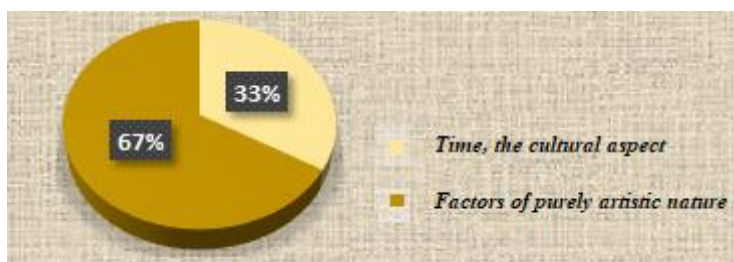
- It is necessary for the purpose of similarity - K. Kondov, I. Yuruchki, G. Gavazov, S. Dobrev, I. Mihailov
- The problems are neseted in the inaccurate deciphering of the ornamentation of the folk song - K. Buradzhiiev, G. Petkov, M. Delchev
- Some ornamentals simply cannot fall in tune with others because of their extreme individuality - I. Paunova
- A certain change can, indeed, be observed - G. Petkov, G. Gavazov
- It should'nt be changed. After all, the ornamentation is not all that complicated. It can be applied if the ensemble is not technically well prepared, but this deprives the song of it's uniqueness - K. Buradzhiiev



Many of the interviewees express their observation that the changes in the musical ornamentation, after their transition from solo to choral singing, are clearly visible and that there are a number of different ways to resolve these problems and to control them via specific staging work.

**„- Which factors provoke - or have provoked – the Bulgarian composers to process musical folk songs?“**

The respondents in this expert questionnaire-interview express the opinion that among the main factors which provoke - or have provoked - the Bulgarian composers to process folk songs *two aspects appear to dominate – time, the cultural aspect and factors of purely artistic nature.*

