

Recension

by

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to

dissertation of Mag. Eugeniya Vladimirov Chevkenov

on the theme

**„Historical context and analysis of Mozart’s violin concertos Kv 207, 211, 216,
218, 219“**

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Biography of the doctoral applicant

According to the presented CV, he was born in 1971 in the family of the opera singer and vocal teacher Elena Baldzhieva and the pianist Vladimir Chevkenov. The family surrounding had its immediate effect: Eugeniya Chevkenov graduated as violinist at the music high school in Plovdiv, the Music Academy in Sofia (degree equal to magister) and the State Music University of Vienna with the level „magister atriium“. Of the above mentioned degrees in the CV the later two have been presented with certificates.

Nevertheless, I will point out of the biography of Mag. E. Chevkenov, that still in his student time he has won a number of awards (not specifically mentioned), 5 seasons he has played in the Vienna Philharmonic orchestra and Vienna State Opera. Since year 2000 he is presented with the honorary citizenship of Austria, given by the Government of the republic Austria and the Mayor of Vienna for extraordinary achievements and special merits as a musician. From 2000 until 2014 he teaches violin at the Wiener Gustav Mahler Konservatorium, since 2014 till present at the Richard Wagner Konservatorium Vienna - violin, chamber music and chamber

orchestra. Since 2013 yearly at The Wiener Music Seminar, at the Music University of Vienna.

He has given concerts in nearly 40 countries in the most prestigious halls.

Certifies many positive press-releases.

After receiving the documents for this application, I have seen on Facebook the notice of his inauguration with the Austrian state title „Professor“ - cordial congratulations!

To **proceed with the dissertation** : already at the end of his 40's, Eugeniy Chevkenov, based on the perspective of his rich professional experience as performing violinist - soloist, chamber musician, orchestral player (amongst others Vienna Philharmonic and Vienna State Opera), having worked with various conductors (including the renowned Mozart specialist Nikolaus Harnoncourt), being himself a conductor, having lived for almost 30 years in Vienna, has directed his interest to the genius work of W. A. Mozart - an endless universe for research - and in particular to the 5 violin concertos. Every each of his comments, analysis and new approaches is **contemporary relevant**.

I acknowledge **the authorship** of Eugeniy Chevkenov's thesis development.

I will quote in full **the goal of the dissertation**:

„The main purpose of this work is to present a deep and solid argued process analysis, which fundamentally interprets the form and content of Mozart's violin concertos, based on a broad spectrum of contextual factology, concerning the historical-political and philosophy-scientific context of the Age of Enlightenment, at the light of the tendencies in society and art, which conditioned the emerging of the phenomenon Mozart“

A dissertation of 200 pages (given that the signs quantity per page is almost double the BDS - which means actually a real 400 page volume) with very rich content of information. The motivation for the writing is described in the **Introduction**. It is followed by the two chapters, with the doctoral applicant describes laconically, as „context“ the first and „analysis“ the second.

In the **First chapter** we read about the age of Mozart (Age of Enlightenment: history, literature, philosophy and science; music... with really many, many facts and resulting cross-references, even until present days). Inclusive through the perspective and comments of the life and work of: Leopold Mozart, the musician violinist and teacher, the father - and the unique relation father-son, mentor-pupil; Padre Martini in Milano (one totally undeserved neglected musician and teacher, here I fully agree with E. Chevkenov, see page 25) and W.A. Mozart; Johann Christian Bach and W.A. Mozart The napolitanian opera and W.A. Mozart with opera seria and opera buffa (about the operatic mentality of the mainly opera composer Mozart in his instrumental music, which „sings“, „speaks“, „tells stories“, I add - for its „operatic-plot genetic“, page 7 - yes, many times I have thought about that, performing and listening to Mozart); about the Manheim school and its „manners“. About C.W. Gluck (music serving the text, with Mozart it is the opposite). About the essential important role of the traditional ritornello principal in the concertos of Mozart. About Joseph Haydn and his evaluation of the uniqueness of Mozart and his influence.

About the composer's road before the composing of the violin concertos (all of them before the age of 19! - the so called 6th and 7th are not an object of the dissertation research because of their unproved authorship), in parallel with the other instrumental concertos and many other instrumental and vocal works, secular and church, the doctorant is defining his idea of, quote, „the fundamental vocal-violinistic tendency in the early opuses, which needs to be threaded and considered in the interpreting approach to the violin concertos“ (page 43)

And all this just in the First chapter of the dissertation: truly very informative, thus representing in many viewpoints and layers the „context“ around the creation of the violin concertos by W.A. Mozart.

