

The activity of the “Doina” choral chapel during 1963-1975 based on archive materials from the special depository of the Republic of Moldova

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Abstract: The “Doina” Academic Choral Chapel is considered the most renowned and long-lived choral ensemble in the Republic of Moldova. The history of this collective as part of the National Philharmonic has gone through different stages, each stage being characterized by the key aspects of its activity. The present article analyzes the period between 1963 and 1975 – the first twelve years of management of the chapel by Veronica Garștea until the team became part of the General Directorate of the State Philharmonic of Moldova and of the October Palace. For the purpose of research, the qualitative and quantitative composition of the team and the geography of concert tours are investigated, the selection, complexity and variety of repertoire are analyzed, as well as the interaction of the administration with the leaders of other cultural organizations. Special attention is paid to the personality of the artistic director and issues related to the mission of the Choral Chapel “Doina” in the cultural space of the Republic of Moldova. For this purpose we used all available materials from the archives of the Republic of Moldova: the National Archive of the Republic of Moldova, the archives of the Moldova-Concert Directorate and the National Library of the Republic of Moldova. The present article considers a vast number of heterogeneous documents that are used in order to recreate an objective panorama of the ensemble in the determined period. In conclusion, it is mentioned that the artistic activity of the most famous choral collective is an integral part of the cultural life of the country and, together with other artistic groups of the National Philharmonic, it contributes significantly to the promotion of national cultural policy.

Keywords: “Doina” Choral Chapel, concert ensemble/ collective, choral music, political repertoire, culture, concert.

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The activity of the “Doina” Academic Choir Chapel is of great scientific interest for the cultural space of Moldova. Given the team’s age of almost a century, the research proved that the most truthful source for creating an objective image of a professional artistic ensemble with national value is the multitude of materials and documents in the special depository of the National Archive of the Republic of Moldova. Prior monitoring of archival resources of the Republic of Moldova makes it possible to identify the main sources containing documents of interest for research. These are:

1. The Funds of the General Directorate of the National Archive and of the Directorate for the Archive of Socio-Political Organizations, which gather documentary materials of the Department of Arts subordinated to the Soviet of Ministers of the Moldavian SSR. Here you can find important sources for describing the concert and development activity of “Doina” Choral Chapel as an artistic collective: posters and programs of the State Philharmonic of Moldova, business correspondence about the creative activity of the Philharmonic (telegrams, contracts with composers), materials on repertoire and activities during tours and concerts of the Philharmonic staff.

2. Moldova-Concert Directorate Archive, where materials covering 1943-1990 are available. Of particular interest are the order collections for “Doina” Choral Chapel, which regulate the inventory of property, organizational and administrative aspects, account of persons in military service, organization of tours, approval of timetables, establishment of categories for choristers, staff payroll, appointments and dismissals, leaves and business trips, administrative warnings, reprimands for violations of labor discipline, personal files of dismissed staff, lists of employees, their profiles, autobiographies and statements.

3. The National Library of the Republic of Moldova, where the files of the Soviet metropolitan and republican press are stored, which extensively highlight the concerts performed by the “Doina” Choral Chapel: reviews, feature articles, interviews, music criticism (for example: the newspaper “Soviet Moldova”, “Chişinăul de seară/Evening Chişinău”, “Culture of Moldova”, “Sovereign Moldova, Literature and Art” etc.).

The discovery of a complex of archival documents related to the artistic and cultural activity of the “Doina” Choral Chapel throughout the 20th century led to the development of well-defined principles of classification/cataloguing. Starting from the structure of an artistic ensemble that carries out its activity in a certain time and in a determined social and cultural context, as well as according to the research objectives, we propose the following conceptual system for classifying archival documents, regardless of the place where they are archived:

1. Vertical regulatory documents – reflect the strict hierarchical structure for the operation of the artistic collective within the state system and administrative subordination at all levels (orders, decisions, dispositions).

2. Sectoral (cultural) interaction documents – reflect the networks of horizontal connections on different levels of decision and professional, administrative and economic interactions that directly ensure the performing activity of the chapel. (letters, agreements, contracts, posters, programs, minutes of artistic committee meetings, etc.).

