

## FEMALE CONDUCTORS' CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHORAL ART IN GALICIA

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### INTRODUCTION

The problem of studying and generalizing the contribution of women to the development of the Ukrainian music culture in musicology has recently caused great scientific interest. Up to this time there were only sporadic attempts to study the role of women in music art, such as the article by Melaniia Nyzhankivska<sup>1</sup> “A Ukrainian Woman and Music”, a number of articles by Vasyl Vytvytskyi<sup>2,3</sup> about women composers and musicologists, Stefaniia Pavlyshyn's<sup>4</sup> ideas about fate of female musicians in her monograph on the first Ukrainian woman composer Stephaniia Turkevych-Lukianovych, the dissertation by Oksana Bobechko<sup>5</sup> on bandura feminization, etc. Recently published works of Iryna Bermes<sup>6</sup> and Oksana Frait<sup>7</sup> prove the perspectiveness of the topic in question. However the problems of

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<sup>1</sup> Нижанківська М. Українська жінка і музика. *Назустріч*. 1934, Ч. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Витвицький В. Жінки в українському музикознавстві. *Музикознавчі праці. Публіцистика*. Львів, 2003. С. 233.

<sup>3</sup> Витвицький, Композитори і композиторки. *Музикознавчі праці. Публіцистика*. Львів, 2003. С. 221–223.

<sup>4</sup> Павлишин С. Перша українська композиторка Стефанія Туркевич-Лісовська-Лукианович. Львів : БаК, 2004, 160 с.

<sup>5</sup> Бобечко О. Бандурне мистецтво ХХ століття в контексті процесів фемінізації: дис. ... канд. мистецтвознавства: спец. 17.00.03 – музичне мистецтво / О. Бобечко. Львів, 2014. 291 с.

<sup>6</sup> Бермес І. Жінка-диригент: спроба характеристики успішності. *Вісник Національної академії керівних кадрів культури і мистецтв : наук. журнал*. К. : Міленіум, 2017. № 1. С. 63–68.

<sup>7</sup> Фрайт О. Ментальні та історико-суспільні чинники музично-мистецької діяльності українського жіноцтва. *Актуальні питання гуманітарних наук : міжвузівський збірник наукових праць молодих вчених Дрогобицького державного педагогічного університету імені Івана Франка. Вип. 19*. Дрогобич, 2018. С. 51–55.

significance of women's creativity in certain areas of national music art or its areal and chronologically limited specificity of the development, such as choir female conductors in Galicia until 1939, have not been properly studied so far, therefore they can be considered as relevant.

It is well known that the Ukrainian choral culture is an original artistic phenomenon, famous in the world due to its centuries-old traditions, outstanding performers, extraordinary artifacts of different times, styles and genres. Social, political and historical conditions of the struggle for independence caused the national-state motivation of the Ukrainian choral art. As a result, it has always been interpreted not only as an aesthetic factor, but also as a significant means of social unification, popularization of liberation ideas and youth upbringing. In this regard, it is worth considering the role of female conductors, who, however, not so numerous as men, contributed to the development of choral art in Galicia until 1939.

What was the activity basis of the Ukrainian women-choir conductors? At the initial stage of their appearance prevailed, as in general in the choral activity of the late nineteenth century, enthusiasm, patriotism, love for music, educational needs. At the same time, there undoubtedly was a number of other pre-dispositions of the Galician women to this creativity field.

Tangent to the female issue statements of Bohdan Tsymbalistyi (his article on the family guidance and values of the Ukrainians), as well as those of Yurii Lypa (the article “AUkrainian Woman”), provided by O. Frait<sup>8</sup>, can be considered as basic in determining mental inclinations of women to conducting activities. These researchers, in particular, emphasized on the predominance of the female element in

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<sup>8</sup> Фрайт О. Ментальні та історико-суспільні чинники музично-мистецької діяльності українського жіноцтва. *Актуальні питання гуманітарних наук : міжвузівський збірник наукових праць молодих вчених Дрогобицького державного педагогічного університету імені Івана Франка. Вип. 19.* Дрогобич, 2018. С. 52.

the Ukrainian race and national psychology, and identified such features of the Ukrainian womankind as activeness, energy, devotion to keeping family, tendency to preserving domestic and sacred traditions. They accentuated on the superior social position of a Ukrainian women in comparison to other neighboring peoples. It is known that the Ukrainian psyche is distinguished by its high cordocentricity among others.

