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**PEDAGOGICAL CREATIVITY  
OF OLEKSANDR KOLOSOK  
IN FOLK CHOREOGRAPHY  
SPECIALIST TRAINING**

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The purpose of the article is to highlight the teaching practice of O. Kolosok and identify its impact on the development of Ukrainian folk stage dance and the choreographic culture in Ukraine. Research methodology. To achieve this purpose, general scientific methods of theoretical and empirical levels such as analysis and generalisation of scientific and theoretical foundations of researches, logical approach, interview method were used. Conclusions on O. Kolosok's teaching peculiarities are made based on the analysis of scientific sources, pedagogical, methodological and creative achievements of the artist, our own experience of communicating with him, memories of colleagues and students. Scientific novelty. The article highlights O. Kolosok's teaching practice at art universities, analyses the teacher's work on the Ukrainian Folk Stage Dance discipline, introduces in scientific use materials of interviews with the teacher and his students and colleagues. Conclusions. The teaching practice of Professor O. Kolosok was aimed at developing the traditions of folk dance in a harmonious and logical combination with expressive means of literary art and the best achievements of the contemporary world performing culture. Thanks to his efforts, future choreographers began to study the Ukrainian Folk Stage Dance discipline. The methodological developments by the folk dance theorist and practice O. Kolosok are now used to teach choreography at higher education institutions of Ukraine. His students' engagement in mastering the choreographer's skills was multi-faceted, truly professional, and choreographer-director thinking reached the deep sources of folk dance art. O. Kolosok's long-term teaching practice was highly fruitful, so today, many young choreographers and dance teachers whom he nurtured owe him their high professional level.

*Keywords:* Oleksandr Kolosok; Ukrainian folk stage dance; choreographer's skills; folk choreography

**Introduction**

The critical component in the specialist training in folk choreography is their comprehensive mastery of both practical skills and theoretical knowledge about the formation and development of folk stage dance. For almost half a century, Honoured Artist of Ukraine, Professor Oleksandr Kolosok (1932–2020) introduced his scientific and methodical and creative developments, ideas, plans at art universities. His scientific and pedagogical range includes the creation and improvement of professional disciplines, the development of the author's methods of teaching them, the preparation of textbooks and curricula, methodological recommendations for choreography teachers and students. However, the conducted scientific research has shown that O. Kolosok's teaching practice has not yet been the subject of scientific research. It gives grounds to speak about the relevance of the chosen topic.

*Recent research and publications analysis.* General information about O. Kolosok is provided in V. Turkevich's handbook "Choreography in Ukraine in Personalities" (Turkevych, 1999). It was owing to this paper that O. Kolosok's name was first introduced into the bibliographic discipline. The reference book "Masters of Folk Stage Dance", compiled by O. Kolosok himself, presents the artist's biography, a list of his artistic achievements, creative works and scientific works briefly (Kolosok, 2009). Unfortunately, Oleksandr Kolosok's pedagogical work was neglected by scientists.

Scientific novelty. The article highlights O. Kolosok's teaching practice at art universities, analyses the teacher's work on the Ukrainian Folk Stage Dance discipline, introduces in scientific use materials of interviews with the teacher and his students and colleagues.

**Purpose of the article**

The purpose of the article is to highlight O. P. Kolosok's teaching practice and reveal its influence on the development of Ukrainian folk stage dance and choreographic culture in Ukraine in general; to find out the features

of Oleksandr Kolosok's teaching skills in his work with students, future choreographers, to characterise his work on the creation of the Ukrainian Folk Stage Dance discipline.

Research methodology. To achieve this purpose, general scientific methods of theoretical and empirical levels such as analysis and generalisation of scientific and theoretical foundations of researches, logical approach, interview method were used. Conclusions on O. Kolosok's teaching peculiarities are made based on the analysis of scientific sources, pedagogical, methodological and creative achievements of the artist, our own experience of communicating with him, memories of colleagues and students.

### Main research material

Oleksandr Kolosok is an Honoured Artist of Ukraine, winner of international competitions, the professor who, with his performing, choreographic and scientific and teaching work, has made a significant contribution to the development of not only Ukrainian folk stage dance but also higher choreographic education in Ukraine in general. Due to the efforts of the famous artists and leading cultural figures of Ukraine, such as Professor O. Kolosok, the first choreography department was established in our country. It started working in 1970 at the Kyiv State Institute of Culture of Korniyuchuk (now Kyiv National University of Culture and Arts (hereinafter referred to as KNUCA). With its scientific and methodological, and practical activities, the newly created department laid a solid foundation for developing the educational system for training performers, choreographers, and later ballet masters at the universities.

