

REPORT

on the doctoral dissertation on the topic до “Dramaturgical development and specifics in the ornamentation and the processing of authentic folk songs for choral folk ensembles” presented by doctoral candidate Marek Zhelev Dyakov for awarding the educational and scientific degree of “doctor”, SU “St. Kliment Ohridski”, Faculty of educational sciences and arts at the department of “Music and multimedia Technologies”

Professional sphere 1.3. Methodology of teaching..., Doctoral program "Methods of education in music"

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1. Topicality of the selected topic. The processing of authentic folklore songs and, in particular, choral formations is an area which has attracted the attention of Bulgarian composers and performers for decades in view of the significant presence of this art in the cultural life of the Bulgarian nation. The delicacy of this activity, which requires skill and a keen sense of the specifics in the approach to the authentic folklore musical pieces as well as the expansion of the creative vision of the genre called "processing for folk choirs" through the introduction of modern compositional techniques and instruments are the reasons why the topic, chosen by the doctoral candidate, has not lost its relevance through the decades from its creation up to our time but appears as a necessary theoretical analysis; a sort of “balance sheet” of the path traveled so far and a pointer for its future development. Clearly understood, detailed and justified to the highest degree. At the same time, the observations and conclusions found in the dissertation aim to focus the attention of composers, conductors, researchers, choristers on a specific aspect of their practical work or research: namely the role of the ornamentation in the development of the dramatic construction of a musical piece.

2. Structure and content. The dissertation consists of an introduction, four chapters, a conclusion and a bibliography. The text is presented in a volume of 181 pages, including the bibliography and two musical appendices. In terms of volume, structure, scientific methodology and conclusions, it meets the requirements for a doctoral dissertation. The bibliography contains 143 titles, of which 137 are in the Cyrillic and 6 in

the Latin alphabet, although the borderline between the paper based and the Internet sources has not been made so clear.

The **first chapter** is dedicated to the basic terminology of the subject matter in question: the concept of "processing" and its closer, but not equivalent concepts such as "orchestration", "arrangement", "author's composition". The criteria used to distinguish between them are marked. The typology of the genre "processing for folklore choirs" - according to distinguished Bulgarian folklorists, composers, conductors and musicologists – is based on the Russian musicology. In this chapter the roots of the genre "processing for a folklore choir" in the choral song work of the first Bulgarian composers and the practices of the choral works in our country are reviewed until the middle of the last century. The history of folklore choral and ensemble performances during the second half of the century has been traced in detail: the creation of compositions - especially for folklore choirs – and the establishment of specialized musical/folkloric formations some of which have enjoyed professional status. The theoretical studies, related to the "processing for folk choir" genre, have been thoroughly and systematically analyzed.

The **second chapter** is engaged with a search for the definitions of the concept of "musical dramaturgy" and its parameters after which the role of the various musical means of expression and the musical form of the musical and dramaturgical construction in a processed piece of musical work is thoroughly examined. After considering some guiding notes, given by Department of music and multimedia technologies, the doctoral candidate proceeds to expand his observations and view on the very nature of musical dramaturgy although a further and a more precise, in depth analysis of the cited publications may, indeed, be desirable.

The **third chapter** traces the practical staging process for the realization of the musical and dramaturgical development explicated in the musical score. The usual stages in the work of every conductor with the music score and the staging process; the contact between the conductor and the performers, etc., are well described and from page 108 on the specific methodological model, which Marek Dyakov offers as a composer and a conductor, is presented in detail. A link is established with the educational material and the activities included in the "Bulgarian folklore" section of the programs for general education in music.

The **fourth chapter** presents the results from the survey performed among three, professionally different, expert groups "on key issues relating to the investigated processes".

The submitted abstract conforms with the requirements placed by the university, but it also reflects the need for a further clarification of some conclusions embedded in the dissertation.