Although universal gender attributes are sometimes denied, they are worth taking into consideration. Thus, in works of modern Western researchers it has been proved that “in general, women are less aggressive than men, more caring ..., women are more interdependent than men; they are more focused on relationships with people; they show higher indicators of conformance .... women are emotionally more sensitive, more empathic (sympathetic); they are better in decoding non-verbal emotional messages (facial expressions, gestures, poses)”<sup>9</sup>. So, the suggested observations of D. Mayers may be considered as an additional source for explanation the adequacy of the features of character and the working manner of a female conductor.

According to the researcher Ye. Strashko, the scientific, theoretical and cognitive interest in women's history in Ukraine is now at the stage of formation<sup>10</sup>. The point that attracts attention is the statement about the “cultural and national ideas” of the Ukrainian women's movement. The immanence of these ideas is particularly evident in the activities of female conductors who dealt with groups of artists and big audiences.

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<sup>9</sup> Кісь О. Етнічні гендерні стереотипи та джерела їх конструювання. *Український жіночий рух: здобутки і проблеми. Збірник наукових праць за матеріалами першої Всеукраїнської науково-практичної конференції. Вип. 1.* Дрогобич : Коло, 2002. С. 26–43.

<sup>10</sup> Страшко Є. Фемінізм і жіноча освіта в ХІХ ст. в європейському та українському вимірах (на матеріалах жіночих освітніх закладів Чернігівщини). *Український жіночий рух: здобутки і проблеми. Збірник наукових праць за матеріалами першої Всеукраїнської науково-практичної конференції. Вип. 1.* Дрогобич : Коло, 2002. С. 44–50.

Education played the decisive role in the professional promotion and self-awareness of women in general. From the second half of the nineteenth century in Europe competitions for women's rights in receiving higher education unfolded. In 1878 Ukrainian women got access to universities<sup>11</sup>. As to the musical realm, it can be stated that in Galicia, due to the establishment and functioning of the Music School in Lviv in 1849, and the Conservatory of the Galician Music Society in 1853 (in Lviv it happened earlier than in St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Kyiv), there were more professional female musicians. The conservatory of the Galician Music Society from the very first years of its existence was characterized by the multinational staff of both students and teachers. According to experts engaged in music schooling processes in the countries of the Eastern and Central Europe, Lviv was a record-holder in the number of music educational institutions in the first decades of the 20th century (approximately 70 of them functioned simultaneously in 1914)<sup>12</sup>. Also for the period from 1888 to 1913, silver and bronze medals were awarded to the best students of different specialties, among whom the majority was represented by women (e.g. Solomiia Krushelnytska was awarded twice)<sup>13</sup>.

Analysis of the process of teaching music subjects in Lviv shows that in higher educational institutions of the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (conservatories of the Galician Music Society (GMS), later – the Polish Music Society (PMS), Lviv Music Conservatory named after Karol Shymanovskyi, Music Institute named after M. Lysenko) for a long time there was no separate subject of Choral Conducting. In the conservatory of GMS there was only a course of Choral singing at the vocal

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<sup>11</sup> Субтельний О. Україна: історія. Пер. з англ. Ю. І. Шевчука. Вступна стаття С. В. Кульчицького. 2-ге вид. Київ : Либідь, 1992. С. 267.