3. Current documents for internal circulation – reflect all kinds of everyday practices in their empirical specificity (annual reports, lists of artists, statistics, internal orders, etc.) reflecting the daily life of each individual artist and the whole ensemble, which would constitute the micro-level of research. It involves the daily routine and work schedule, social roles of employees and cultural interactions with colleagues and other public organizations, interactions with the state institutions, realities of the historical situation, aspects relative to human and financial resources, the system of sanctions and administrative incentives of the choristers. In other words, all that would characterize the daily life of any professional social group, team or organization, taking into account the specifics of its artistic activity.

By classifying the materials according to the conceptual system proposed, an “identity archive” is created, organized around the history of a certain artistic ensemble (“Doina” Choral Chapel).

In order to implement the principle of historical integrity and restore objectivity, the connection between these components is identified, the dynamics of creative results are established, the historical stages and the chronological framework of the chapel’s development as a collective are determined, obviously taking into account the personality of the artistic leaders. The artistic leader of any artistic collective is the employee responsible for implementing the cultural policy of the state. They make administrative, financial and personnel decisions, being guided by the directive documents received, addressed as a basis for decisions and direct orders at their level of competence.

At this level, the chronological stages in the history of the collective were identified, namely:

The initial stage – 1928-1942 – from the establishment of the collective as the Musical Chapel of Moldova, reorganized in 1930 into the Choral Studio of the city of Tiraspol and renamed in 1935 the “Doina” State Choral Chapel of Moldova. Initially, the collective was formed by young workers and amateurs of the kolkhoz who sang folk songs. Constantin Pigrov² participated in the training

² Constantin Pigrov (1876-1962) – choir conductor, professor, founder of the choral conducting department at the Odessa Conservatory.

of the interpretive and artistic skills of the young choir. During the 1930s and 40s he lived in Moldova, and was the artistic director of the chapel until 1940.

After the reunion of Bessarabia with the Soviet Union in 1940, the “Doina” Choral Chapel together with the symphony orchestra formed the National State Philharmonic in Chisinau. To this day, these two formations are the basis of Serghei Lunchevici's National Philharmonic.

During the Second World War the Philharmonic was disbanded, most of the artists were called to arms, and only a few artists (singers, instrumentalists, dancers and soloists) were united in the “Doina” Song and Dance Ensemble. Choir artists constituted the basic contingent of this collective, led by the composer David Gherșfeld³. The ensemble was later evacuated and traveled through Central Asia and other regions of the USSR including the front, acting as a concert unit.

After the return of the ensemble to Chisinau (1944), the State Philharmonic resumed its activity and since 1945 the “Doina” Choral Chapel has continued its activity under the baton of conductors Moisei Cononenco⁴ and Mihail Brezdeniuc⁵ (the 50s). During this time, the collective is going through an artistic and performance-related crisis, due to the lack of well-trained personnel in the field of choral singing and of a competent conductor.

Years 1958-1963. In order to come out of the crisis and maintain the ensemble, but also to obtain a professional level of interpretation and expand the repertoire, Vladimir Minin⁶ (born in 1929), a graduate of the Moscow State Conservatory, conductor of the Moscow State Academic Choir was invited as the artistic director. V. Minin made an effort in the development of the collective in academic choral music, introduced classical choral works into the repertoire, reworked folk music material and adapted it for the interpretation of choral artists, introduced solfege and singing lessons for choristers and filled the vacant positions with young talents from the republic, whom he also trained. One of the conductor's merits was the preparation and subsequent evolution of the chapel under his baton during the Decade of Art and Literature of the SSR in Moscow in 1960. The “Doina” Choral Chapel had a successful performance and became recognized throughout the Soviet Union. Following this success, the chapel obtained the title of the collective Emeritus of the Republic.

³ David Gherșfeld (1911-2000) – composer, conductor, pedagogue, folklorist, founder of the National Opera of the Republic of Moldova.

⁴ Moisei Cononenco (1891-?) – artistic director of the *Doina* Choral Chapel in the 1950s.

