

Scientific review

By Assoc. Prof. Wesselin Karaatanassov, PhD
on dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree "PhD"
in the professional field 1.3 - "Pedagogy of education in..."

Author: Marek Dyakov
Form of study: full-time doctoral studies
Research organization. Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"
Faculty of Education Sciences and Arts
Department of Music and Multimedia Technologies

DRAMATURGICAL DEVELOPMENT AND SPECIFICITY OF ORNAMENTATION IN TREATMENTS OF AUTHENTIC SONG FOLKLORE FOR FOLK CHORAL FORMATIONS

Scientific supervisor. Prof. Adrian Georgiev
Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"
Faculty of Education Sciences and Arts
Department of Music and Multimedia Technologies

1. Defence Materials

The documents provided by the applicant meet the set of requirements set out in the Regulations for the Implementation of the Academic Staff Development Law in Republic of Bulgaria, adapted to the specifics of the above-mentioned higher education institution.

I have received the following documents in digital format:

- Dissertation;
- Author Summary;
- Creative autobiography;
- List of publications;

All the files referred to cover the required set of documents in accordance with the provisions in ASDLRB.

2. Biographical data and general information

In 1998 Marek Dyakov received his Bachelor's degree from Veliko Tarnovo University „St. St. Cyril and Methodius“ with a degree in Accordion, and then continued his education when in 2001 received a Master's degree from Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" – again with a special subject/instrument Accordion.

In the period 2001-2005 he attended the following courses with the respective professors at New Bulgarian University:

- composition - prof. Alexander Tekeliev
- symphonic orchestration - prof. Alexander Tekeliev
- harmony - prof. Alexander Tekeliev
- polyphony - prof. dr. Dimitar Hristov,
- choral conducting - prof. Krum Maksimov
- orchestral conducting - prof. Alexander Yosifov.

The doctoral candidate has indicated that he holds a Class IV qualification as an accordion teacher.

From 2000 to 2018 he taught accordion at the National Palace of Children in Sofia. In the meantime, from 2012 to 2014 he worked at the National School of Dance Art, and from 2005 to 2010 he was seconded by the Ministry of Education and Science as a teacher among the Bulgarian communities in the Republic of Moldova. There he is the

conductor of the choir "Rodolyubets". For the last nine years, from 2012 until now, he has been working as the Chief Conductor of the Gotse Delchev Ensemble, Sofia.

Marek Dyakov is the author of the music to the performance "Shepherd and Woodnymph", composed especially for the professional Folk Song and Dance Ensemble "Pazardzhik". The premiere took place on 2 May 2018 in the town of Pazardzhik. The concert was held on the opening of the Review of the professional ensembles in Bulgaria.

Marek Dyakov has won the following awards and honors:

- 2017, 1st Prize for Symphonic Work in the framework of "NEW BULGARIAN MUSIC 7/8" for "Three Symphonic Pictures" based on "Shepherd's Song" by Peyo Yavorov performed by SOFIA PHIL-HARMONY and VANYA MONEVA Choir. Conductor. St. Ushev;
- 2016, Premiere of Symphonic Tale. Conductor. The work is supported by the MUSIC AUTOR Cultural Fund
- 2013, 1st prize for instrumental work at the International Competition "NEW BULGARIAN NATIONAL MUSIC 7/8", Sofia, Bulgaria. Chepelare;
- 2011, 1st prize for instrumental work at the International Competition "NEW BULGARIAN NATIONAL MUSIC 7/8", Chepelare;
- 1998, the Special Award of the Rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in the section Composition;
- Prizes from choral competitions with the choir "RODOLUBETS", Moldova and the ensemble "Gotse Delchev", town. Sofia;
- He is the author of symphonic, choral, chamber, orchestral music for various ensembles in the country and abroad.