The total O. Kolosok's creative path is 64 years, the experience of his pedagogical work is 42 years. Of these, 30 years are in KNUCA (1973–2002), and 15 years are in the National Academy of Culture and Arts Management (2000–2015).

O. Kolosok started his teaching practice in 1973, after finishing his career as a ballet dancer in G. Veryovka Ukrainian National Honoured Academic Folk Choir (1958–1970). The work in the choir was a critical stage and, at the same time, a bright milestone in his professional performing activity, which began in the State Folk Dance Ensemble of the Ukrainian SSR (1951–1952), and then continued in the Song and Dance Ensemble of the Central Group of Forces in Baden (Austria), where the young man served in the army (1952–1955).

Oleksandr Kolosok came to work at the Department of Choreography with the title of Honoured Artist of Ukraine (1967) and a higher education diploma, which he received at the Directing Department of the Kyiv Institute of Culture. He started teaching as a senior teacher, then became an associate professor (since 1982). Since 1996 he is a professor at the Department of Folk Choreography of Kyiv State Institute of Culture.

Oleksandr Kolosok had a responsible and challenging mission to start developing the Ukrainian Folk Stage Dance new professional discipline. The need to create this subject was due to the professionalisation of folk art, as a result of which folk stage dance was gradually formed from folk dance. Therefore, having many years of practice and a deep understanding of the achievements of leading theorists and practitioners of Ukrainian folk choreography, O. Kolosok developed and justified a new discipline for teaching at higher educational establishments.

S. Zubatov, a graduate of the Department of Choreography at the Kyiv State Institute of Culture of Korniyuchuk, and now an Associate Professor of the Department of Choreography at Kyiv National University of Culture and Arts, recalled the times when Oleksandr Kolosok started working as a teacher and taught Ukrainian folk stage dance for his discipline (Fig. 1).

“At that time, this subject was significantly different from what is currently taught at the university. The curricula were still being created, there was no clear teaching methodology, and the subject itself was studied for only two and a half years. The difficulty was that the material on Ukrainian dance was not presented by regions, almost no Ukrainian terms were used in the titles of movements. It is clear that it is always difficult to start. Therefore, Oleksandr Kolosok and we, the students, were always in search,” recalls S. Zubatov (2002). According to S. Zubatov, “the beginning of the Ukrainian Folk Stage Dance discipline was essential and very relevant. Folk dance in its stage form existed for a long time, but there was no theoretical basis for its study and formation as a separate subject. Therefore the creation of the methodology for teaching Ukrainian Folk Stage Dance became an urgent need” (Zubatov, 2002).

Oleksandr Kolosok felt the differences between academic folk stage dance and folklore subtly, was obsessed with the idea of creation of a stage dance of current level and did not stand still, but developed together with his students, — so says O. Kasianova, his former student, and now PhD in Art Studies, Professor,

Honoured Artist of Ukraine, about O. P. Kolosok. “Oleksandr Kolosok has never been ashamed of asking students who came from remote regions of Ukraine to show certain dance moves. He paid a lot of attention to students’ independent work. But his thematic lessons were the most memorable when all the material — at the barre, in the middle, and sketches — was devoted to one topic. For example, there was a lesson on Ukrainian rituals. It was new, challenging and fascinating at the same time,” says O. Kasianova (2002).



**Figure 1.** The 4<sup>th</sup> year students of the Department of Choreography of Kyiv State Institute of Culture, 1980. In the first row from left to right: teachers L. Tsvietkova, V. Kamin, O. Kasianova and O. Kolosok; in the upper row, the fourth from the left is S. Zubatov. Source: the author’s archive

As we can see, the students of O. P. Kolosok are unanimous in assessing their teacher’s work. They all have a high opinion of the teacher’s professional level, teaching style and personal qualities.

During his work at the University of Culture, O. Kolosok prepared many curricula on Ukrainian Folk Stage Dance, which he constantly supplemented and improved. He was convinced that in the learning process, students should master exercises that have not only a material basis — movements, but, above all, spiritual content, plot basis, because the practice of outstanding masters of Ukrainian folk dance convinces that meaningless choreography does not exist (Kasianova, 2002).