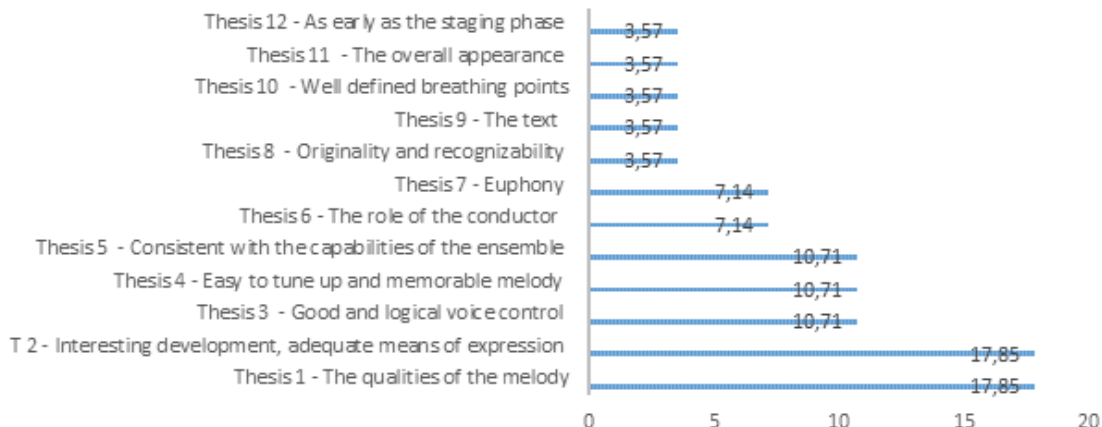


**„- Which particular features of a processed folk song do the performers like most?“**

## EXPERT GROUPS "B", "C"

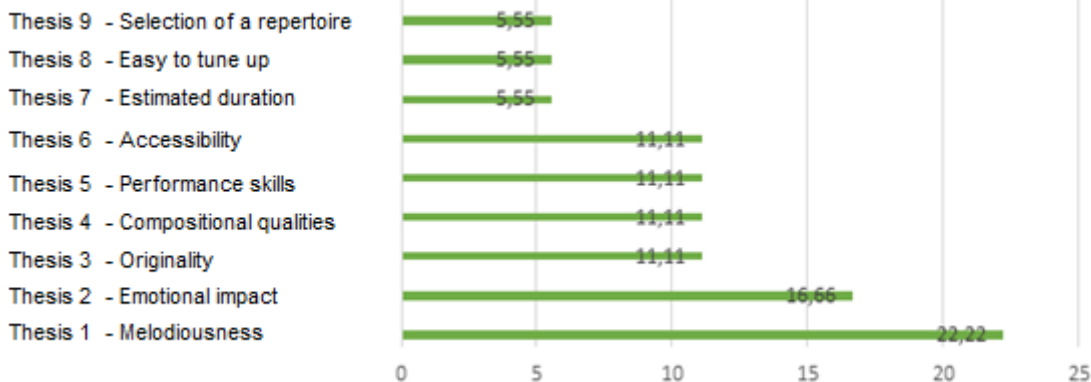
Thesis 1 - I. Dimova, D. Zlatkova, S. Chakarova, D. Boyanova, Ts. Dimitrova	Thesis 7 - I. Dimova, D. Spasov
Thesis 2 - Zlatkova, S. Chakarova, Ts. Dimitrova, E. Valentinova, D. Spasov	Thesis 8 - D. Spasov
Thesis 3 - I. Dimova, S. Chakarova, R. Filkova Thesis 9 - Ts. Dimitrova	Thesis 9 - Ts. Dimitrova
Thesis 4 -E. Zlatkova, S. Chakarova, D. Boyanova	Thesis 10 - D. Zlatkova
Thesis 5 - R. Filkova, E. Valentinova, Yu. Gatderova	Thesis 11 - I. Dimova
Thesis 6 - E. Valentinova, Yu. Gatderova	Thesis 12 - D. Teneva

**WHICH PARTICULAR FEATURES OF A PROCESSED FOLK SONG DO THE PERFORMERS LIKE MOST?**



„- Which particular features of a processed folk song does the audience like most?“

**EXPERT GROUPS "B" and "C"**



Thesis 1 - D. Zlatkova, Ts. Dimitrova, R. Filkova, D. Spasov	Thesis – 6 - Yu. Gatderova, D. Spasov
Thesis 2 - D. Zlatkova, S. Chakarova, D. Teneva	Thesis 7 - D. Zlatkova
Thesis 3 - D. Teneva, D. Spasov	Thesis 8 - S. Chakarova
Thesis 4 - Ts. Dimitrova, D. Teneva	Thesis 9 - Yu. Gatderova
Thesis 5 - I. Dimova, Ts. Dimitrova	

„- How can you describe the current status of the genre “Choral folk song”?“

**EXPERT GROUP "A"**



■ The problems 69,56      ■ The positive trends 30,44

**The problems:** Reducing the size of the choirs – G. Petkov, I. Paunova. Lack of new compositions - K. Buradzhiev, I. Yuruchki; Absence of innovation and development, stagnation, no interest in the genre – M. Delchev; The peak of the interest in folk choirs is history and the emphasis is now shifted to orchestral and dance music; There are no eminent composers; Insufficient number of well-trained singers and - with only a few exceptions - lack of high quality choirs; - K. Buradzhiev; A feeling of fatigue within the genre - I. Yuruchki; The role of NBM has declined - M. Delchev; Difficulties in the selection of repertoires after the suspension of the magazine "NAA" – K. Kondov; Lack of state policy, no financial assistance. Amateur choral folk singing is on the verge of extinction – G. Petkov; Rare concert performances – S. Dobrev; Dire financial status of most of the folk choirs – I. Mihaylov.

**The positive trends:** Some revival and interest in the genre has been observed during the last two decades - K. Kondov; An increased search for a new repertoire - K. Kondov; More competitions and festivals are being staged in the country and abroad - K. Kondov; The genre has its development in recent years, although somewhat changed – G. Gavazov; Some positive, creative attempts have been made in the genre – I. Mihaylov; The success in the work of the private folk choirs – I. Paunova; Incentive for the development and enrichment of the repertoire thanks to the reviews of the professional ensembles in the town of Pazardzhik – I. Paunova

### **EXPERT GROUP "B"**

#### **OVERALL STATUS**

**Opinion group 1 – 50%:** Emergence of new high level professional and amateur choirs - D. Teneva; Increased permanent interest in folk music - D. Zlatkova; Observation of positive upgrading and further development - S. Chakarova

**Opinion group 2 – 50%:** No tangible development can be observed- I. Dimova; Stagnation – D. Boyanova; Far from what is desired – R. Filkova