3. Dissertation

The dissertation text admitted to the defence is entitled "Dramaturgical development and specificity of ornamentation in treatments of authentic song folklore for folk choral formations". It is developed within 195 pages and contains an abstract, 4 main chapters and a conclusion. Included in this volume are numbers of music examples that follow the description in the text, as well as the full scores of the songs "Tudora is laid", arr.

by Philip Kutev and "Years, strenuous years" from the repertoire of Verka Siderova, arr. by Marek Dyakov.

The introduction describes the aim of the study – to propose a practical approach to working with folk choral formations to achieve musical and dramaturgical development and to build treatments for folk choir. The a cappella treatments of Bulgarian folk songs are indicated as the object of the study, and the subject is the so-called musical dramaturgy as the ultimate artistic goal and the basis of the overall staging work in the folk choir. The tasks are complex and are for the most part related to the work of the conductor, whose creative conception and pedagogical work become a decisive factor in the artistic development of the work. Here we find the staging work in the choral ensemble, the study of ornamentation with its stylization and, above all, the clarification of the concept of "musical dramaturgy".

The hypothesis of the study states that if the necessary conditions are created for making sense of the dramaturgical construction of treatments for folk choirs, a qualitative change in the sound of the folk choir as a vocal ensemble can be achieved through appropriate methodological approaches in the creative act of staging and interpretation of works. In this regard, the proposed methodology relies on analytical and qualitative approaches, musical analysis, systematization of empirical data, etc. The stated diagnostic tool is a questionnaire-interview with three expert groups.

The first chapter is devoted to the statement of the problem and the attempt at a broad exposition of the conceptual base related to the processing of folk songs. Surprisingly, this chapter has been seriously expanded and modified from the original submitted to the Department for a vote to a scientific jury defense. According to the minutes of the meeting, there were no comments or recommendations of any kind on the text in 1.1. What is striking, however, is that within just a few consecutive pages, from the 9th to the 12th, there appear as many as 6 citations of Prof. Naydenova. Just as a clarification – in the previous versions of the dissertation discussed in front of the Department, her name did not even appear in the bibliography. In addition, she was unanimously proposed as a peer reviewer at the departmental meeting in the presence of the PhD-student Dyakov, just when the green light was given to attend to the defense

with a scientific jury. In addition to the introduction of additional citations, a substantial amount of text has been added here – over two pages, which, in terms of vocabulary, sentence construction, content richness and punctuation, stands out above the rest. The enigma remains unresolved, accompanied by doubt as to whether there is (un)shared authorship by an anonymous but highly educated and literate subject. Furthermore, I found that fragments of this same First Chapter appeared to have been moved into the Second, and vice versa, but thank goodness, in quite appropriate places. It remains an open question whether the supervisor was informed of these castlings and editorial changes, since there were no remarks or recommendations from the members of the Department at the last discussion of the work on this part of the text. I have personally checked the minutes of the meeting. Let us not forget that the addition of such voluminous text calls into question the validity of the anti-plagiarism procedure. Therefore, after the submission of the review, I require the PhD student to explain the reasons for all of the above, and accordingly I will ask the supervisor to illuminate his communication with the PhD student – again on the same case.

Section 1.2 discusses the historical background to the emergence of the "genre of processing for folk choir". In all the discussions I have strongly expressed the opinion that neither processing nor arranging or orchestration are genres, since they represent a thought process - a process of re-creation, the basis of which lies educational competences, compositional skills, including specific techniques and techniques that can be mastered.

And here it is noteworthy that again there is an added text, which is, however, a string of three quotations of Prof. D. Sci. Agapia Balareva. There are no reflections, analyses and summaries on them. Later in the dissertation (in italics) we read "the first professional Bulgarian composers... brought our distinctive creativity to the stage. This process has a far-reaching impact on the genre of processing for folk choir'. However, the paragraph stops here, no further logical connection follows, no conclusions or arguments are presented. At the end of section 1.2 another garland of three consecutive quotations is added, which, as in Balareva's case, are left here without any comment. They are from Dobri Hristov. Musical-theoretical and journalistic heritage. Volume one. Sofia, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, compiled by Venelin Krastev.