“The author summarised his theoretical and practical experience of teaching the Ukrainian Folk Stage Dance discipline in the educational and methodical manual “Exercise Structure at the Bar based on Ukrainian Folk Stage Style”. The achievements of outstanding predecessors — P. Virskyi, M. Bolotov, A. Hume-niuk, A. Kalinin, V. Vronskyi, V. Petryk, K. Baloh, D. Lastivka, K. Vasylenko and other figures of Ukrainian choreography were taken into account in the manual” (Gutnyk, 2020). This manual was republished in 2001.

The seminars conducted by O. Kolosok in all regions of Ukraine and the diaspora — for Ukrainians in Canada, Australia, France, America, as well as many years of teaching work confirmed the validity of theoretical generalisations and the fruitfulness of methodological developments covered in the manual on Ukrainian dance.

In O. Kolosok’s work, a collector and serious researcher of the pearls of Ukrainian folk art, the elements of the classics acquired national character due to their harmonious, logical combination, as well as rethinking on the basis of his many years of fieldwork in Central and Carpathian Ukraine. In his manual, the author emphasises the need to develop “a new methodology for preparing the artist’s performing apparatus, including the stage of his full stage load. This methodology should be based on and follow from the specifics of folk art, which only needs to be carefully observed, studied and researched” (Kolosok, 2001).

The exercise at the bar created by the author is not limited only to the mechanical performance of movements and technical exercises. Still, it aims to develop creative imagination, the transmission of national colouring, revealing the nature of folk dance in different regions of Ukraine, the integrity and richness of its artistic and aesthetic content. This is also facilitated by analysing the language and style features of Ukrainian folk dance in different regions of Ukraine, the reproduction of its specific features in the corresponding graphic images and explanatory descriptions made in the manual.

Over time, the Ukrainian Folk Stage Dance discipline, which the Honoured Artist of Ukraine first taught, Professor O. Kolosok and Honoured Artist of Ukraine, formerly the artist of P. Virsky Ukrainian National Folk Dance Ensemble, M. Motkov, at the Department of Folk Choreography of Kyiv National University of Culture and Arts received a new name — Theory and Methodology of Teaching Ukrainian Folk Stage Dance, taking into account its tasks and content. Further, the discipline was developed and improved by the Honoured Artist of Ukraine, PhD in Pedagogy, Professor S. Zabredovskiy, People's Artist of Ukraine V. Virska and Associate Professor S. Zubatov.

Oleksandr Kolosok taught Ukrainian Folk Stage Dance for nine years and then proceeded to the Choreography discipline, which is considered one of the most difficult in the field of higher choreographic education. This opinion is confirmed by Professor R. Zakharov's words: "Only a teacher who has considerable experience in creative work has the right to teach this discipline. Only the one who has accumulated his experience can pass it on, who has something to tell his students, who has reason to build classes on specific examples of creative and staged work" (Zakharov, 1983).

O. Kolosok guided future choreographers to professional skills, generously sharing his knowledge, skills and experience. Then, under the supervision of an experienced teacher with a high level of professional skills, students created individual sketches, dances, and choreographic compositions of large forms.

"Oleksandr Kolosok paid special attention to the development of the student's artistic intuition, to the disclosure of creative individuality, to the identification of their choreographer's style. Of great importance was the manner of communication between the teacher and students, the ability to create a relaxed atmosphere of creative daring, when everyone can express their thoughts, express themselves as a personality" (Gutnyk, 2020).

At the same time, O. Kolosok did not remain indifferent to the students' problems, their lives; he never put himself above and did not stay aside, but at the same time did not descend to familiarity or over-familiarity. Oleksandr Kolosok was not only an experienced, demanding teacher, a sincere and frank person — he always remained a wise tutor, senior fallow and adviser. And the pledge of success of future choreographers is in such communication. It was the secret of O. Kolosok's pedagogical skills. This conclusion can be drawn from our experience of studying with the professor and communicating with him. This is also evidenced by the results of a survey conducted at one time among the students of KNUCA, both full-time students and correspondence departments. All interviewed students, describing their teacher as a person and a tutor and evaluating the methods of his work and the manner of communication with students, gave him only the best reviews unanimously.

During the years of teaching, O. Kolosok has prepared curricula for the Choreography discipline, textbooks and methodological developments, in particular, *The Search for a Figurative Solution to a Choreographic Composition* (Kolosok, 1997), *The Peculiarities of Choreographer Work in a Folk Choir* (Kolosok, 1999), *The Stylistic Features of Dances of the Carpathian Region* (Kolosok, 2002b) and *Choreographer Skills: Lecture Notes for Students of the subject field 6.020202 "Choreography"* (Kolosok, 2015). When developing curricula, as when creating the manual, the author focused not only on his experience as the director but also on the best achievements of the national choreographic culture and pedagogy.