3. Contributions:

- the views on the terminology and the classification of the concept of "processing" are systematized in order to distinguish them from the concepts located closer by - such as "harmonization" and "arrangement";
- the concept of "music dramaturgy", primarily associated with musical and scenic or instrumental creativity within the area of the so-called "classical" music as well as the indicators of a musical-dramaturgical construction, has been transferred to the sphere of folklore processing and has been adapted to the specifics of musical folklore;
- the doctoral candidate proposes his own model of staging "based on the dramaturgical development of a cappella arrangements";
- essential information on the topic of the dissertation has been collected regarding terminological, compositional and technological, artistic and aesthetic, historical and sociological issues. The resulting theoretical conclusions drawn, as well as the "staging model" proposed by the doctoral candidate, can be used by both by researchers and the people actually engaged with the practical creation and realization of the performance;
- the major contributions, presented by the doctoral candidate, correspond to the theoretical research performed by him and their approbation in practice.

Recommendations: The cited characteristics of the Byzantine/East Orthodox singing tradition are correctly presented and they are based on the publications made by eminent scholars of Byzantine culture but the parallels between the Orthodox church and the folklore singing practices remain outside of the focus of the dissertation. Once introduced, however, the interrelationships between the two areas should be better substantiated and the conclusions must be more precise and well grounded. For instance, which singing practice refers to the statement that "..One of the main sources of the Bulgarian singing tradition is, unconditionally, the Orthodox church music" (p.17)? How

are we to understand the conclusion that "...the folklore melody was refracted through the Byzantine formulaic language" (p. 19), especially when one is to consider the authoritative positions of Vasil Stoin and Nikolai Kaufman on this problem which one can find on page 66? The historical overview of the development of the choral work up to the middle of the twentieth century should be brought to the end and linked, more specifically, to the topic of the dissertation. It is desirable to adduce some facts regarding the presence of the first processings and harmonizations in staged concerts. Regarding the work of the so-called "first generation", the assertion that "...the first Bulgarian professional composers were educated abroad and it is they who brought the professional experience and traditions of Europe back home" (p. 20) reflects the truth but only partially and is valid - to a greater extent - for the composers of the so-called "second generation". The processing of Bulgarian musical folklore in the works of Pancho Vladigerov, Petko Stainov, Dimitar Nenov, Lyubomir Pipkov, etc., some of which belong to the next period in the history of music, should also be taken into account.

On item **3.4**. "Applying the model in the music education in school" could need some additional work in view of the professional sphere of development chosen by the doctoral candidate.

Despite the exploratory value of the survey, regarding the current study it could be more appropriate to direct the questions at the proposed specific innovative model rather than to delve into some „key issues“ regarding general problematics. The texts in Chapter 4, art. 2.1. and 2.2 are duplicated!

Questions: 1. How did some specified sources, such as Lyubomir Savaev's - "Book of Opera", Arthur Honegger's - "I am a composer", the René Leibovitz - "Phantoms of the Opera", Giuseppe Tartini's - *Traité des agréments de la musique* contribute to the specific research process performed by the doctoral candidate?

2. What are the interrelationships between the genres presented as „processing for a folklore choir“ and the repeatedly used „song for a folklore choir“, which are asserted in the conclusion of the dissertation, as well as in the abstract? Does the latter have points of contact with the category /also presented by the candidate/ referred to as an „author's creation based on folklore“ (p. 32), when considering that some of the presented compositional ideas relate – to a great degree – with the author's creative works?

Despite the indicated omissions and the need for some clarification, when publishing the dissertation work the text does reveal an in-depth knowledge of authentic

folklore music examples and the possibilities for their processing and further development based on their specificity plus the conscious role of the rich palette of musical means of expression and the analytical approach the doctoral candidate has to the dramaturgical construction and processing of genuine folklore music and the manner of its interpretation. All of this justifies my proposal to the honorable members of the scientific jury to award the educational and scientific degree of a "Doctor" to Marek Zhelev Dyakov for his dissertation on the topic of "Dramaturgical development and specifics in the ornamentation and the processing of authentic songs for choral folklore ensembles", in the professional sphere 1.3. Doctoral program "Methods of education in music".

Sofia, 24. 04. 2023

Signature: Assoc. prof. dr. Boryana Mangova