Section 1.3 traces the emergence of professional folk choirs and ensembles, and in 1.4 the author draws attention to a series of theoretical studies by selected authors on folk choir arrangements and methodological work with folk choir formations. The study is complemented by section 1.5, which covers the topic of future directions for the development of the genre of "Song for folk choir", along with repertoire, concert activity, management, including issues related to the professional guild and the education of its members.

Chapter Two emerges as the central chapter in theoretical terms, attempting to define the concept of music dramaturgy to no avail, introducing more than a page of quotations from Dahlhaus, Dean and Primrose that were previously missing from the development. Gotthold Lessing is also added here as an author, though I suggested in the very first discussion of the dissertation that the PhD student should take a look at 'Hamburg Dramaturgy', as well as the philosophy of the German theatre scholar Gottfried Fischborn, from which reasoned conclusions could be drawn, rather than the dissertation as it stands contenting itself inevitably with quoting Plotnikov that 'the nature of this concept remains rather metaphorical'. The definition, taken from the Russian Dictionary of Music, is also not applicable to the subject of the dissertation because, as one might assume, it refers to the stage genres of opera, ballet and operetta. That is, these are all genres in which there are procedural and structural activities, spatio-temporal and communicative acts. Unfortunately, however, the doctoral student has probably failed to focus on these, especially since in rare cases the beginnings of such can be traced in this kind of work (I am thinking of treatments), especially in live performance, stage presence being the leading one, since sequences of events and processes, be they speech, symbolic, motor, social, etc., can also be found in it. Well, still they are not fundamental in our notion of folk song, including in processing for folk formation. Even the best stage behavior cannot substitute for the emphasis that gravitates around the musicianship, all the more so since here a verse-variation structure often prevails and, for the short time in which it unfolds, could hardly be identified with the conditions described above. Let us also not forget the fact that in terms of form, except in the fast and moderate songs, the presence of so-called 'organic unquadraticity', which as a concept can serve in depicting the structure of „senza misura“ melodies, is in the same situation as the structure mentioned before.

I can even assume that if in this paper the phrase "musical dramaturgy", which all the time circulates only in the stratosphere of the aesthetic and partly art historical context, is replaced by "compositional development", "compositional structure" or "complex (of precisely specified) means of expression" (depending on the level of abstraction and analytical concreteness), the content of the dissertation would not suffer in any way, except to shake off the unnecessary clutter that serves in places as a mimicry of the unplayed terminology that prevents one from reaching deep concreteness.

The author further elaborates on the creative activity of the composer, who: 'creates by placing at the heart of his work a complete authentic pattern with melodic lines formed in a certain key and with a recurring finale in each stanza, while variation is achieved by improvisation and concerns primarily ornamentation'. In this passage of the dissertation, the term 'melodic lines' suddenly appears, which was absent in the previous version of the elaboration and which, according to those in the know, is particularly favored as a term and characteristic of the vocabulary of an extremely narrow range of ethnologists in this country.

The syncretism and synthesis of word and melody of the songs, along with the expressive means of interpretation already point the development towards its already strong points. In section 2.3.1 the author discusses the melodic and melodic foundations of folk songs, and below he already enters the topic of the interrelations between harmonization and its conditioning by the intervallic specificity of the intonational material.

On page 54, Dyakov writes in a casual and epistolary tone that "after the 16th-17th centuries, harmonization began to establish itself as a compositional technique," without, however, stepping on specifics, omitting even to point to the most brilliant treatise on the subject from that era, *Le Istitutioni Harmoniche*, 1558 (The Foundations of Harmony) by Gioseffo Zarlino. A few sentences after that... and a link is already made to "evolutionary (processes) in the development of harmony, worldwide (without specifying an era), (which) became a solid basis for the development of the genre of 'Song for Folk Choir' and the treatment of Bulgarian folk songs, choruses and instrumental melodies". Seeking to create links with telegraphic mention of historical

facts and creating references to the subject would have been fine, however, as long as "how more precisely" was stated.