Their effectiveness confirmed O. Kolosok's theoretical postulates in his practical work as a choreographer. It is evidenced by his choreographic productions, embodied by the students of the Kyiv Institute of Culture. In particular, O. Kolosok staged a number of dances for the performances prepared by students: *An Irkutsk Story* and *My Poor Marat* by A. Arbuzov, *A May Night* by M. Hohol, *A Zaporozhian Beyond the Danube* by S. Hulak-Artemovskiy, *The Courtship at Goncharivka* by H. Kvitka-Osnovianenko, *After Revision* by M. Kropyvnytskyi, *Wedding in Malinovka* by B. Aleksandrov, *The Snow Maiden* by M. Ostrovkyi, *Story of a Real Man* by B. Polovyi, *Colleagues* by E. Riazanov, *The Drummer* by O. Salynskiy, *In Fashion and Gypsy Aza* by M. Starytskyi, *I Believe* by V. Shukshyn, *Nazar Stodolia* by T. Shevchenko. In addition, students performed many choreographic productions not only in Ukraine but also abroad.

Working on the arrangement of folk dances, the director did not duplicate classical samples, but created his dance version, found new moves that enriched the choreographic images. O. Kolosok is a person who knew the national choreography perfectly, and therefore each of his works was a vivid expression of the national character in dance. At the same time, music, dance, and colourful costumes created a single harmonious performance. The untiring, extremely demanding teacher experimented boldly, created large-scale, innovative choreographic forms and multi-faceted plans. At the same time, he understood — and tried to make his students understand it too — that only a constant desire to reach the heights of professionalism, self-sacrificing, exhausting work on every movement, dynamic stroke and emotional nuance can become the key to the highest sounding of dance (Fig. 2).



**Figure 2.** The teachers are in the centre from left to right: Ye. Zaitsev, K. Vasylenko (Head of the Department of Choreography of the Kyiv State Institute of Culture) and O. Kolosok with students after another concert performance, the 1980s. Source: the author's archive

Oleksandr Kolosok has a whole series of productions, generations of performers under his belt who owe him their current achievements and skills. A competent and qualified specialist, an experienced teacher, choreographer O. Kolosok has trained hundreds of professional dancers, directors and leaders of dance groups. Later, some of them worked with him side by side, were his colleagues. Many graduates of Professor O. Kolosok have reached heights in their creative and scientific activities, have honorary titles and awards (Fig. 3)



**Figure 3.** The first graduates of the Department of Choreography of Kyiv State Institute of Culture with teachers five years after graduation, 1979. O. Kolosok is the second in the second row from left to right. Source: the author's archive

O. Kolosok also participated in the professional training of international students, worked with youth who came from different countries: France, Canada, and the United States to exchange experience with Ukrainian colleagues. And the participants of such events always highly appreciated the professionalism and goodwill of the teachers, including O. Kolosok.

### Conclusions

With his energy and tireless work, O. Kolosok made a significant contribution to the development of folk dance. Carefully preserving the pearls of Ukrainian dance folklore, Oleksandr Kolosok was looking for ways of more profound and more organic penetration of folk and stage art with inspiration and selflessly. Developing the folk dance traditions, he simultaneously used the expressive means of academic art and the achievements of the performing contemporary culture.

Thanks to O. Kolosok's efforts, future choreographers began to study the Ukrainian Folk Stage Dance discipline, and later many years of practice and detailed work on the theoretical foundations of folk dance resulted in the methodological developments on which the teaching of choreography at higher education establishments of Ukraine is based now. His students' engagement in mastering the choreographer's skills was multi-faceted, truly professional, and choreographer-director thinking reached the deep sources of folk dance art.

Honoured Artist of Ukraine, Professor Oleksandr Kolosok, a talented artist who devoted his life to serving Ukrainian culture and folk choreography, passed away last year, leaving behind entire generations of students and followers. However, O. Kolosok's long-term teaching practice was highly fruitful, so today, many young choreographers and teachers-choreographers whom he nurtured owe him their high professional level.

Prospects for further research consist of a comprehensive analysis of the scientific and methodological works of the theorist and practitioner of folk choreography O. Kolosok.

