

DOI: 10.31866/2410-1915.23.2022.260736

UDC 78.071.2(477)(092)Bench

**THE CULTURAL WORK OF OLGA BENCH: CONDUCTOR,  
MUSICOLOGIST, PROFESSOR, PUBLIC FIGURE**

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Bermes, I. (2022). Olga Bench's Cultural and Creative Work. *Culture and Arts in the Modern World*, 23, 8-18. <https://doi.org/10.31866/2410-1915.23.2022.260736>.

The purpose of the article is to reveal the main stages of the life and work of the famous Ukrainian cultural figure, musicologist, conductor, teacher, diplomat Olga Bench. The research methodology includes biographical, systematic, interviewing methods, which made it possible to highlight the versatile activities of a person who is concerned about national culture, education, and the image of Ukraine in the world. The scientific novelty of the article lies in the fact that for the first time the life and work of Olga Bench is revealed in today's realities. The materials of the study of professional, scientific, pedagogical, creative, administrative activities of O. Bench, which form a cultural aura of positive ideals important for the current situation in the Ukrainian society, have been introduced into scientific circulation. Conclusions. The determining factor in the formation of O. Bench's personality was family upbringing and traditions based on deep national principles, musical environment, a number of talented teachers. A spiritually rich world and high national consciousness, active citizenship have become the foundation of personal development and creative realisation in the musical, educational, diplomatic, and administrative spheres. The life and work of Olga Bench is an example of serving the national culture, which is inextricably linked with educational and cultural processes in the modern Ukrainian area, the formation of a positive image of Ukraine in the world.

*Keywords:* Olga Bench; life and work; cultural figure; diplomat; conductor

**Introduction**

As a creator of the cultural environment, a person is also a bearer of certain national traditions, especially when referring to a creative person. It is well known that the study of the life and work of cultural figures is a necessary component of studying the spiritual life of society.

Olga Bench stands out among Ukrainian figures whose work led to the rise of national culture. Her activities were most clearly manifested during the period of Ukraine's independence, which led to the rise of spiritual and artistic culture. The country's in-

tellectual elite and artists were inspired by the idea of national identity, which arose at that historical moment, and were looking for their own way to contribute to the development of Ukrainian cultural life. Having sufficient life and pedagogical experience, a creative and emotional resource, O. Bench became actively involved in this work. Her initiatives are marked by high civic, moral, and aesthetic dimensions.

*Recent research and publications analysis.* It should be noted that not much has been written about O. Bench. Basically, there is some information in the *Encyclopedia of Modern Ukraine* (author L. Kyianovska) (2003), the *Encyclopedia Britishpedia. Osobnosti Ceskej a Slovenskej republiky* (2018, 2019, 2020), *Musicological portal*, the bibliographic index of *Musical Ternopil region* (compiled by V. Myskiv et al.) (2008); the work “Gender features of the diplomatic service in Ukraine and the world” (Zakharova & Martseniuk, 2015); the article by H. Kryshthal (2018) “There was a report on Lemko culture in Canada”, published in the Ukrainian newspaper *Svoboda* (11/06/2018) and the article by A. Kissova, A. Smihulova “Bravo pani konzulka”, published in the journal *Presovsky Vecernik* (9/09/2011), *Scientific elite of Ukraine* (2020); the review by O. Kozarenko (2004) “The phenomenon of one fate” (about Olga Bench’s new book *Pavlo Muravskiy. The phenomenon of one life*, and the interview with N. Bilotserkivets, published in the journal *Ukrainian culture*. The breadth of O. Bench’s scientific, creative, and administrative interests and the implementation of many successful ideas escaped the attention of scientists. So, this became the author’s motivation to collect and analyse the information about the modern Ukrainian figure.