The research continues by focusing on the tonal plan, bringing it to the level of a structure-building process in the treatments. As an example is given the song "Dragana and the Nightingale" in F. Kutev. The following is a consideration of functional variation in the harmonization of the melody as a reflection of the composer's combinative and variant thinking in "a constantly evolving sound-harmonic environment offering listeners different emotional perceptions and impacts". In this line of thought, the author now gets to the heart of the matter with his in-depth discussion of 'Chord Structure', defining it as 'an important feature of compositional style and largely determines the successful conveyance of the emotional messages of choral music'. The note examples here illustrate the different types of vertical 'giving away', recognising its importance to the overall acoustic impact and emotional perception that is created, including the presence of divisi in individual voices.

Here, however, we come across the following "Modulation of the melody and its conduction into other tonal centers is one of the most common compositional approaches". Such a statement is contradictory, especially since modulation as a concept is associated with certain functional processes, with a particular harmonic impact aimed at "changing the spectrum" and complementing the melody, leading to a change in tonality. Here, however, the author does not mention a word about which of the usual eight types of modulation techniques are most commonly used in folk treatments (I mean among: modulation based on a common chord, enharmonic modulation, chromatic modulation, modulation by means of a held tone, direct modulation, i.e. static, sequential modulation, chain modulation, or parallel key modulation). However, only the transposition interval is specified and nothing more about the actual manner of operation.

In section 2.3.3, the development discusses polyphonic techniques. I positively accept the formulation that 'we define as polyphonic those works which consist of a polyphonic texture and each of the voices (melodic lines) has an equal functional role in the polyphony', since in Western European music theory the word 'polyphony' is not very

fashionable and instead *Mehrstimmigkeit*, i.e. polyphony, is used in German-speaking countries, while in the Anglo-Saxon world it is mainly Counterpoint. This section provides background information on the emergence of polyphony, which is structurally unnecessary, given that everyone in the Department, as well as the members of the scientific jury, has an academic musical background, and such a text adds nothing to the scientific weight of the development, but rather serves only as filler. The same applies to almost the entire 67th page.

Dynamics is the next handful of considerations in terms of sound extraction in folk choral singing. Here the development manages to link the analysis to the practical work of the conductor and composer. On p. 72, however, the opinion is expressed in a rather direct tone that since the old scores lack dynamic markings, "this in itself indicates that in their early days they were perceived as compositions with poor dynamic reflection." This statement is unfortunately not referenced by any sources, and I would accept it only on admissibility.

The research proceeds to the main section 2.3, where we come across descriptions related to tempo rhythm and its impact in terms of song relief, after which the author now proceeds to a description of form in section 2.4.

Page 82 identifies "the creative practices that began the use of two- and three-part forms, which took shape as such in a variety of ways." Here again, 4 methods are suggested "for forming a second partition". I can categorically state that none of the options mentioned can fulfill this function, since in all of them there is variation rather than development, a particular kind of trans-formation or the emergence of new thematic material. P. Stoyanov defines these forms as 'couplet-variation structures', each of which may possess the listed features of development, but the repetition of couplets and the emergence of the outlined textural changes do not give rise to bipartition, nor are they a prerequisite for the construction of a tripartite form, as the writing on p. 83 makes unfounded claims to achieve such a result.

On the next page, the author quotes what the Great Soviet Encyclopedia of Code in Literature and Music says, generously diluting the text with another 20 lines.

Section 2.5 discusses ornamentation and its ethnographic specifics, and here Dyakov is really in his own waters, outlining the variety of relief ornamentation in the melody of the songs, and now reasonably delving into the details and specifics of their application. Section 2.6 moves on to the conclusion of this main chapter. Here Dyakov's wealth of experience and wide aesthetic horizons allow him to take advantage of the fertile prospect of exposing interesting conclusions based on proven practices. The focus of his elaboration falls on sound formation and sound extraction, again a strong section in the dissertation, tracing processes and proposing practical solutions based on diverse creative experiments.

