

OPINION

by

Assoc. Prof Zornitsa Petrova, PhD

Teacher of Piano and Piano Accompaniment at AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev"

for awarding educational and scientific degree Doctor to

NADEZHDA SIMEONOVA PETROVA

in Professional Field 030802 Music and Dance Art

in scientific specialty Music Studies and Music Art

Department of Musical Folklore, Faculty of Musical Folklore and Choreography

with the topic of the dissertation thesis:

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT OF FOLK SONGS

The doctoral candidate, Nadezhda Petrova is among the prominent graduates of the Piano and Accordion Department with her numerous appearances on the concert and competition podium, with her talented performances and her extremely responsible attitude to the learning process in the specialty Performing Art - Piano. Knowing well Nadezhda and having followed her upward development over time in the class of Prof Snezhana Simeonova, I can confidently say that this doctoral dissertation crowns, logically and categorically, her progressive development as a gifted and erudite specialist.

The dissertation *Development of the piano accompaniment of folk songs* is 227 pages, and has introduction, four chapters, and a conclusion. The reference literature is impressive with its more than 173 titles, and the appendices - with the rich additional information of more than 190 score examples, systematizations according to various signs, and interviews with composers and accompanists.

The **introduction** clearly states the object, the subject and the purpose of the dissertation. In it, the author sets herself multidirectional tasks, constantly maintaining the "line" of comparison between the songs in folk tone intended for classical singers and authentic folk songs with added piano accompaniment aimed at the educational practice of folk singers. The methodological basis of the work is also clarified. Nadezhda Petrova uses the term "genre of the folk song with accompaniment", in which she tries to combine certain common features (such as piano accompaniment) of authentic and original folk song.

The **first chapter** of the work is entitled "*Specifics of the accompanist work in the genre folk song with piano accompaniment*". Here, Nadezhda Petrova makes a comprehensive review of the specific features associated with traditional "rural" and "urban" song. The subtitle "Specifics of the accompanist profession" suggests theorization in the field of very wide-ranging artistic work, such as the piano accompaniment. The author dwells on the established publications of Alexander Lublinski and Evgeni Shenderovich, recognized over the years as one of the main works in the field of accompaniment methodology.

The author dedicates an extensive fragment to the problem of the existing different classifications of the piano accompaniment. The methodology for their determination is explained through the prism of a number of established names: Prof Mariyana Buleva, Prof Nikolina Kroteva, Prof Daniela Dikova. When presenting her thesis on the folk song, the author rightly relies on the work of Prof Bozhidar Abrashev *Arrangement and orchestration of Bulgarian folk music*. His classification of the types of arrangements is clear, precise and proved in practice. In addition, Nadezhda also mentions the theories of Prof Rada Slavinska, Prof Manol Todorov, Prof Todor Dzhijev, Ani Lincheva and others.

The **second chapter** of the dissertation refers to "*Folk songs with piano accompaniment in the work of the Bulgarian composers of the First Generation*". The author offers a massive amount of information. I am impressed by the in-depth historiographical approach, through which the process is explained: from the formation and development of the collecting activity and the first publications of Arnošt Tovacovsky and Franjo Kuhač (1875), to the first concert performances of folklore songs. The names of the opera singers Stoyan Mihailov, Hristina Morfova, Ivan Petrov, Petar Raichev, Dimitar Popivanov, etc. "shine" in the dissertation with the facts of their extensive patriotic work. In their numerous recitals in the country and abroad, they propagate the earliest collections of song folklore arrangements. It is an interesting fact that opera singers, as well as their accompanying pianists (e.g. Lyudmila Prokopova) often themselves participate in the processing of the authentic melodies. The "development" is historically covered: from the professional creative work of prominent musicians such as Andrey Stoyanov, Asen Dimitrov and Yosif Cheshmedjiev to its natural apogee at this early stage, namely the solo songwriting of Dobri Hristov. The chapter also contains rich information about the work of Alexander Krastev and Petar Dinev, in the genre of arrangement for vocal and piano. The folk song with piano accompaniment is discussed in development with the tracing of important features such as: range, size, form, mode, structure, harmonization, piano texture.