## Purpose of the article

The purpose of the article is to reveal the main stages of the life and work of the famous Ukrainian cultural figure, musicologist, conductor, teacher, diplomat Olga Bench. For the first time the life and work of Olga Bench is revealed in today’s realities. O. Bench is an extraordinary person. With her life, ability to work, interest and conviction, she defends her principles, gives courageous assessments of the modern, difficult socio-cultural circumstances, and is sensitive to the problematic issues of Ukrainian culture and education. Through her professional, scientific, pedagogical, creative, and administrative work, O. Bench forms a cultural aura of positive ideals that are important for the current situation in Ukrainian society.

## Main research material

Olga Bench is a professor, conductor, musicologist, diplomat, Honoured Artist of Ukraine, People’s Artist of Ukraine, Deputy Minister of Culture and Arts of Ukraine (2005–2010), Consul General of Ukraine in Presov, Slovak Republic (2010–2015), Professor of the Catholic University in Ruzomberok (Slovak Republic), Rector at the Kyiv Academy of Arts, member of the National Union of Composers of Ukraine, cultural and public figure, expert of *Ukraine Speaks* TV show. She is a laureate of the M. Lysenko Award, the National All-Ukrainian Music Union Award, the All-Ukrainian Award “Woman of the Third Millennium” in the nomination Rating, the Pride of Truskavets

Award in the nomination Ambassador of Truskavets – 2017, awarded the order of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker 3<sup>d</sup> degree, Queen Anna Yaroslavna, numerous diplomas, and prizes.

It should be noted that Olga Bench is concerned about the development of culture as a national phenomenon, a carrier of national, ethnic, regional features; the national characteristics of art education as one of the important means of developing and forming a harmonious personality. O. Bench pays attention to the cultural and political situation in Ukraine, those segments of cultural life where political influence would be appropriate and meet the interests of society. She always responds to current topics of public life with deep reflections that arouse interest not only in the scientific community but also in the general public. As a person devoted to the issues of the historical and cultural heritage of Ukraine, she carefully preserves the artefacts of Lemko culture, because she is a representative of this sub-ethnic group.

Olga Bench was born in the Ternopil region, in the picturesque village of Hutysko, Berezhanskyi district, where her parents and the entire Bench family were deported from the village of Vilka in the Lemko region (now Poland) after World War II in 1945. Here, in the village, where the evicted dynasties of prominent Lemko carvers — Orysyk, Odrekhivskiy, Sukhorskiy, Berdal, Bench, Mykhailyshyn, Stetsiak, Iliash, Dolynskiy, etc. — lived, she learned the “secrets” of the creative work of the masters, which were reflected in the unique works of their hands. Beautiful nature, picturesque landscapes, Lemko songs and characteristic dialects are the particular ethnic environment that was formed not only by her parents but also by her fellow villagers. O. Bench inherited from them examples of the original colourful traditional Lemko culture: “The roots of the spiritual progress of each person are laid in childhood when memory clearly captures the whole world around us, in which the worldview and world experience of all things are formed. Therefore, these first later become one of the main factors in the formation of values of the individual” (Saint-Exupéry, 2003, p. 35)

The world of the mentality of the big Bench family, in which O. Bench was the youngest, was distinguished by high spirituality, education, love, sincerity, and respect. Family upbringing, in which, according to M. Stelmakhovych (1993), the leading role belongs to “parents and native (mother) tongue” (p. 15), their respect for folk traditions and customs was transferred to O. Bench and aroused love for them, most of all for the songs. The Lemko songs performed by her parents and fellow villagers, heard and recorded in her childhood memory, captivated the girl, she willingly sang them, developing her musical talent. It was under these circumstances that Olga Bench’s main socio-cultural guidelines were laid down: she learnt Ukrainian cultural traditions from her environment.

Since her father was a well-known carver, a graduate of the Rymanow School of woodcarving, founded by the countess A. Potocka, and dreamed of having favourable conditions for doing what he loved, the family decided to move to the resort town of Truskavets. Here O. Bench graduated from secondary and music schools and entered the Drohobych State Music School (choral conducting department). This educational institution was a “forge” of professional music training; the institution where the “spirit” of high art always prevailed, there was an active creative life, and students were involved in many performing groups not only acquiring practical skills and abilities but also improving them.