<sup>12</sup> Л. Мазепа, Т. Мазепа. *Шлях до Музичної Академії у Львові: У 2-х т. – Львів : Сполом, 2003. Т. 2. Від Консерваторії до Академії (1939–2003). С. 125.*

<sup>13</sup> Ibidem. С. 151.

department<sup>14</sup>, taught by Vincenty Sieroslavskyi – the teacher of piano and choral singing<sup>15</sup>. In the conservatory of PMS according to the curriculum of 1911 there were such specialties as “Choral singing” and “Conducting”, which were taught for 8 years and 2 years<sup>16</sup> accordingly. At the “Opera school” of the Conservatory in 1925/26 academic years a “School of professional choir» was opened... Its purpose was to prepare students for professional work in opera and operetta theaters”<sup>17</sup>. In the conservatory booklet published in 1939, seven faculties were listed, the first one mentioned was the Faculty of theory, composition and choir and orchestra conducting (the list of the teaching staff was not provided)<sup>18</sup>. In the consolidated summary table of the of GMS and PMS conservatory teachers, in the Choral singing specialty there were the teachers of solo singing only; the specialty “Conducting” was missing, Adam Soltys was the only one listed in the table “Theoretical subjects and composition», as a teacher of the choir class<sup>19</sup>. In Lviv Music Conservatory in 1928–1929<sup>20</sup>, the subject “Conducting” was taught by Kazymyr Abratovskyi. In Ukrainian Higher Music Institute, founded in 1903 (since 1912 it was named after M. Lysenko), the specialty “Choral singing” (taught by Doctor Yevhen Forostyna) was introduced in 1913–1914 academic years<sup>21</sup>. The subject “Conducting” (choral and orchestral classes) in 1931–1939 was taught by Mykola Kolessa<sup>22</sup>.

Patriotically aware educated Galician women attempted to break the shroud of conservatism that was still dominant in their region and

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<sup>14</sup> Мазепа Л., Мазепа Т. *Шлях до Музичної Академії у Львові: У 2-х т. – Львів : Сполом, 2003. Т.2. Від Консерваторії до Академії (1939 – 2003). С. 151.*

<sup>15</sup> Ibidem. С. 150.

<sup>16</sup> Ibidem. С. 169.

<sup>17</sup> Ibidem. С. 177.

<sup>18</sup> Ibidem. С. 183.

<sup>19</sup> Ibidem. С. 194–195.

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem. С. 211.

<sup>21</sup> Ibidem. С. 239.

<sup>22</sup> Ibidem. С. 254.

gave the women a subordinate role in the family and in the society as a whole. They strove to “lead the woman across the threshold of her own house”, saying: “Let's be the citizens in the four walls of our homes, let's be mothers in the public life – that's our understanding of motherhood, and that's our – so to speak – political program of equality”<sup>23</sup>. The leaders of the Galician women, including Nataliia Kobrynska, Kostyantyna Malytska, Milena Rudnytska and others, advised women-mothers to “teach the children in the family environment the conviction that their life is closely connected with the destiny of the nation, to be proud of the fact that they are Ukrainians, to have faith in people, their strength, so that they would never neglect the national ideal”<sup>24</sup>. It meant that education of women was seen as the means of education and upbringing the entire nation, as the way to national progress<sup>25</sup>. This was a promising direction of the Ukrainian movement for women's rights, which was successfully joined by female teachers and conductors, because their teaching and educational function was tolerated by the society.

Yevheniia Barvinska (maiden name Lyubovych) is known as mother of the outstanding composer Vasyl Barvinskyi. His great musical talent was to some extent inherited from Yevhehiia, who was a skilled pianist, conductor and a singer. In the end, in his autobiography, he wrote: “My musical abilities have been taken after my mother”<sup>26</sup>. Yevheniia Barvinska was born and died in Lviv (1854–1913). In 1874 she graduated from the Teaching Seminary and entered

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<sup>23</sup> Івах С., Токарська Т. Проблема родинного виховання у жіночому русі Галичини наприкінці ХІХ та на початку ХХ ст., *Український жіночий рух: здобутки і проблеми. Збірник наукових праць за матеріалами першої Всеукраїнської науково-практичної конференції. Вип.1.* Дрогобич : Коло, 2002. С. 71.