⁵ Mihail Brezdeniuc - (1895-?) – choirmaster of the *Doina* Choral Chapel, between April 1957 and March 1958 – artistic director and conductor.

⁶ Vladimir Minin (b. 1929) - choir conductor, professor; laureate of the State Prize of the USSR (1982), People's Artist of the USSR (1988), Person of Honor of the Republic of Moldova (2004), artistic director of the State Academic Chamber Choir in Moscow. From 1958 to 1963 he was artistic director and conductor of the “Doina” Choral Chapel.

The next stage of the group's evolution is related to the activity of the famous Veronica Garștea⁷ (1927-2012), conductor, pedagogue, People's Artist of the USSR, laureate of the State Prize of the SSR, Knight of the Order of the Republic. In 1957 she became choir master in the “Doina” Choral Chapel, and in April 1963 she was officially appointed first conductor and artistic director of Doina. In this capacity, Veronica Garștea worked until her very last day.

Her professional training began in 1948 at the Chișinău School of Music, after which she studied at the Chișinău State Conservatory (1952-1957), specializing in choral conducting in the class of E. Bogdanovsky. As a student at the conservatory, V. Garștea started teaching at the College of Music, which demonstrates the recognition of her interpretative and organizational qualities.

After successfully graduating from the conservatory and qualifying as a choir conductor and teacher, the young graduate was directed to the State Philharmonic. On May 23rd, 1957, the Directorate of the State Philharmonic submitted to the Ministry of Culture of the MSSR a request for the approval of an additional unit of conductor (choir master) within the “Doina” Choral Chapel, a fact that was not previously foreseen, in order to “prepare and train a master of choir for the collective of the State Philharmonic”. Thus, the future career of the young conductor was determined by the administrative decision of the government for the training of national professionals in the field of culture.

The first stage of her activity as a conductor takes place from 1963 until the collective transitioned to the United Directorate of the State Philharmonic of Moldova and the October Palace in 1975.

According to the archival materials of all three types, the activity of the chapel was carried out in strict compliance with the regulations and decisions of the state in the department of culture.

Of great scientific interest are the internal orders, which arguably reflect the repertory policy of all concert collectives, including the “Doina” Choral Chapel. These normative acts, such as the *Order of the Director of the Philharmonic regarding the activities to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the October Revolution* (1966) and the *Order of the Director of the Philharmonic regarding the activities to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the city of Chisinau* (1966) have a well-defined structure aimed at the following topics: repertoire and concert activity.

For instance, within the *jubilee year events* (50 years since the October Revolution) the emeritus collective of the republic of the “Doina” Choral Chapel is requested to present a new anniversary program to the artistic council of the Philharmonic within the set deadline (April 15, 1957). The new programs must

⁷ Veronica Garștea (1927-2012) – conductor and pedagogue from the Republic of Moldova, People's Artist of the USSR (1987), artistic director and first conductor of the *Doina* Choral Chapel during 1963-2012.

be drawn up taking into account the conditions of *the Regulation on the evaluation of professional artistic ensembles within the Soviet Union*.⁸. The correlation between the creations of Soviet and Moldovan composers, of Russian and universal classical works in the repertoire of the Doina Choral Chapel (1961):

1. Creations of Soviet Moldavian composers – 43%
2. Creations of composers from other republics of the USSR – 32%
3. Arrangements of Moldovan folk music – 18%
4. Russian composer classics – 3%
5. Universal classic composers – 2%

2% of the library fund of the collective is made by collections of solfeggio, crestomatia, *Muzica* magazine (editions no. 3, 4, 5, 10), as well as the texts (lyrics) of popular creations.

The essential aspect in the repertory policy of the choral collective is the language in which this repertoire is performed. In this context, the distribution of the linguistic affiliation of the creations is presented as a percentage:

Russian language – 67%

Romanian (Moldovan) language – 30 %

Other languages – 3%.