The third chapter is the most recent in the study, although it is not the last in order, because there is a fourth chapter, and it should be noted that its presence implies the admissibility of this defense in the specific field 1.3. It is devoted to the conductor's methodological work with the folk choir in terms of the staging process. The whole of section 3.2.1 is identical to the candidate's publication and is entitled 'The conductor - ambassador and embodiment of the composer's creative idea', the dissertation itself including the addition 'and his multifunctional role in the ensemble'. Generalizations and comparisons are made in the use of the methodological approach for the work on the compared songs "Years, strenuous years" and "Tudora is laid". The appendices include notational examples illustrating the ornamental patterns of learning, then working by part, building the dynamics, including a presentation of the differentiated and innovative pedagogical approach described on p. 125th, followed by pedagogical activities that are distributed in two charts (on the table). In line with the recommendations made during the discussion, the chapter is extended to include the application of the model in school music education - in out-of-school settings, in elective classes and interest activities, and it is also included in the music subject curriculum. The new addition at the end of this chapter compared to the previous version of the dissertation is expressed in the two quotations of Prof. Valtchinova on page 136., which, although in volume are not in parity with the 6 of prof. Naydenova, can still be considered as a manifestation of God-fearing humility on the part of the PhD candidate, probably in order to make the defence procedure run more smoothly and easier to fulfill his wishful expectations!

Chapter four is the last chapter in this research and presents the results of the application of the methodological model, summarizing the approbation. Here, the diagnostic toolkit used in collecting opinions from our prominent folk choir conductors, composers of treatments, musicologists, performers, and folklore journalists, who give their opinions on key issues related to the processes under study, which are the subject of this dissertation, is presented. The groups are divided into three, and the analyses of the results are described in section 4.3. The graphical representation used is precise and gives an accurate picture of the levels of problems and positive trends that are reported. The chapter is sufficiently large and clearly laid out.

4. Critical remarks are already described when examining the individual chapters in the text, and my recommendations to the PhD student include: improving the vocabulary, being critical and thorough, expanding the terminological apparatus used and completing the knowledge of music analysis and other theoretical disciplines, improving punctuation – and this also applies to the other written materials – creative biography and publications.

5. Final summaries and evaluation

I have reviewed in detail the documents provided by Marek Dyakov. I read the dissertation carefully and repeatedly, including comparing it to older versions. Therefore, I believe that the defence can be considered a success, despite the strict remarks and recommendations made, as the candidate is willing to work and at this stage has the necessary basic theoretical knowledge, and in contrast to the weaknesses mentioned, possesses outstanding compositional and conducting talent, as well as an undeniable desire for development and creative drive.

For the most part, the dissertation reads without much hindrance, although it can hardly be described as deeply analytical, with logical and meaningful connections between the different parts. The style is tolerable - without unnecessary repetition, though with a marked tendency towards excessive citations and fillers. As for the musically engraved samples, they illustrate accurately the issues at hand, and the graphics are explicit.

On the basis of the above, albeit with serious reservations expressed about the conceptual apparatus used, the questionable terminology and approach to the analysis of the factual material, and with an understandable show of collegial indulgence on my part, I consider, that the materials and text of the development provided meet the minimum linguistic, aesthetic, and pedagogical expectations of the Department of Music and Multimedia Technology, and accordingly I give a satisfactory grade and the green light to the defense of this dissertation.

6. Conclusion

Given the methodological guidelines, generalizations and contributions at the compositional level, I recommend the scientific jury to unite around the award of the educational and scientific degree "PhD" to Marek Dyakov in the professional field 1.3, "Pedagogy of education in..."

Sofia, Bulgaria

May, 9th 2023

Submitted Review:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'W. Karaatanassov', written in a cursive style.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Wesselin Karaatanassov
Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"