O. Bench immediately joined the work, worked hard on herself. In addition, she studied in the class of well-known conductors-teachers V. A. Hushchak (conducting) and O. I. Tsyhylyk (choral class). "Perseverance, diligence in learning, the ability to set goals and achieve the desired result immediately distinguished a capable student from others" (Bermes, 2021, p. 107). Noticing O. Bench's talent and great desire to learn the "basics" of conducting art, teachers set increasingly complex artistic and technical tasks for her, and expanded her repertoire palette. There is reason to believe that the hard work of the student and her mentors, who had good understanding of the methodology and a pedagogical talent, brought positive results. O. Bench recalls the Drohobych period with gratitude: "These were the happiest years of study, teachers were creative and inspired, devoted to their vocation, everything was real, natural and deeply human!" (O. Bench, personal communication, 2020).

After 4 years, O. Bench acquired a thorough knowledge, skills and abilities, graduated from the school with honours and received a recommendation for the admission to the Mykola Lysenko Lviv National Music Academy. Having successfully passed the entrance exams, O. Bench became a student of the conducting faculty. In the 70s, masters of musical art, famous musicians and teachers worked in this institution: the founder of the Lviv conducting school M. Kolessa, his students Yu. Lutsiv, M. Antkiv, Ye. Vakhniak, I. Nebozhynskyi, B. Zavoiskyi, O. Sotnychuk, L. Bober and others, who gave the highest training to talented young people. O. Bench was assigned to the class of professor Yu. Lutsiv, one of the most prominent representatives of the Kolessa school.

"Professor Yu. Lutsiv demanded that students understand the essence of music as a living intonation process, and not as a fixed structure. For the professor, the technique of conducting was a means of embodying the content of music... Yu. Lutsiv never honed the technique in isolation from the music, the student did it independently, when comprehended the figurative concept of the work. Yu. Lutsiv focused on the logic of imaginative development of the composition, a clear distribution of its emotional peaks" (O. Bench, personal communication, 2020).

At the time of O. Bench's studies, musicians-teachers of high spiritual culture Ye. Kozak, A. Kos-Anatolskyi, V. Flys, L. Yarosevych, T. Konovart, and others taught at the conducting faculty, they skilfully passed on their thorough knowledge to students. Communication with these people enriched the inner world of the gifted student, and contributed to her proper professional development.

During her studies at the conservatory, she maintained close relations with famous Lviv artists: People's Artist of Ukraine, Professor M. Ya. Baiko and her husband, the outstanding sculptor V. P. Odrekhivskyi. In this creative family, where the values of kindness and beauty prevailed, the continuity of the traditions of Lemko culture was preserved, where it was possible to hold conversations on forbidden topics, the "Ukrainian soul" and the character of O. Bench were strengthened.

The formation of the professional career of the activist falls on the beginning of the 1980s. The individual and personal worldview was formed in the process of pedagogical work at the departments of orchestral conducting and folk instruments of the Kharkiv Institute of Culture. This is where O. Bench's professional development took place, where she managed to declare her high creative potential as a teacher and conductor.

However, her perseverance and firmness of purpose, the inexhaustible artistic enthusiasm pushed her to search for new phases in professional growth. She entered the

assistantship-internship at the P. Tchaikovsky Kyiv State Conservatory in the class of L. Venedyktov. An outstanding master interpreter, choral conductor, a person of high general and musical culture, Professor L. Venedyktov "... never imposed his will, ... always gave a wise advice" (Malyshko, 2006, p. 32). He constantly emphasised: "the difficulty of choir work lies precisely in the fact that it is necessary to tune human souls, and not the strings of instruments" (Stepanchenko, 1994, p. 10). Bench's internship with a well-known artist gave her professional maturity, introduced new creative and methodological segments into the individual conducting style, demonstrated the rise of artistic potential. However, this was not enough for O. Bench, her curious nature sought to "support practical skills with solid theoretical knowledge" (Bermes, 2021, p. 108).