#### **REPERTOIRE**

**Opinion group 1 – 66.66%:**

The younger authors are looking for new ideas, new songs and different means of expression in the processed musical pieces - S. Chakarova, R. Filkova; Interaction with other genres and instrumental compositions - I. Dimova; A new repertoire is being created - D. Zlatkova

**Opinion group 2 - 33.34%:** They keep using the old repertoire - I. Dimova; The authors are writing predominantly for dance groups, dancing schools and clubs - D. Boyanova

### **EXPERT GROUP "C"**

**Problems – 60%:** No innovation and development, stagnation, no interest in the genre – R. Tsintsarska; Crisis and decline as a result of economic, political, spiritual and cultural factors - D. Spasov; Shortage of new repertoire - Yu. Gutterova

**Positive trends – 40%:** Emergence of new professional and amateur choirs at a high artistic level - Yu. Gutterova; Young authors are on the look out for new ideas, unknown songs and different means of expression in their processing of musical material - E. Valentinova

In summary, the opinion of the respondents from the three expert groups - "A", "B" and "C" - come to indicate that the problems faced by the folk choirs and, in general, the "Choral folk song" genre prevail over the observed positive trends in its development.

„- How would you describe the successful future directions in the development of folk choirs (in terms of repertoire, concert activity, general status...)?“

**EXPERT GROUP "A"**

To preserve the love and interest in folk songs, to properly guide and educate the young folk singers for their true value and the repertoire to meet the interests of the listeners, to perform more and more music, the masterpieces left as a legacy, responsible and well measured insertion of innovative experiments on the part of composers. To preserve the achieved fame and expand the interest in the genre. To preserve the unique voice sonority and ornamentation.  
I. Paunova

To seek and provide more media space on air to educate a large section of society. We have wonderful composers who are still producing masterpieces today. To preserve the tradition we have, as well as to modernize it. To stage more concerts among the people who are out of the musical profession which will provoke them to visit the concert halls more frequently in the future.  
Support from the state.  
G. Gavazov

The vitality of a choir depends on the extent to which there is an active recording and concert activity.  
G. Petkov

It is especially important that those who can and know how folk music should be performed at the professional level, do not downplay their aesthetic and professional ambitions.  
M. Delchev

Making efforts and affirming this artistic niche as a conscious need for cultural empathy on the part of the audience.  
S. Dobrev

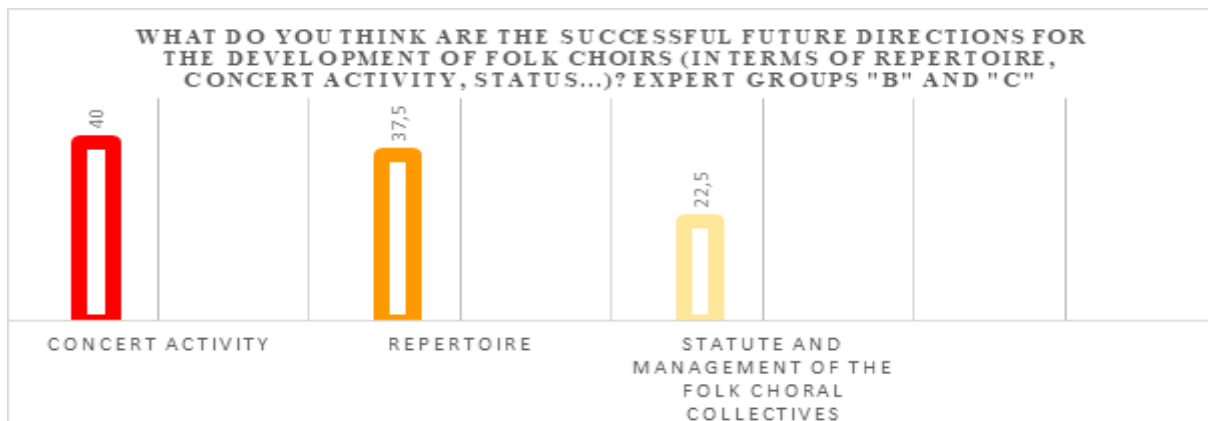
The genre should be somewhat refreshed to find its place in life and preserve the already proven masterpieces of the authors who have created music before us.  
I. Yuruchki