<sup>24</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>25</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>26</sup> Німилович О. «Подвижниця української справи» (До 160-річчя від дня народження і 100-річчя від дня смерті Євгенії Барвінської). *Календар класного керівника на 2014–2015 н. р.: Посібник для вчителів.* Дрогобич : Видавничий відділ. 2014. С. 104–105.

the Conservatory of the Galician Music Society (piano class of Karol Mikul). In 1879 she married a widower Olexandr Barvinskyi and became the mother of five children<sup>27</sup>. Yevheniia was very active and diverse in social life: before the marriage, she initiated the foundation of the “Women's Society” in Lviv, and during 1882–1888 together with Amvrosii Krushelnytskyi (father of Solomiia Krushelnytska) she organized a female and a male choirs in Ternopil (where she acted as a soloist and the conductor). Her true devotion to the family did not stand in the way of her versatile musical vocations.

Ye. Barvinska became the first vocal teacher of young S. Krushelnytska. The future world-famous opera diva sang with two of her sisters in the choir, directed by Ye. Barvinska. The choir performed at concerts in the memory of T. Shevchenko, M. Shashkevych, Yu. Fedkovych, O. Konysky, M. Kostomarov; in its repertoire there were the songs written by M. Lysenko, S. Vorobkevych, M. Verbytskyi, V. Matiuk, S. Moniushko, S. Guno, Ukrainian folk songs. In the newspaper “Dilo” review one of the choir performances was highly praised due to the excellent conducting and singing performance (among the chorists there were “three ladies Krushelnytskas”)<sup>28</sup>.

Ye. Barvinska's work in the choir conducting field continued in Lviv. She and other musicians organized the choral society “Lvivskyi Boyan” and became one of its first conductors (1891–1895). L. Mazepa and T. Mazepa, having studied the “the Registration Book of the Galician Societies”, proved that A. Vakhnyanyn and other activists, including two women (Ye. Barvinska and O. Bazhanska-Ozarkevych), appealed to the Galician Provincial Office with an announcement letter about the foundation of the society “Lvivskyi

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<sup>27</sup> Німилович О. «Подвижниця української справи» (До 160-річчя від дня народження і 100-річчя від дня смерті Євгенії Барвінської). *Календар класного керівника на 2014–2015 н. р.: Посібник для вчителів*. Дрогобич : Видавничий відділ. 2014. С. 105–106.

<sup>28</sup> Ibidem. С. 106.

Boyan” in the first decade of December, 1890. On December 24, 1890, the Provincial Office reported on the approval of the Regulations. That day the society “Lvivskyi Boyan” was included into the Registration book<sup>29</sup>. Therefore, 1890, not 1891 (as it was indicated in the existing research) should be considered the exact year of foundation of the “Lvivskyi Boyan”. Relying on the statements of S. Ludkevych, L. Mazepa and T. Mazepa, it was pointed out that V. Shukhevych was elected the chairman of the society, S. Fedak became his assistant, A. Vakhnyanyn and Ye. Barvinska were appointed as the conductors, D. Sichynskyi, S. Handeris and B. Ganinchakova became the board members<sup>30</sup>. Besides, Ye. Barvinska had a series of concerts with the “Lvivskyi Boyan” in Prague, Stryi and Stanislaviv.

Among other conductors of the “Lvivskyi Boyan”, which functioned for 49 years, there were the names of the following female-conductors: Olena Yasenytska (1911), Stephaniia Terkevychivna (1921)<sup>31</sup>, Olena Voloshynova (1921–1922), Iryna Rozhankovska (1927–1930), Olena Filyasova (1932–1933), Olha Tsipanovska (1934–1939)<sup>32</sup>. These data from the archive (DALO) testify on the quite significant female representation in the choir conducting directorate of Galicia until 1939 (at the same time none of the mentioned women was listed as an assistant conductor, unlike the eight male assistant conductors).

It is worth clarifying that Olena Yasenytska and Olena Voloshynova are one and the same person. It was confirmed by Petro

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<sup>29</sup> Мазепа Л., Мазепа Т. Шлях до музичної Академії..., С. 71.

<sup>30</sup> Ibidem. – С. 72.