The desire to theoretically generalise her ideas prompted O. Bench to proceed with postgraduate studies at the Department of Music Theory of the Kyiv Conservatory. It is worth noting that the foundation of future scientific work was laid in the Lviv Conservatory by successful reports at all-Ukrainian scientific conferences (Odesa, Kyiv). During her postgraduate studies, she won 2<sup>nd</sup> place at the All-Union Scientific Conference in Kazan (Tatarstan), which was chaired by M. Tarakanov.

She wrote her dissertation on "Choral Culture of Ukrainians in the Aspect of Performing Folklore" under the supervision of professors O. Murzina and N. Horiukhina, successfully defended it in 1990, receiving the PhD degree in Art Studies. Since then, she has been engaged in scientific work, she wrote more than 100 articles, the subject of which impresses with the breadth of interests and awareness in the field of music and culture.

Success in the scientific and conducting spheres, communication with well-known scientists and musicians expanded the intellectual and creative horizons of O. Bench, and at the same time stimulated her to reach new heights. And this became an important factor for the invitation to work at the Kyiv Conservatory. Olga Bench went from being a teacher to a professor, taught conducting, and lecture courses, worked with the student choir side by side with P. Muravskiy.

Having sufficient potential, O. Bench successfully combines pedagogical activities with scientific and performing ones. An important step in the creative realization of the conductor was the founding of the chamber choir "Ukrainian Singing" in the early 90's. The group presented and popularised the best examples of national choral literature in Ukraine and abroad. Bench together with this choir implemented a number of art projects: they did voice-over for the feature documentaries *Journey to the lost past* and *Hustynia*, prepare two author's concert programmes. Under the direction of O. Bench, I. Sonevtskyi's "Prayer songs" were performed by People's Artist of Ukraine M. Baiko and the National Orchestra of Organ and Chamber Music of Ukraine; V. Kaminskyi's oratorio "Go. Cry. I'm calling..." for the soloists, reader, mixed choir and orchestra using Metropolitan Andrii Sheptytskyi's texts in a poetic adaptation by I. Kalynets, voiced by the choir and orchestra of the National Music Academy of Ukraine. In these compositions, O. Bench fully revealed the artistic potential of music, encrypted in the author's texts. And the choral interpretations reflected the semantic significance of the presented works.

O. Bench-scientist revealed the issues of the development of Ukrainian musical culture, musical performance, ethnomusicology, folklore studies, dialectology, musical biographical studies in numerous publications. 2002 became the most fruitful year, two

fundamental scientific works were published: the manual “Ukrainian choral singing. Updating the custom tradition” and the monograph “Pavlo Muravskiy: the phenomenon of one life”. In the first, the author focuses on “the need to preserve historical and folklore traditions and traditions of national choral singing against the background of comprehensive globalisation” (Mahalis, 2018, p. 193), in the second — for the first time during the maestro’s lifetime reveals the life and work of an outstanding Ukrainian choral conductor, whose life is “a manifestation of the height of the human spirit, and his creative work is an organic part of the centuries — old tradition of Ukrainian choral singing” (Bench, 2002, p. 5).

An important stage in the creative biography of O. Bench was her work in the music editorial offices of Ukrainian Radio and Television, Radio Liberty, where for many years she was the author and host of the programmes: *Choral singing of Ukrainians, Family, Let’s not shy away — let’s confess, Saturday meetings*; the TV project *Sunny clarinets*, which task was to popularise folk talents of different regions of Ukraine. Their genre and thematic range are impressive, which encouraged listeners to treat the national as an eternal and fruitful source of creativity, directed them to national self-awareness and the search for spiritual foundations. These radio and TV programmes demonstrated the general and musical erudition of the author, the desire to share her views for educational purposes. They had a wide audience because they met its needs.

The acquired life, pedagogical and creative experience allowed Olga Bench to become an expert of programmes initiated by charitable foundations. So, in the 90s, she became a member of the competition commission, an expert of the programme “Transformation of humanitarian education in Ukraine” of the International Renaissance Foundation and the Ministry of Education of Ukraine. The main aim of the programme was to support the humanisation of the educational industry through the development and implementation of textbooks and manuals focused on the values of Ukrainian and World Culture.