Although the largest share of the chapel's repertoire belongs to the creation of Soviet Moldavian composers, almost half of its pieces are written on verses composed in Russian. This fact fully supports the conceptual ideas and fundamental principles of the cultural policy of the CPSU and demonstrates the implementation of this policy by the Ministry of Culture, namely the underappreciation of the native people's culture and the glorification of “the most advanced culture in the world – Russian culture”⁹. At the beginning of the 50s, Russian creations gradually began to eliminate Moldovan songs from Doina's repertoire.

The creation of the composers from the MSSR present in the repertoire of the “Doina” Choral Chapel is divided into two compositional areas: the choral processing of folk music (choral miniatures, suites) and the works with a deep propaganda tone: *a cappella* choirs and vocal-symphonic creations.

Moldovan folk music in the repertoire of the “Doina” Choral Chapel towards the 1960s is presented in the creations of composers L. Gurov, D. Gherșfeld, N. Ponomarenco, P. Șerban, N. Vilinschii, G. Borș, V. Zlatov, N. Chiosa, etc. The theme of these creations is reflected in its titles, such as: *Hill*

⁸ ANRM, F. 3241, inv.1, d. 407, p. 106.

⁹ Valentina Ursu (2013), *Politica culturală în RSS Moldovenească 1944-1956* [Cultural policy in the Moldavian SSR 1944-1956], Editura Pontos, Chișinău, p. 288.

with flowers of St. Neaga, *The tractor driver's song* by D. Gherșfeld on lyrics by I. Corneanu, *Longing for the village* and *On the valley* by L. Gurov, miniatures by P. Șerban on popular lyrics: *Fa, Marie Mărioară, Little Shepard*, etc.¹⁰ This repertoire also includes the *Lyrics* section containing the lyrics of Moldovan folk songs, such as *Green leaf, beautiful apple; Dniester on your banks; Mîndra mea; Doruleț dorul; Dragă ni-i lelița-nantă; Frunză verde de bujor, Hai la vie în colhoz*, etc. In order to improve the quality of literary texts, namely in the choral arrangement of musical folklore, the composers of the MSSR collaborated with Moldovan poets and writers, especially in the second half of the 1950s: E. Bucov, A. Busuioc, L. Deleanu, L. Corneanu, An. Gujcl and others. This repertory segment reflects the folklore of the new Soviet Moldovan people.

For this reason, the folk songs arrangements by composer G. Muzicescu are highlighted: *Răsari luna, Dor dorule, Stîncuța, Zis-ai bade*, etc. G. Muzicescu's creations largely reflected the rich folk musical traditions in those difficult times for national art.

Given the use of mechanisms for promoting politics such as party diktat, ideological monopoly, authoritarian decision-making process, composers of the MSSR, as well as all Soviet composers had to recount successes in various branches of Soviet activity: the heroic work of Soviet citizens¹¹, multilateral activity of the CP, the great October socialist revolution¹², glorifying the personality of party leaders¹³. These topics are reflected in the most ample section of "Doina"'s repertoire. We highlight the following creations: *Jubilee Cantata* (1949) by Șt. Neaga, lyrics by A. Lupan and P. Crucienuț, and the oratorio *The Song of Renaissance* (1951); cantata *Our Dawn* (1954) by S. Lobel, lyrics Em. Bucov; cantata *Under the Banner of Victories* (1952) by V. Zagorschi, lyrics by A. Aleabov; *Soviet Moldova, Song about Chisinau, The Homeland* by D. Gherșfeld, lyrics by L. Corneanu; *Long Live Stalin* by N. Ponomarenko; various oratorios and jubilee cantatas. The repertoire of the chapel includes the creations of the composer A. Stârcea: *Ballad of the violin, My Moldova, Ode lui Lenin, The Warsawian, Song of joy*, etc.

In "Doina"'s library of scores there are also creations on lyrics written by Romanian poets, for example the piece *Ce te legeni, codrule*, signed by P. Mezeti on the lyrics of Mihai Eminescu, the four madrigals of P. Constantinescu.

From the creations of composers from all over the USSR included in the repertoire of the chapel, we mention the works of famous Soviet musicians such as D. Shostakovich, S. Prokofiev, A. Hacıaturian, T. Hrennicov, V. Muradeli, I.

¹⁰ The folk music arrangements present the basic layer of the repertoire of the "Doina" Choral Chapel.

