

PEER REVIEW

by **Prof. Dr. Vesela Ivanova Geleva**, lecturer of “Choral Conducting” in the Musical Pedagogy and Conducting Department at the Faculty of Musical Pedagogy at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv

for **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rada Borislavova Slavinska**, lecturer of “Folk Choir Singing”, “Conducting a Folk Choir from the Piano”, “Conducting a Folk Orchestra from the Piano”, and “Scores Playing” at the Musical Folklore Department at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv, candidate in the competition for the academic position of “Professor”, Higher education field 8. “Arts”, Professional field 8.3. “Music and Dance Arts”

Rada Slavinska was born in Gabrovo. She graduated from the Specialized Music School /Dobrin Petkov National School of Music and Dance Arts/ in Plovdiv with a major in piano. Assoc. Prof. Slavinska received her higher education at the Higher Music Pedagogical Institute (now Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts), where she studied in the piano classes of Prof. Georgi Kanev, in the choir conducting classes of Assoc. Prof. Krikor Chetinyan, and in the orchestral conducting classes of Prof. Ivan Spasov. She also worked as an assistant conductor in the Angel Bukoreshtliev Singing Society (1986-1988), an accompanist and second conductor in the Detska Kitka Choir (1986-2003), as well as a conductor of the Philippopolis Ensemble (2001-2006). Dr. Slavinska is the founder of the Evmolpeya Girls’ Choir Formation /2006/. As the conductor of the Philippopolis Ensemble and the Evmolpeya Choir she has over 700 concert appearances in the country and abroad, 32 foreign tours, and participations in 29 international festivals. In 2016 and 2018, she presided over the jury at the XVI and XVIII Zlaten Izvor Festival of the Children’s Fun Song based on folklore in the City of Dimitrovgrad. In April 2017, she was accepted as a corresponding member of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and Arts, and since January 2020, she has been acting as the Secretary of the Musical Folklore Department. Rada Slavinska is a member of the Union of Bulgarian Composers – Musicologists Section. She is the author of scientific and fiction literature.

The main part of the work and creative experience of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Slavinska was spent at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts. In 2012, she obtained the scientific and educational degree “Doctor” in “Musicology and Musical Arts”, and in 2016, after successfully passing a competition, she was appointed as the Chief Assistant in Conducting at the Musical Folklore Department. Since 2020, she has been an Associate Professor of “Folk Choir Singing with Choral Studies”.

In the announced competition for the academic position of “Professor”, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Slavinska participated with a habilitation thesis /“Ivan Deliradev and His Chrestomathies for the Folk Choir”/, 2 realized author’s products /“Messa Liliun” and “Rumelia Concerto for Piano and Orchestra”/, 3 leading creative performances with the Evmolpeya Choir, published monograph /“**Let’s Be Silent**”/, published book based on a

defended dissertation work /“The Songs of Krasimir Kyurkchiyski for Folk Choir – Specificity and Significance”/, as well as 9 published articles and reports in specialized publications in the field of arts. The candidate presents 2 realized author’s products, 4 leading creative performances, and numerous citations /34 citations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review and 14 in non-refereed editions with scientific review/. She also has participated in 5 national artistic and creative projects (in three of which she was the head). Assoc. Prof. Dr. Slavinska is the author of the textbook “Choral Conducting Technique” and 4 textbooks that complement the literature in the disciplines “Folk Choir Singing”, “Chamber Vocal Ensembles”, “Folk Singing”, “Scores Playing”, “Folk Choir Conducting”, and “Conducting a Folk Orchestra from the Piano”. The attached reference for the fulfillment of the minimum scientific requirements shows a rich and varied activity, exceeding many times what is necessary for the procedure.

The monograph “Ivan Deliradev and His Chrestomathies for the Folk Choir” represents the first study of the life of the conductor and pedagogue Prof. Ivan Deliradev, as well as the work and the value of the literature created by him for folklore conducting specialties and disciplines. The monograph systematizes and analyzes the teaching materials on folk choir conducting. The work of Associate Professor Dr. Rada Slavinska consists of an introduction, first and second part, a conclusion, and a bibliography. The total volume is 216 pages, and the used literature covers 35 titles. The scientific approach in the research is based on the methods of analysis, synthesis and systematization, comparison, as well as interview.