The significant achievements in the field of culture, conscious civic and active life positions, leadership qualities of the activist were noticed, and in 2005 by the decree of the President of Ukraine V. Yushchenko, O. Bench was appointed to the post of Deputy Minister of Culture and Arts of Ukraine. Olha Bench’s responsibilities included issues related to music, theatre and fine arts, library and museum affairs. She also dealt with the issues of unique historical and cultural monuments, highly professional art groups, talented folk artists, as well as museums and theatres, in particular their financial support. It was not an easy job, O. Bench had to solve various problems, and each time she tried to listen, help, and make the right decision. Despite the workload, irregular working hours, administrative work brought pleasure, because she managed to implement a number of initiatives, support creative teams, and focus on priority areas of development in various spheres of culture, etc. “Six years of work in the civil service, combined with pedagogical work at the Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine, only added the experience that allowed her to fully use the intellectual potential” (Bermes, 2021, p. 110).

O. Bench’s numerous duties (socio-administrative, pedagogical) did not distract her from creative and scientific research. All this, combined with her ability to set high standards for herself and surrounding people, brought fruitful results that were noticed and appreciated. Thus, in 2010, by order of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, she was



appointed Consul General of Ukraine in the city of Presov. Olha Bench was responsible for the issues of Ukraine's foreign policy, protection of its national interests, the rights and interests of Ukrainian citizens and legal entities living in the Slovak Republic. "In recent years, the information and propaganda work aimed at disseminating knowledge about Ukraine has been the first and main priority in the work of the Consulate General of Ukraine in Presov," notes O. Bench (2020, p. 77).

Understanding that culture, as a tool for promoting Ukraine's foreign policy interests, shapes its image in the international arena, the Consul General supports it with a representation of cultural achievements. To this end, she organises artistic events to support the positive image of Ukrainians, establish an intercultural dialogue. O. Bench invites mobile Ukrainian performing groups (vocal and choral, instrumental, dance) to Slovakia, which promote examples of national culture at a high level. The audience liked their concert programmes, they "actualised the unique Ukrainian national cultural product in the Slovak environment" (Bermes, 2021, p. 110).

At the initiative of the Consulate General, many cultural events were held, the main ones being: the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Taras Shevchenko with the opening of a memorial plaque in the honour of the geniuses of Ukrainian and Slovak literature — Taras Shevchenko and P. J. Safarik at the University of Kosice; the celebration of important state holidays — Independence Day, Constitution Day of Ukraine, etc.

As the head of the Consulate General of Ukraine in Presov she had a lot of responsibilities. This is close cooperation with Ukrainian educational, cultural and public organisations of Eastern Slovakia, lectures, meetings with public officials and cultural figures, etc. O. Bench maintained contacts with the staff of the Department of Ukrainian language and literature at Pryashiv University, the Taras Shevchenko Joint School-Gymnasium in Presov, and schools in Humenne and Jarabina. The Consul General's attention was also focused on the activities of the Union of Ruthenian-Ukrainians, the Association of Ukrainianists, and the Taras Shevchenko Scientific Society, the Union of Ukrainian Writers of Slovakia, the Centre of Ukrainian culture in Presov, which carried out active cultural and educational work and with the help of which a number of cultural and artistic projects with a dominant Ukrainian segment were implemented.

To disseminate knowledge about Ukraine and the Ukrainian people, their traditions, and rich cultural heritage, O. Bench hosted thematic programmes at the regional branch of Slovak television RTVS in Kosice, prepared articles for the Slovak print media, and participated in the programmes of the Ukrainian editorial office of Slovak radio. The activist's duties also included meetings with school principals, village heads, where Ukrainians studied and lived, who needed the attention, help and support of the consulate.