¹¹ AOSPRM, F. 51, inv. 5, d. 23, p. 458.

¹² AOSPRM, F. 51, inv. 3, d. 23, pp. 264-279.

¹³ КПСС о культуре, просвещении и науке. Москва: Политиздат, 1963, 551 с.

Dunaevski, as well as V. Šebalin, V. Poleakov, R. Glier, S. Tulikov, etc. Their work includes choral scores such as *Winter Road* by V. Šebalin, *The Miller, the Boy and the Donkey* by D. Kabalevsky, *The White Dove* by S. Prokofiev; creations with a propagandistic agenda, such as the *Oath of the People's Commissar* and *Our Song* by D. Shostakovich, *Song about Stalin* by A. Hacıaturian. Doina's repertoire also includes creations of a high degree of complexity, such as *10 poems for mixed choir*, *To those executed* signed by D. Shostakovich, cantata *Alexandr Nevski* by S. Prokofiev. Folk music arrangements of the Soviet peoples are also present, such as the *Ukrainian Songs* arranged by N. Lîsenko, the choral arrangements of A. Sveshnikov, and others.

An extremely small percentage of the library depository of the "Doina" Choir Chapel belongs to works from the heritage of Russian and universal classical choral music. Since 1946-1949, the "Doina" Choral Chapel has included vocal-symphonic works in its repertoire: the Persian Choir from the opera *Ruslan and Ludmila* to the lyrics of A. Pushkin, as well as the Slavsea Choir and the Polish Choir from the opera *Ivan Susanin* by M. Glinka, *The Tatar Captivity* by N. Rimsky-Korsakov, the end of first act of the opera *Prince Igor* and choruses by A. Borodin; the choruses from the opera *Rusalka* by A. Dargomijski; *Chorus of girls* by P. Tchaikovsky. The following choral miniatures were included in the library fund: *Ah, ti, bereoza*, *Under an apple tree* by P. Cesnokov; *7 songs* by A. Grecianinov including *The Prisoner* and the folk song *Poidu li ia, vîdu li ia*; *Sunrise, Morning, Nature and love*; *Ne kukuška vo sîrom boru* by P. Ceaikovski; *On the old mound* signed by V. Kalinikov, *Barcarola* by Ț. Kiui; *Anchar* by A. Arenski; chosen choirs: *Evening song*, *Good road*, *The Evening* by S. Taneev. In 1957, the *Ioan Damaschin* cantata signed by this composer can also be found in the repertoire of "Doina" Choral Chapel.

The examples of universal classical music in "Doina"'s records are of scientific interest. In the library inventory we also identified the following creations: *Echo* and *Spring Song* by O. Lasso; *Sanctus* of Palestrina; *Crucifixus* by A. Lotti; *Glorious Work* by G.F. Handel¹⁴; *Credo* and *Fugue* by I.S. Bach; *Requiem* and *Ave verum corpus* by W.A. Mozart; The finale of *Symphony No. 9* and *Spring Sonata* by Beethoven; *The Nightingale* by F. Mendelsohn; *Hiking* by F. Schubert; *Dreams* and *Gypsy Life* by R. Schumann; *Lullaby* by J. Brahms, *The Nightingale* by E. Grieg¹⁵.

¹⁴ The name of the work is in Romanian, without the indication of the author of the lyrics and the original source of the musical material.

¹⁵ The choral miniatures of the composers L. Beethoven, F. Mendelssohn, F. Schubert, R. Schumann, J. Brahms and E. Grieg are presented in the repertoire with their titles in Russian; accordingly, these creations were performed on verses written by Russian poets, and not in the original language.

The repertoire of the “Doina” Choral Chapel in the 1960s and 1970s also includes the collections of songs of various peoples, including nations that were friends with the Soviet Union: Korean, Spanish, Latvian choirs, Swedish, Polish, Ukrainian songs (including the anthem of the USSR), Africans songs, Italian choirs, reworks of Russian and Bulgarian folk songs, songs from Albania, Armenia, Estonia.