In the **third chapter**, Nadezhda Petrova examines *The folk song with piano accompaniment in the work of the Second and Third generation of Bulgarian composers*. She presents in depth the debates surrounding the problem of the creation and essence of a Bulgarian national musical style, a problem that arose in the 1920s, are. The historical data on the importance of the composer Dimitar Nenov in his capacity as an editor at Radio Sofia are extremely interesting." A great contribution of Dimitar Nenov, says Nadezhda Petrova, is his struggle to solving the problem of what the accompaniment of the folk songs should be." (p. 104) In addition to enriching the repertoire of Radio Sofia with folk and art songs, Nenov strives to clarify the harmonic language of the piano accompaniment. To this end, many new compositions of songs with piano have been commissioned. According to the author, Lyubomir Pipkov was the first to respond to this idea. Here, Nadezhda analyzes the huge role of the composers of the second generation: Lyubomir Pipkov, Pancho Vladigerov, Svetoslav Obretenov, Parashkev Hadjiev, Marin Goleminov. She traces the aesthetic accumulations in the interpretation of the folklore primary sources, as well as the emerging new characteristics in the piano part (types of articulation, dynamics, ornamentation, tempo deviations). As for the third generation of Bulgarian composers, the author mentions Dimitar Petkov and Todor Popov and motivates her choice with their work on arrangements for voice and piano.

I consider **chapter four** *The Folk Song with Piano Accompaniment in the Repertoire of Folk Singers* to be the center of the dissertation work. In it, the in-depth research of the doctoral student has an unconditionally contributing character. She makes important musical-historical and methodological conclusions regarding the reasons for the use of piano accompaniment in authentic songs. The "pioneering" role of the two folk music schools (in Kotel and in Shiroka Laka) is highlighted. The author offers rich and relevant information on the main higher school for Bulgarian music and dance folklore, namely Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts "Prof Asen Diamandiev". The review of the available collections intended for the training of folk singers, their composers and arrangers is accurate and reliable. It includes an impressive list of prominent folklore performers, conductors and theoreticians, whose names are symbols of the high level of the academic training in the Faculty of Musical Folklore.

Nadezhda Petrova makes a competent analysis of the developing trends in composing the piano accompaniment to folk songs. According to her "*many of the published arrangements contain form-extending elements - introduction, interlude and conclusion. There is a lesser tendency of the said elements to be more extensive and conceived more*

piano-oriented, in order for the pianist to show up and reveal the entire sound palette of the instrument". (p. 199)

I especially want to mention the contribution of the articles on the performance and ensemble problems of the piano accompaniment of a folk song in the various educational forms in the academic training of the folk singers. Here, the doctoral student freely deploys her personal professional "arsenal" and experience, makes vivid parallels and truthful generalizations. All this, in my opinion, turns out to be the most useful, innovative and uplifting information about the role of the piano component, especially in the training process of young folk musicians.

While fully supporting the main theses of the doctoral dissertation, I consider it my personal responsibility to fill in a certain informational inaccuracy regarding the training in the discipline "Piano Accompaniment" at AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev". I hope that when publishing this work (which will be of great use) this information will be taken into account:

1. The six volumes of *Anthology of Bulgarian Metrorhythms for Piano* by Nikolay Kaufman are still taught in the lessons of Piano Accompaniment.

2. Transposition of piano part up to interval G3 in ascending and descending order is still taught in the Piano Accompaniment classes.

3. During the academic years 2017-2018 and 2018-2019, the students studying the discipline "Piano Accompaniment" performed a series of concerts (in "Yuriy Bukov" hall and community center "Hristo Smirnenski" with soloists - students from major Folk Singing: Ivan Ognev, Georgi Dimitrov, Deyan Ivanov, Maya Alexieva and others.

4. The Master's program in Piano Accompaniment of Diana Stoeva's (currently a full-time accompanist in the Faculty of Musical Folklore) was fully adapted to the repertoire of the folk singing classes, given her ensemble work with the students.

In conclusion, accepting the significant contributions of the dissertation work to be true and essential, I propose to the esteemed scientific jury to award the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" to Nadezhda Simeonova Petrova

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Plovdiv

Review prepared by:

Assoc. Prof. Zornitsa Petrova