In Slovakia, O. Bench's range of research interests expanded, as she gained access to archives and libraries, and was able to study and reveal Ukrainian-Slovak cultural ties more deeply, including in a comparative aspect. Thus, the scientist carefully collected many little-known facts, worked on the issue of "Taras Shevchenko and Slovakia", in particular, such components: the relationship of T. Shevchenko and P. J. Safarik, the first edition of "Kobzar" in 1876, which is stored in the funds of the Presov State Scientific Library; the works of Slovak scientists M. Nevrlí and M. Molnár are analysed; the personal archive of the outstanding scholar of Ukrainian and Slavic studies, academician of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine M. Mushynka is characterised

as a reflection of the active and fruitful long-term scientific activity of an extraordinary person, etc.

For the recognition of Ukraine by the international community, highlighting its place and role in Europe and the world, O. Bench gave lectures to students of the Universities of Presov and Kosice, the Academy of Arts in Banská Bystrica, rethinking the historical experience of nation-building, revealing the potential of material and spiritual values of Ukrainians, spreading cultural artefacts. It should be noted that the scientist made reports on current topics at scientific conferences, published articles in the journals of these educational institutions. Thus, Slovaks gradually learned about the diversity of the spiritual culture of Ukrainians — a determining factor in preserving their national identity. Thanks to the systematic and planned work of the Consul General, it was possible to partially bridge the information gap and change the vector of perception of Ukraine by Slovaks.

An integral element of innovative development of higher education is International Cooperation, which enables universities to develop dynamically and integrate into the European and global educational space. O. Bench managed to establish cooperation between higher education institutions in Ukraine and Slovakia: Presov University, P. J. Safarik Kosice University with Yu. Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University and Kremenchuk National University; Presov University with Ternopil National Economic University; Kosice Technical University with Lviv Polytechnic National University, etc. Such processes have significantly intensified the work on student exchange and the study of European educational experience.

Despite the fact that the range of services provided by the Consulate General of Ukraine in Presov was quite wide (interaction, assistance, support for Ukrainian citizens, in particular consular and legal protection, solving their problems, preparation of documents, information and explanatory work, control and supervisory functions, etc.) and many issues related to the observance of the rights and freedoms of Ukrainian citizens were successfully resolved, still in 2014 The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, optimizing a number of diplomatic institutions abroad, liquidated the consular office.

Five years as Consul General, close cooperation with Slovak statesmen and Ukrainian community of Presov, appearances on various channels of Slovak television and radio, open lectures in higher education institutions, meetings with students of Ukrainian schools, active participation in the cultural life of Slovaks and Ukrainians — this is only a small part of the events in which O. Bench took part, always open to dialogue.

It should be emphasised that O. Bench never forgot about her Lemko roots, often visited her father's land, and dreamed of telling the general public about the beauty of its nature and talented fellow countrymen. And she succeeded: the Slovak television RTVS made in Poland, where her family lived for a long time until 1945, a short film "In the Footsteps of Ancestors", which tells the story of the Bench family, the art of Lemko carvers.

As a diplomat, scientist, active cultural and public figure, O. Bench had a good reputation in Slovakia. Her experience was in demand, and Olga Bench was invited to the position of the professor at the Catholic University in Ruzomberok. Since 2014, Professor O. Bench has been the guarantor of the direction of musical art of the faculty of education in this institution of Higher Education. To this day, she continues to work in Slovakia, introduce elements of Ukrainian methodology into the European experience



of art education, while introducing segments of European education into the educational process of Ukrainian universities.

At the end of 2018, O. Bench headed the Municipal Institution of Higher Education Kyiv Academy of Arts. Now it is the only one in Ukraine that implements the concept of continuing art education in its activities, in particular, in the following links: school — college — higher education. In recent years, the work of the art education institution has been brought into the compliance with the requirements of the current legislation in the educational, financial, and economic spheres. This made it possible to rename the Kyiv children's Academy of Arts to the Municipal Institution of Higher Education Kyiv Academy of Arts, and to reorganise an inseparable unit — the M. Chemberzhi Kyiv children's Academy of Arts into a specialised art school (Lyceum), and so on. This unique institution has a powerful scientific and pedagogical staff, well-known specialists in the field of music, stage and fine arts, which aims to educate a spiritually rich person.