In the **Second Chapter** we read: about „the musical anatomy“ of W.A. Mozart's violin concertos (building the singular elements of the compositions. First: about the tempo, which the doctorant and a long list of other distinguished authors, which he knows and quotes, put as extremely important and equally difficult issue in the music of Mozart, as he writes to his father (page 47). The doctorant carefully comments the tempo system of the violin concertos from W. A. Mozart, which he presents in graphic tables and points out that the achieving of correct, truthful tempo makes Mozart's music also ... easier to play. Concerning the tonalities and tonal mentality he also presents table examples, comments on the sonoric violinistic compatibility of the tonalities. About the thematic of Mozart, the unreached genius of his melodies, which not only stay in ones mind for days, but are remembered forever. The doctorant pays willful attention to, quote, „the chosen as an universal model of triad chord structure of the main themes of the First movements - not only in the selected works, but as well in numerous other instrumental and vocal opuses of the Maestro from Salzburg“, he gives a significant number of concrete music examples for it. About the articulations and bow-arts in the violin concertos - with the special recommendation by N. Harnoncourt, that one should study the original manuscripts, containing the specific accents and articulations. About dynamics - the doctorant underlines the thesis, that Mozart works with, quote „placative black-white relations forte-piano“, connected to the Ying-Yang symbolism of the sun-moon categories, and that the forte and piano are character indications, not just volume of the sound, (page 57), but this does not exclude the performers differentiation in the sound. About the ornaments, the doctorant points out and quotes a big number of tractates on the topic (to which list I will add the one by Beischlag, Y.K.). Further follows a comparative survey to the 5 violin concertos (he underlines the connection between the first 2 and the later 3), by the movements, sections, themes, etc. etc. An exceptionally detailed knowledge of the object of investigation. Furthermore follows a research also through the analytic method : combination of discourse analysis, exegetic, semiotic, hermeneutic... All 5 concertos are analyzed: movement by movement, section by section, detail by detail. The doctorant comments (having clarified the term in advance) also the elision principal in the composed structures by Mozart (page 86), which contributes to their specific „unevenness“ (here I would add myself something that I often say: W.A.Mozart is full of compositions surprises, „failing“ the expectancies of the usual, which we as performers must present exactly as surprises, so we may enchant the audience, not just as „the usual things everybody knows“).

The dissertation continues with very many details (even tact-wise, with thoroughness of examples and tables representing the facto-logy), comments (with quotes of his personal practice including his work with masters like Oleg Krissa, quoting David Oistrakh), considerations, paralleling, conclusions from the dissertation research. By all means of restraining my will I am not going into even more details, because this would augment the volume of my recension (I am not even violinist - recommended for violinists learning these concertos is to read this work holding the scores in front of their eyes) - and it is not necessary for my general evaluation of the dissertation of Eugeniy Chevkenov. Someone else on his place could have presented such work even for obtaining the big doctor title, doctor of science „ScD“.

Further the **Conclusion** of the dissertation of Eugeniy Chevkenov, from which I will quote only this: „The attempt to globally systematize an universal approach to the grammar, semantics and even semiotics of the musical language (in this case of the Mozart’s specific style in the violin concertos) and the fulfilled in that context practical analysis of these chosen works defines per se the meaning of the scientific contribution of the presented work, which not only has no analogy in bulgarian language, but is entirely unique of its kind until the moment...“ (page 197). **I agree in full** also with the rest of the Conclusion , as well with the estimated by the doctorant **usefulness** of his work.

The literature to the dissertation contains 32 bibliographical writings, 2 in bulgarian, 30 in english and german, I haven’t counted precisely how many of them are directly quoted in the dissertation. He lists also the Neue Mozart Ausgabe by Bärenreiter (without specific year). From the reading of the dissertation becomes obvious that the doctorant knows well and in details numerous information sources and his dissertation is filled with many parallels to those, with many quotations.

I fully accept the laid by the doctorant **contributions and usefulness**, both **scientific and practical-implicative**.

The Autorefferat (which is also of remarkable size, 58 pages, almost double the standard BDS) represents complete picture of the dissertation. It lists an impressive number of examples (44) and tables (44). There I have been diminished by scientific degree (which has happened quite often lately) - only PhD, I am also ScD, obviously I can do nothing, but get use to it.

In connection with his dissertation Mag. Eugeniy Chevkenov has 2 published articles (2020 and 2021), in which he has made his development available to the public.

IN CONCLUSION: after carefully reading the whole dissertation of Mag. Eugeniy Chevkenov „Historical context and analysis of Mozart’s violin concertos Kv 207, 211, 216, 218, 219“ and the Autorefferat to it, I pronounce my vote FOR the awarding to him of the educational and scientific degree Doctor.

November 5th 2022

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