The first part is entirely biographical. Its object is the life, musical and conducting growth of Ivan Deliradev, the circumstances and prerequisites for his interest in the folk choir repertoire, his conducting realization and pedagogical experience, as well as his interests in various fields that support the training and make it as effective as possible. The second part is devoted to a research in-depth analysis of the methodological and theoretical heritage of Prof. Ivan Deliradev. The four volumes of the chrestomathy for a folk choir are the result of the rich practical experience, professionalism and extensive knowledge of the author, and in this sense can be called a methodical guide to folk choir conducting.

As an educator with serious experience, Slavinska makes a professional analysis of the series created in the period 1989-2000. The first two volumes contain a total of 98 acapella songs in a certain meter, arranged according to the problematic of the study and its stages, and the editions include all ethnographic areas. In the third volume, samples of arrangements of meterless songs are collected. The author of the monograph clarifies in detail the factors that make it difficult for students to interpret this type of repertoire, namely: lack of meter, frequent use of crowns, abundance of ornaments, freedom of performance. Methodical guidelines are given for overcoming the mentioned problems by the young conductors. The last fourth volume is dedicated to the repertoire for ensemble music making. It includes 24 pieces for choir and orchestra or group of several folk instruments.

The third section of the second part of the monograph presents a brief analysis of Deliradev's habilitation work entitled "Problems of the Repertoire of Folk Choirs" and, according to Slavinska, it is necessary to complete the general biographical and professional portrait of Ivan Deliradev, by summarizing his methodological heritage for the development of the "Folk Ensembles Conducting" specialty.

The two author's works included in the review: "Messa Liliium" and "Rumelia Concerto for Piano and Orchestra", show another creative side of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Slavinska, namely her interest in composition. The first work is the only one of its kind as an experience of a Bulgarian author in the mass genre and is widely distributed due to the interest of the conductors of children's and youth choirs in Bulgaria and abroad. The unique musical expression interweaves tradition and modernity, song motifs, folk elements and jazz. The Rumelia Concerto also contains motifs from folklore and in it, in her own way, the author pays tribute to one of the greatest Bulgarian composers – Pancho Vladigerov.

The three leading creative performances chosen by the candidate for the reference are concerts with the Evmolpeya Choir, the creator and long-time conductor of which is Rada Slavinska. In the three programs, the diverse repertoire, including works from different styles, eras, genres, and authors, is impressive, which requires erudition and knowledge in the field of interpretation.

The candidate's permanent and deep interest in the work of one of the greatest masters of Bulgarian song folklore, Krasimir Kyurkchiyski, finds expression in the dissertation work for the award of a doctorate degree, namely "The Songs of Krasimir Kyurkchiyski for Folk Choir – Specificity and Significance" /2012/, published as a book of the same title in 2022, and in the monograph "Let's Be Silent", published in the same year. "Let's Be Silent" is an extensive biographical study of the life and work of Kyurkchiyski /202 pages of text and used literature from 181 theoretical and sheet music sources/. The detailed cataloging of his work, as well as the published chronograph of his life, are considered significant contributions. Also of interest is the musicologists' synthesized assessment of his place in Bulgarian musical history, derived from all available criticisms of works and arrangements for folk choir and classical music, releases, discography, filmography, media presence, and bibliography. Apart from the framing introduction and conclusion, the text of the theoretical development is divided into several sections: "Overview of publications on Krasimir Kyurkchiyski", "Brief biographical data", "Chronograph of the creative life of Krasimir Kyurkchiyski", "Characteristic features of the style of Krasimir Kyurkchiyski", "Interview with Krasimir Kyurkchiyski", and "In the focus of criticism". The reference section of the book contains catalogs that systematically and comprehensively cover all his published works in various genre areas, a discography reference, as well as data provided by the Bulgarian National Television archive on broadcast performances of works by Krasimir Kyurkchiyski and on his participation in broadcasts of this national media in the period from 1974 to 2008. The detailed bibliography attached at the end complements the

information content and provides new directions and opportunities for further research of his work.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Slavinska's journalistic activity is impressive with its volume and versatility of the chosen subject. It includes both analyzes of authors and their work, as well as pedagogical problems that arose in the process of her work with students. The large number of citations is also impressive – 34 in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review and 14 in non-refereed editions with scientific review, which proves the existence of a serious interest in her scientific developments. Her desire to find the best possible result in the education of the students motivated her to create the "Choral Conducting Technique" textbook and the songbook manuals for chamber ensembles, men's and mixed choirs.

In conclusion to all of the above, after analyzing all the materials presented by the candidate, representing a voluminous and multifaceted activity, I support the candidacy of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rada Slavinska for the academic position of "Professor" under Higher education field 8. "Arts", Professional field 8.3. "Music and Dance Arts", and I wish her success and gratification in her future scientific and education activities.

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