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**ПЕДАГОГІЧНА ТВОРЧІСТЬ  
ОЛЕКСАНДРА КОЛОСКА  
У ЦАРИНІ ПІДГОТОВКИ ФАХІВЦІВ  
НАРОДНОГО ХОРЕОГРАФІЧНОГО  
МИСТЕЦТВА**

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Мета статті — висвітлення педагогічної діяльності О. П. Колоска та виявлення її впливу на розвиток українського народно-сценічного танцю і хореографічної культури України в цілому. Методологія дослідження. Для досягнення мети використовувались загальнонаукові методи теоретичного та емпіричного рівнів: аналіз та узагальнення науково-теоретичних основ дослідження, логічний метод, метод інтерв'ю. Висновки щодо особливостей педагогічної діяльності О. П. Колоска зроблено на основі аналізу наукових джерел, педагогічних, методичних і творчих доробків митця, власного досвіду спілкування з ним, спогадів колег і студентів. Наукова новизна. У статті вперше висвітлено педагогічну діяльність О. Колоска у мистецьких закладах вищої освіти; проаналізовано роботу педагога над створенням фахової дисципліни «Український народно-сценічний танець»; введено у науковий обіг матеріали інтерв'ю з педагогом та його студентами і колегами. Висновки. Педагогічна діяльність професора О. П. Колоска була спрямована на розвиток традицій народного танцю в гармонійному й логічному поєднанні з виразними засобами академічного мистецтва та кращими здобутками сучасної світової виконавської культури. Завдяки його зусиллям майбутні хореографи почали вивчати дисципліну «Український народно-сценічний танець», а на методичних розробках теоретика і практика народного танцю О. Колоска нині ґрунтується викладання хореографічного мистецтва в закладах вищої освіти України. Його робота зі студентами над опануванням мистецтва балетмейстера була багатогранною, по-справжньому професійною, а балетмейстерсько-режисерське мислення сягало глибинних джерел народного танцювального мистецтва. Багаторічна педагогічна діяльність Олександра Колоска була надзвичайно плідною, тож нині йому завдячують своїм високим професійним рівнем чимало виплеканих ним молодих балетмейстерів і педагогів-хореографів.

*Ключові слова:* Олександр Колосок; український народно-сценічний танець; мистецтво балетмейстера; народне хореографічне мистецтво

**ПЕДАГОГИЧЕСКОЕ ТВОРЧЕСТВО  
АЛЕКСАНДРА КОЛОСКА  
В СФЕРЕ ПОДГОТОВКИ  
СПЕЦИАЛИСТОВ НАРОДНОГО  
ХОРЕОГРАФИЧЕСКОГО ИСКУССТВА**

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Цель статьи — освещение педагогической деятельности А. П. Колоска и выявление ее влияния на развитие украинского народно-сценического танца и хореографической культуры Украины в целом. Методология исследования. Для достижения цели использовались общенаучные методы теоретического и эмпирического уровней: анализ и обобщение научно-теоретических основ исследования, логический метод, метод интервью. Выводы об особенностях педагогической деятельности А. П. Колоска сделаны на основе анализа научных источников, его педагогических, методических и творческих работ, личного опыта общения с ним, воспоминаний его коллег и бывших студентов. Научная новизна. В статье впервые освещается педагогическая деятельность А. Колоска в высших учебных заведениях, проанализирована работа педагога над созданием профессиональной дисциплины «Украинский народно-сценический танец»; а также введено в научный оборот материалы интервью с А. Колоском, его бывшими студентами и коллегами. Выводы. Педагогическая деятельность профессора А. П. Колоска была направлена на развитие традиций народного танца в гармоничном и логическом сочетании с выразительными средствами академического искусства и лучшими достижениями современной мировой исполнительской культуры. Благодаря его усилиям будущие хореографы начали изучать дисциплину «Украинский народно-сценический танец», а на методических разработках теоретика и практика народного танца А. Колоска основывается преподавание хореографического искусства в высших учебных заведениях Украины. Его работа со студентами над освоением искусства балетмейстера была многогранной, по-настоящему профессиональной, а балетмейстерское и режиссерское мышление питалось из глубинных источников народного танцевального искусства. Многолетняя педагогическая деятельность Александра Колоска была чрезвычайно плодотворной, поэтому на сегодняшний день ему обязаны своим высоким профессиональным уровнем немало воспитанных им молодых балетмейстеров и педагогов-хореографов.

*Ключевые слова:* Александр Колосок; украинский народно-сценический танец; искусство балетмейстера; народное хореографическое искусство