The creation of a new repertoire with new means of expression, unlocking the already created repertoire during the 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s of the last century. Collaboration with other arts - such as cinema, modern dance, multimedia. State normative regulation governing their activities and supporting them with the needed subsidies.  
I. Mihailov

It is necessary to hold more competitions and choral folk art festivals. Publication of materials (light choral scores) to help amateur and student folk choirs. Holding conferences on the problems of choral art and the participation of the musical groups.  
K. Kondov

We need forums such as "New Bulgarian Music - 7/8", which will stimulate the creation of Bulgarian music. There are emerging trends towards the imposition of chamber vocal ensembles - trios and quartets.  
R. Tsintsarska

**EXPERT GROUPS "B" and "C"**



## CONCLUSION

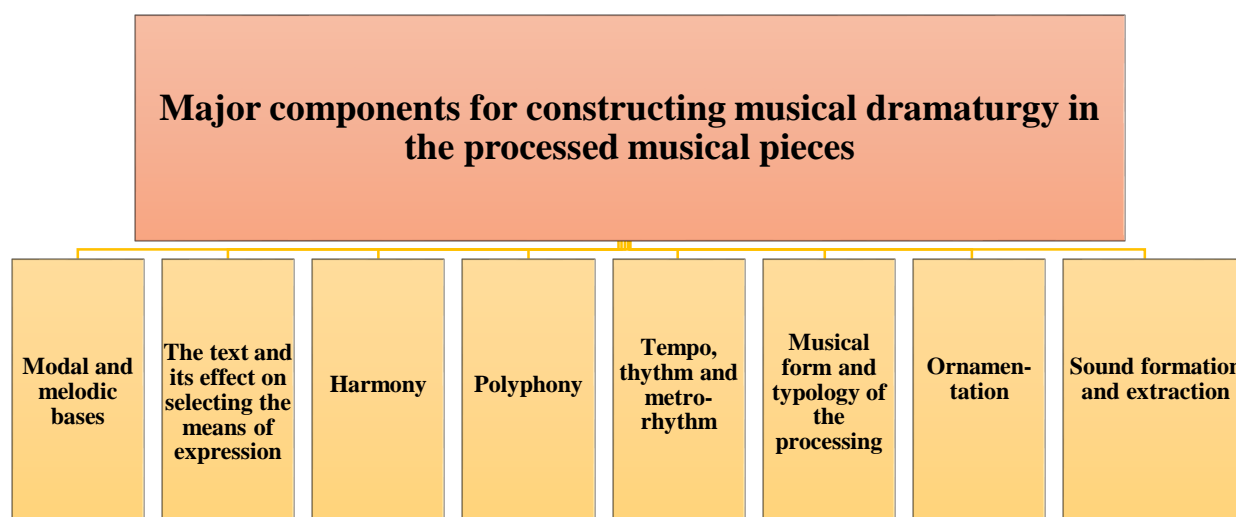
The present paper confirms the hypothesis that *by creating the necessary conditions for understanding the dramaturgical construction of the processed musical compositions for folk choirs, a qualitative change in the sound of the folk choir and an artistically substantiated interpretation of the work in correspondence with the composer's idea can be achieved to exert a profound emotional influence on the audience.*

The proposed model for processing and preparing the musical works for the stage is based on the dramaturgical development in the treatment of a cappella singing via a logical sequence of steps which - to the fullest extent - reveal the quality of the conductor's work in the process of rehearsing and mastering every new musical piece. Some of these steps are included in the process for the first time (according to existing practices and published methodologies), while the remaining contain a number of other innovative techniques.