O. Bench is the guardian of artefacts of the Lemko culture, understands the value of the historical memory of the people, in which cultural heritage she lives. She studies the history and culture of the Lemkos, is fluent in the Lemko dialect, and knows many Lemko folk songs. O. Bench assembled a collection of carvings of his father and folk masters of the Lemko region — representatives of the Rymanow Art School of sculptural and flat carving, which originated in Poland at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

She is recognised for her knowledge of the Lemko culture. That is why in the summer of 2018, the Taras Shevchenko Canadian Scientific Society invited Professor O. Bench to share her knowledge about the uniqueness of the Lemko culture. The scientist presented reports that were distinguished by well-thought-out structural architectonics: “The phenomenon of Lemko culture through the prism of folk songs and composers' work” and “The traditions of sculptural and flat folk carvings” in Toronto and Montreal. The lectures aroused the interest of Ukrainian scholars in Canada, and the material offered to the students laid the foundation for a comprehensive understanding of the Lemko phenomenon.

O. Bench never forgets her native Hutysko (she is a welcome guest there — I. B.), and she often writes about it in her scientific research. After all, the bearers of the “living” song and carving of the authentic Lemko tradition still live in Hutysko — the representatives of the historical memory of the people, its genetic code.

She is organised, business-like, good-tempered, and responsible. A sharp mind is harmoniously combined with a soft character, subtle emotionality. O. Bench's achievements are the result of hard work and perseverance, motivated by a strong desire to serve the native people, to demonstrate the deep ties between Ukrainian and world cultures. Creative and intellectual potential, talent, and hard work gave impetus to rapid growth, inspiration in music, science, administrative and diplomatic activities.

## Conclusions

The determining factor in the formation of O. Bench's personality was family upbringing and traditions based on deep national principles, musical environment, a number of talented teachers, who taught the future cultural figure. A spiritually rich world and high national consciousness, active citizenship have become the foundation

of personal development and creative realisation in the musical, educational, diplomatic, and administrative spheres. Olga Bench's successful cultural activity is inextricably linked with educational and cultural processes in the modern Ukrainian area, the formation of a positive image of Ukraine in the world.

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**КУЛЬТУРОТВОРЧА ДІЯЛЬНІСТЬ ОЛЬГИ БЕНЧ: ДИРИГЕНТКА, МУЗИКОЗНАВИЦЯ, ПРОФЕСОРКА, ГРОМАДСЬКА ДІЯЧКА**

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Мета статті — розкрити головні етапи життя та діяльності відомої української культурної діячки, музикознавиці, диригентки, педагога, дипломатки Ольги Бенч. Використано такі методи дослідження: біографічний, системний, інтерв'ювання, що дали можливість увиразнити різнобічну діяльність людини, яка вболіває за стан національної культури та освіти, імідж України у світі. Наукова новизна. Оригінальність роботи полягає в тому, що вперше розкрито життєвий і творчий шлях О. Бенч у реаліях сьогодення. В науковий обіг введено матеріали дослідження професійної, наукової, педагогічної, творчої, адміністративної діяльності О. Бенч, що формує культурну ауру позитивних ідеалів, важливих для сучасної ситуації в українському соціумі. Висновки. Визначальними чинниками формування особистості О. Бенч стали родинне виховання та традиції, що ґрунтувалися на глибинних національних засадах, музичне середовище, гроно талановитих педагогів, у яких навчалася майбутня культурна діячка. Духовно багатий світ і висока національна свідомість, активна громадянська позиція стали фундаментом особистісного розвитку і творчої реалізації в музично-освітній, дипломатичній, адміністративній царинах. Життя та діяльність О. Бенч — приклад служіння національній культурі, нерозривно пов'язаний з освітніми та культурними процесами у сучасному українському ареалі, формуванням позитивного іміджу України у світі.

*Ключові слова:* Ольга Бенч; життєдіяльність; культурна діячка; дипломатка; диригентка