<sup>31</sup> Here, probably, is the error in the cited document. Perhaps this is S. Turkevychivna (Turkevich) – the first Ukrainian female composer, on whom S. Pavlyshyn wrote a monograph. Though, S. Pavlyshyn does not mention S. Turkevich's conducting the “Boyan”, but she mentions the composer's daughter, who informed that Turkevich sisters conducted three female choirs in the family village of Pidmykhaylivtsi.

<sup>32</sup> Мазепа Л., Мазепа Т. Шлях до музичної Академії..., С. 73.



Medvedyk's reference, which says that Olena Yasenytska-Voloshyn was a pianist, a conductor and a teacher. She was the wife of Mykhailo Voloshyn, a conductor and a critic. Her long-term activity after moving from Lviv unfolded in Poland, Germany and the United States, but there is no information about her being as a conductor abroad<sup>33</sup>. Iryna Rozhankivska (1881–1934) was a singer (lyrical soprano), whose teacher was Sofiia Kozlovska (Lviv), sang in the “Lvivskyi Boyan”<sup>34</sup>.

Olga Tsipanovska (1861 – 1941) is a Western Ukrainian pianist, an outstanding teacher and a public figure. Along with giving piano lessons and concert performances she took an active part in social life. She was the founder and the head of the Women's Labor Society in Peremyshl. The aim of the society was to unite the women in production, trade and financial activities. Besides it set the task of “making the women the aware citizens of the State”. During World War I, O. Tsipanovska presided at the Ukrainian Women's Committee for Helping Captives in Vienna for some time. She was also one of the leading figures of the Union of Ukrainian Women in Peremyshl. During the first Congress of the Union, in December 1924, she was elected the member of the board, namely, the substitute chairman and the referent of youth training. O. Tsipanovska became a member of the Presidium at the Women's Congress in Lviv (1937), when the World Union of Ukrainian Women (WUW) was formed. When the Polish authorities liquidated the center of the Ukrainian Women's Society, Ukrainian women led by M. Rudnytska organized a new women's association – the Platoon of Princess Olga. O. Tsipanovska entered the Main

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<sup>33</sup> Медведик П. Діячі української музичної культури і матеріали до біобібліографічного словника. *Записки Наукового товариства імені Шевченка*. – Т. ССХХІІ: *Праці музикознавчої комісії*. Львів, 1996. С. 464–558.

<sup>34</sup> Людкевич С. Дослідження, статті, рецензії, виступи. Т. 2. Упорядкування, редакція, переклади, примітки і бібліографія З. Штундер – Львів : «Дивосвіт», 2000. 816 с.

Council and Presidium of the association. Although O. Tsipanovska was unmarried, her house always was full of visitors<sup>35</sup>.

By 1939 Olena Yatsyshyn worked in Peremyshl. She was the conductor of the female choir of the Peremyshl Teachers' Seminary. According to the memoirs of L. Tsehelska (one of her former students), O. Yatsyshyn was born not far from Stryi on February 24, 1899. She studied in Lviv at the Musical Institute named after M. Lysenko. She was a skillful pianist and violinist. She taught her chorists to love native songs, encouraged them to rewrite the scores of songs that had been distributed to the choir (so that the chorists could use them themselves as the conductors in the future). O. Yatsyshyn also composed for the choir, but she was very modest and humble and did not submit her authorship to her works, only marked them with three stars. It took her much time, effort and meticulous work to prepare choral pieces with her singers, that's why the seminarian choir had a good reputation and repeatedly gained praise after the concerts. Works of Lysenko, Leontovych, Stetsenko, "Testament" by M. Verbytskyi were in the repertoire. O. Yatsyshyn was very religious. Every Sunday the choir participated in the Divine Mess, performing the concerts of Bortniansky, Vedel. When the liquidation of the Seminary began and because of this the choir became much smaller, the conductor involved the former students of the seminary who lived in Peremyshl and carried on the rehearsals in her house. Besides they sang in the Chapel of the Basilian Orthodox Church in Zasyannya. After the final elimination of the Seminary, O. Yatsyshyn and her sister moved to Stryi. In Stryi she continued teaching music and lived there until she died on March 5, 1974<sup>36</sup>.