The repertoire list containing all the scores that are available for the artistic collective and can at any time be studied and performed by this collective presents the potential repertoire of the collective. From this repertoire, we highlight the number of creations already studied by the collective, the creations that are in progress, in the process of deciphering or rehearsal, as well as the creations that are performed within the concerts during the determined period - they make up the current repertoire of the collective.

The current repertoire of the chapel for the first twelve years under the direction of Veronica Garștea (1963-1975) is directly reflected by the concerts in which “Doina” participated or performed: local concerts within the State Philharmonic, performances in the regions and towns of the republic (on the field), *a cappella* choral concerts, concerts within the country and the entire Soviet Union, performances during tours abroad, tours through Soviet cities, planned concerts, concerts with program, performances during state holidays and socio-political events, participation in cultural weeks of MSSR, recordings, concerts of philharmonic artists.

According to the archive documents and the annual activity reports of the philharmonic collectives, the “Doina” Choral Chapel annually studied and prepared new programs for the most important events of the year, to serve the demands of the party. For example, in 1965, “Doina” learned a new program that was presented during the concert tour through the cities of Siberia and during the culture week of the SSR in Azerbaijan, which contained the following titles: *Still the heart beats* by V. Salmanov, *Lullaby* by W.A. Mozart, *Cântecul de roadă* by P. Șerban, *Fluieraș (The Flute)* by E. Coca and the Moldavian folk song *Good is cheese*.

The typical program for the concerts of the “Doina” Choral Chapel during the Cultural Weeks of the MSSR during the time interval studied is the following: a section of the so-called classical choral repertoire, composed of existing and newly learned creations, is performed: *Choral Concert No. 1* (lyrics by A. Busuioc) or *Choral Concert No. 2* (lyrics by A. Gujel) by G. Muzicescu were a must, two or three works of European composers, pieces signed by Soviet composers. Section two contained arrangements of Moldovan and Russian folk music and a folk music creation of the host nation.

For example, between May 14-22, 1966, together with the concert ensembles of the republic, “Doina” Choral Chapel participated in the concerts of the MSSR Culture Week in Riga, Latvia, where it also presented its own choral

concert. During this concert they performed *Lenin – peace, life and sun* by S. Lungu, *Choral Concert no. 1* by G. Muzicescu, both works composed to the lyrics of A. Busuioc¹⁶, *Night* by C. Gounod, *Melodie lină (Slow Melody)* by S. Rahmaninov, *Slomannâe sosnî* by E. Darzini, *Arde pământul (Burning earth)* by V. Zagorschi, on lyrics by V. Tulinic, W.A. Mozart – *Lullaby*, lyrics by A. Mașistov, *In the blue evening* by G. Sviridov to the lyrics of S. Yesenin S. Esenin and *Alleluia* from the oratorio *Messiah* by G.F. Haendel. In the second section of the concert, the reworks of Moldovan folk music were heard (*Hai, Ioane, Ioane* by M. Ursul, *Brâul amestecat* by N. Vlaiculescu, *Dor, dorule* and *Stăncuța* by G. Muzicescu, *Cucușorul meu* by S. Lungul, *Tudoraș* by V. Vilinciuc, *Iac-așa* by I. Niculescu, etc.), reworks of Russian folk songs and a Latvian folk song *Dance*¹⁷.

The concert tour in Riga was widely mentioned in the Soviet press. In particular, the stage performances of the “Doina” Choral Chapel were described.

Likewise, we find the description of the concert activity in the country, in the press of the time. For example, the newspaper *Soviet Moldova* from April 15th, 1966 mentions: “Stormy applause from the audience was provoked by the popular song *Lelișoare* from *Mîndrești*, the Ukrainian song *Susidko* and the *Anthem of the great city* by R. Gliere under the baton of conductor Veronica Garștea. But the chapel would have been even more successful if it had interpreted works of classical choral music”.¹⁸

