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The Ukrainian Component of Regional Professional Musical Culture in 1939–1945: A Case Study of the Volga Region

Abstract

The article touches upon the yet unexplored issue of including the Ukrainian component in the structure of regional professional musical and cultural system and their interaction in the days of the Second World War. The study draws on documents from local and federal archives and periodicals of the Volga region. Evacuation to the region allowed to maintain the creative life of the Zhytomyr theatre of musical comedy (Syzran, Melekess) and of the Taras Shevchenko Ukrainian Radio. The project of creation of the Ukrainian Philharmonic was realized in Saratov in July, 1943. Ukrainian artists, performers, teachers, composers P. Gaydamaka, B. Lyatoshynsky and others lived and worked in evacuation in the Volga region. Awarding music pieces that used Ukrainian themes stimulated further development of this creative trend. The Volga region saw some musicological activities to find and record Ukrainian folklore (the Astrakhan expedition of the Moscow Conservatory). The Volga region became a road house for Ukrainian artists and bands. Local musicians organized bands to spread Ukrainian art, there were thematic concerts, such as the radio concert "Masters of the great Russian art to the Ukrainian people" that took place in Saratov. Many local and evacuated institutions included Ukrainian works in their repertoire. Despite the extreme conditions of war, Ukrainian, as well as local musicians did much military patronage work (gave concerts for the troops, etc). The study shows that the Volga region played a positive role in the preservation and development of Ukrainian music. Furthermore, the work and activities of the Ukrainian culture-bearers contributed enrichment of the wartime Russian musical life of the region in 1939–1945.

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Keywords

Archive, source, Musical culture, the Volga region, Ukrainian music, World War II, Zhytomyr theatre of musical comedy, the Ukrainian Committee.

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