The model in question is generated on the basis of many years of personal artistic experience and its ideas are tested both during the concert performances of the choir but also with the help of a questionnaire and an interview with experts from the professional community: composers, conductors, performers, musicologists and journalists. In more concrete terms this comes as a conformation of the hypothesis underlying the entire study: *if working with a folk choir includes the step-by-step model based on musical dramaturgy, the distance between the rehearsals and the concert performance, which the choristers and the conductor have to go through, will be marked with exceptional success. The rehearsal process shall be more concentrated and it shall serve as a guarantee for truly impressive stage performances.*

The text of the dissertation has been made possible thanks to the tasks which the author himself has placed at the beginning of the research work:

- The history of the genre and the basic terminology employed by the related scientific literature and in the present study have been carefully systematized;
- The concept of "musical dramaturgy" has been clarified and the means of expression have been traced, via which the concept of a cappella processing of choral folk compositions has been achieved;



- The multifunctional role of the conductor is presented, whose creative concept and pedagogical work is a decisive factor for the artistic construction of the musical work;
- A methodological model has been generated for the staging work with a choir based on the musical dramaturgy in the processing of choral folk compositions;

- The ornamentation has been carefully studied: its stylization and transition from a solo to a choral song as well as the adequacy of its ethnographic background as a factor for the construction of the musical dramaturgy of the work;
- Appropriate examples from the available musical literature have been selected as the subjects of an analysis supporting the major theoretical assertions and methodological techniques.

***Thus, the major objective of the study has been achieved, namely to offer practical techniques for working with choral folk formations with the aim of achieving the musical and dramaturgical development and construction of the processed musical compositions for folk choirs.***

The achievement of this goal and the approbation of the methodological model come to prove that the object and the subject matter of the study are topical and significant.

The mere fact that over the centuries Bulgarian culture and traditions have been preserved and have continued to develop in the conditions of major historical upheavals is evidence that they can look forward to a bright future. The belief, love and high educational level of all participants in this process are a guarantee for the future development of the "Choral folk song" genre and they will determine its new directions and incarnations.

The analyses presented in the dissertation paper, the established regularities, principles, guidelines and recommendations aim to improve and enrich the creative approaches to the processing of choral folk music, to deepen the cognitive and practical work of both conductors and performers. The creative heritage in the genre called "Choral folk song " gives us clear indications that it should be approached with a sense of great professional responsibility. At the same time, it is a serious foundation for all future developments and improvement which all participants in the process can develop through the prism of an elaborate and highly developed musical culture, in depth knowledge of folk and dedication at all levels of the creative processes. The works within the genre "Choral folk song" are an important constituent part of Bulgarian cultural identity and the opportunities for its improvement and development are directly related to the knowledge and far-sighted vision of the future of this musical genre.

**Notable contributions:**

1. A research method has been employed in relation to the processing of a cappella choral works addressing the issue from the point of view of musical dramaturgy based on the musical means of expression. To this end, practical methods and techniques have been introduced in the artistic and staging work with folk choirs.
2. A comprehensive methodological model for the process of rehearsing a piece of choral music based on the conductor`s concept of musical dramaturgy. The model is generated with the methods of qualitative research and enriches the traditional staging practices.
3. A specific and well-argued approach to the poetic basis of the folk songs has been implemented and expressed as an independent treatment of speech, including through choral recitation.
4. Systematized contributions have been made – historical, theoretical and those related to the scientific literature – to the issues under consideration which can support future research works relating to the subject matter of the study.
5. The investigation combines the self-reflection of the composer and the conductor via their inclusion in the research and experimental efforts of the musical works processed by the author. Thus, the research also focuses on the various roles of the artist and the interpreter and on the specific relationship between them.



## PUBLICATIONS ON THE TOPIC OF THE DISSERTATION

1. **"HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE EMERGENCE OF THE GENRE" CHORAL FOLK SONG" IN THE CONTEXT OF THE BULGARIA CHORAL TRADITIONS"**– Education and the arts: Traditions and perspectives", ISBN 978-954-07-5061-3 University edition "St. Kliment Ohridski", Sofia 2020;
2. **"THE CONDUCTOR –AMBASSADOR OF THE COMPOSER'S CREATIVE IDEA"** - Sixth international scientific and practical conference on "Strategies for the musical and educational practices in the pre-school, school and the extracurricular environment". ISBN 978-619-239-541-4 , "Avangard Prima" publishers, 2021;
3. **"SYNCRETISM AND SYNTHESIS OF SPEECH AND MUSIC IN VOCAL FOLK MUSIC"**. – Education and the arts: Traditions and perspectives", ISSN 2738-8999, University edition "St. Kliment Ohridski", Sofia 2021.

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The undersigned Oleg Stoyanov Ivanov hereby certify the veracity of the translation from Bulgarian into English of the present document. The translation consists of 53 pages.

Translator:.....

/O. Ivanov