During the concerts with the participation of all the republican artistic ensembles, the “Doina” Choral Chapel would perform several vocal-symphonic creations (in collaboration with the symphony orchestras) or a short entertainment program, depending on the theme of the event and the number of spectators. For example, during the concert of art masters dedicated to the First Congress of Culture Workers from Moldova (February 20th, 1966), “Doina” performed *Zdravița*, a poem for choir and orchestra signed by S. Prokofiev, together with the choral ensemble of the State Moldavian Theater of Opera and Ballet¹⁹ and the Symphony Orchestra of the State Philharmonic.²⁰ At the end of the concert, A. Mulear's *Song About Moldova* was performed²¹. This piece can be found in the opening concert of the Culture and Art Days of the MSSR in

¹⁶ *Choral concert no. 1* is a religious work written on the words of the prophet David from Psalms 23, 150 and 142. The text of A. Busuioc is written for the adapted version of the Concert. In the potential repertoire of the chapel (1960) only p. 1 is mentioned - *Cine, cine. (Who, who)*.

¹⁷ ANRM, F. 3241, inv.1, d. 407, pp. 88-89.

¹⁸ ANRM, F. 3241, inv.1, d. 409, p. 38.

¹⁹ Choir master – Gheorghe Strezev (1924-1994).

²⁰ The poem for choir and orchestra *Zdravița* by S. Prokofiev – the only large-scale vocal-symphonic creation, introduced in the current repertoire of the chapel in 1966 (Ф. 3241, оп.1, д. 411, с. 34).

²¹ ANRM, F. 3241, inv.1, d. 407, pp. 113-114.

Moscow, on September 5th, 1967, as well as in other concerts of the Philharmonic groups for the entire period under study²². During the Concert dedicated to the 500th anniversary of the city of Chişinău (October 8th, 1966), Doina performed the *Ode to Chişinău* by the composer V. Rotaru, on lyrics by E. Crimerman²³. But in the concert dedicated to the meeting of farmers on December 28th, 1965, the chapel performed a small entertainment program from popular creations: *Ioane, Ioane*, the Ukrainian folk song *Susidko* and again *Brâul amestecat* by N. Vlaiculescu²⁴.

“Doina” Choral Chapel actively participated in cultural events dedicated to Moldovan folklore. For example, in the concert dedicated to Moldovan folk music on November 4th, 1966, “Doina” presented itself with the following creations from the current repertoire: *The song about the party* by G. Borş, on lyrics by E. Bucov, *Ce te legeni, codrule*, signed by P. Mezei, soloist – D. Boikis, *The Flute* by E. Coca, soloist – V. Mihnevici, Moldovan folk song *Plopilor îndepărtaţi* reworked by M. Copâtman, soloist – S. Tăbăcaru, *My wife is Moldovan* and *Iac-aşa* I. Niculescu²⁵.

It is worth noting that the number of creations performed by “Doina” choral chapel, as well as their content, was related not only to the theme and conditions of the events, but also to the performance possibilities of the collective and to the variety of creations included in the current repertoire by the artistic director, Veronica Garştea.

The capacity to complete the current repertoire of “Doina” during 1963-1975 is about 9-10 works per year, the large-scale musical creations being only 1 or 2 annually. For example, the cantata *Ioan Damaschin* by S. Taneev, which appeared in “Doina”’s repertoire in 1957, was prepared for the concert version only in 1968²⁶.

The most often performed by the ensemble and probably loved by the Moldovan audience are the following: *Choral concert no. 1* by G. Muzicescu; *The prisoner* and *Poidu li ia, vîidu li ia* by A. Grecianinov, *The earth is burning* by V. Zagorski, *Iac-aşa* by I. Niculescu. These choirs are present in every second stage performance of the chapel.

One of the collective's main activities during the period studied were a cappella concerts in the towns of the republic. To provide these internal tours and maintain the interest of the public, the chapel annually planned and prepared a new program, primarily consisting of popular creations in the arrangement of

²² ANRM, F. 3241, inv.1, d. 415, p. 18.

²³ ANRM, F. 3241, inv.1, d. 407, p. 188.

²⁴ *Idem*, p. 190.

²⁵ *Idem*, p. 194.