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<sup>35</sup> Заброварний С. *Ольга Ціпановська*, [Електронний ресурс]. Режим доступу: [ntsh.org/content](http://ntsh.org/content).

<sup>36</sup> Цегельська Л. Державна жіноча вчительська семінарія в Перемишлі. *Свобода*. 1984. № 179. С. 2; продовження. *Свобода*. 1984. № 180. С. 2.

In Stanislaviv, during the 1930s, there functioned a children's choir, organized by Stefaniia Mishkevych-Kryzhanivska (1898–1986). She was the first professional pianist and piano teacher in the city. She studied at the Conservatory of the Galician Music Society (class of Professor V. Freeman). After her graduation, she performed solo and with ensembles, worked as a teacher and accompanist of the “Stanislaviv Boyan”. The children's choir, called the “Little Boyan”, enjoyed success both among the participants and their parents<sup>37</sup>.

In the article “The success of the young woman-conductor at the church choirs” published by Boris Kudryk in the magazine “Meta” (N 6, 1937), you can find out about the performance of the four-voice Choir of the Kindergarten governesses under the direction of Dariia Lototska. The program consisted of the songs written by D. Leontovych, O. Koshyts and carols<sup>38</sup>.

## CONCLUSIONS

The above information gives the grounds to state that the Ukrainian female choir conductors in Eastern Galicia were versatile personalities and most of them took active part in the women's movement. It is possible to point out a number of historical, social and cultural preconditions that had influence on their activities. Firstly, it was women's free access to music education, primarily at the Conservatory of GMS, where the Ukrainian women studied in the multinational environment of teachers and students, and then at the Higher Music Institute in Lviv. An important precondition was typical for Galician women close interweaving of the Western feminist tendencies with the national liberation ideas. The choral activities made it possible for them to propagate and appropriately educate the

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<sup>37</sup> Максим'юк Г. Творці музичного Станиславова: Стефанія Крижанівська [Електронний ресурс]. – Режим доступу: [gk-press.if.ua](http://gk-press.if.ua).

<sup>38</sup> Кудрик Борис. Успіх молоді дiрiгентки на церковних хорах. *Meta*. 1937. Ч. 6.

younger generation. Gender peculiarities of the Ukrainian women (cordiality, creativity, predisposition to preserve traditions and at the same time their striving to innovation; active attitude to life, subtle intuition, etc.) were easy to combine with the features necessary for a good conductor (namely, volitional, emotional, empathic, cognitive, managerial, etc.) and correlated with the educational role of women in the society, admitted by the traditional Galician conservatism favoured to the appearance of skillful female conductors. These circumstances led to the tendency of a gradual increase in the number of female choir conductors, who contributed to the revival of artistic activity of choirs and music and aesthetic education of young people, as well as to the national consolidation of Ukrainians and, alongwith interethnic integration with other nationalities of the region.

### **SUMMARY**

The article deals with the study of the Ukrainian female conductors' contribution to the development of choral art in Galicia until 1939. For this purpose we have traced a number of historical, social and cultural prerequisites that have caused their appearance. First of all, women had free access to higher music education, which started at the Conservatory of Galician Music Society, where the Ukrainians studied in the multinational environment of teachers and students; then followed the Higher Music Institute in Lviv. The next factor was the Western feminist segment, which for Ukrainian women was closely connected with the national liberation ideas. Choral art became a megaphone of their propaganda and, at the same time, the means of upbringing of the younger generation in the patriotic spirit. The inherent mental traits of a Ukrainian woman (cordiality, creativity, tendency to preserve traditions and, at the same time, striving to innovation, subtle intuition, etc.) in the synthesis of the characteristics necessary for a conductor (volitional, emotional, empathic, managerial, etc.) corresponded to the woman's educational

and social role, admitted by the traditional Galician conservatism. The mentioned before social and cultural circumstances and ethnic and psychological peculiarities have led to the tendency of gradual increase in number of female choir conductors who have greatly contributed to the revival of the artistic activity of choirs, as well as to the national consolidation of Ukrainians, and in addition to interethnic integration with other nationalities of the region. The most prominent figures of the women-conductors and their personal achievements have been outlined.

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