²⁶ ANRM, F. 3241, inv.1, d. 437, p. 36.

composers S. Lobel, V. Zagorschi, Z. Tcaci, T. Zgureanu, E. Doga²⁷. For example, the register of concert activities for 1969 shows that concerts were planned for each month by localities and districts of the republic: January – 10 performances, including the cities Cimișlia, Comrat, Cotovsk, Orhei; February – Leova, Cotovsk (4 villages), Bălți; March – 6 towns from Drochia and Rîșcani; April – Drochia; May – Edineț, Dondușeni, Orhei, etc²⁸. The year 1970 was marked by the group's concert tours through the villages of the following districts Briceni, Dubăsari, Criuleni, Călărași, Orhei, Telenești, Cimișlia.²⁹

These data can be compared with the registers of concert activity of the philharmonic ensembles for each of the twenty-two regions of the republic.

The preliminary analysis of the current repertoire of the “Doina” Choral Chapel in the first twelve years of management by Veronica Garștea highlights gaps in the preparation and training of choir artists.

The staff statistics for the years 1963-1964 indicate the following ratio of choristers, relative to academic studies: out of the total number of 56 artists, only 10 graduated from higher education, 43 choristers with secondary education and 2 – primary education. Between 1963 and 1975, the number of artists with specialized studies gradually increased. In 1969, the total number of artists increased to 79 artists, out of which 15 – higher education, 59 – secondary education. The insufficient level of preparation and artistic performance of the chapel was an impediment in the process of interpreting classical choral and vocal-symphonic music according to professional interpretative requirements. This fact was mentioned by the director of the Philharmonic, A. Fedcu, who sent a message to the Ministry of Culture in 1970: “The ‘Doina’ Choral Chapel at the moment is a large and rather inflexible collective. In order to decipher and prepare the symphonic vocal repertoire, professionals with a high level of artistic qualification are needed”³⁰. Unrelated to this, in 1972 the chapel was requested to add the title “academic” to its name.

Conclusions

In conclusion, it is emphasized that during 1963-1975 the activity of the “Doina” Choral Chapel continued the process of supporting the ideas of Soviet culture promoted in the MSSR. The current repertoire performed on the stages of the republic and outside was based on two fundamental areas: popular creation and the work of Soviet composers. Classical compositional work, as well as vocal-symphonic and large-scale creations are not characteristic of the ensemble

²⁷ ANRM, F. 3241, inv.1, d. 437, p. 36.

²⁸ ANRM, F. 3241, inv.1, d. 446, pp. 8-13.

²⁹ ANRM, F. 3241, inv.1, d. 459, pp. 1-35.

³⁰ ANRM, F. 3241, inv.1, d. 453, pp. 10-11.

in the researched period. In this sense, the “Doina” Choral Chapel is assigned the mission of serving the ideological orientations in the cultural policy of the republic. The subsequent researches of the special depository demonstrate that after the restructuring of the philharmonic, starting from 1975, the way of documenting all the organizational processes regarding the activity of the concert ensembles also changed.

The contemporary period of activity of the “Doina” Academic Choir takes place in a democratic Republic of Moldova, under a pro-European orientation of political trends in the field of culture, as well as with new performance possibilities in the public space and the media. The implementation of modern interpretive practices is reflected in the activity of the current artistic director of the chapel and first conductor – Ilona Stepan, People's Artist.³¹ Under the direction of Ilona Stepan the choir is regularly supplemented with new members, especially with the students and graduates of the Choral Conducting department of AMTAP³²; an indispensable condition for admission to the ranks of choir artists is an academic degree in the field of musical art. The repertoire of the chapel is characterized by complex works that require high professional training, virtuoso mastery not only of the vocal apparatus, but also of the concepts of musical form, harmony, the implementation of an artistic image and, in general, culture in the broadest sense of the word. Today, the choral creation in “Doina”'s interpretation can be characterized as “intellectual interpretation”.

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³¹ Ilona Stepan (n. 1964) – conductor, professor, Head of the “Conducting” department, AMTAP. Artistic director and principal conductor of the *Doina* Academic Choir Chapel since 2013. Conductor of the National Chamber Choir. Conductor of the AMTAP Student Choir. People's Artist (2020).

³² Academy of Music, Theater and Fine Arts from Chişinău.

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