

OPINION

by Prof Boryana Lambreva

National Music Academy “Prof. Pancho Vladigerov”

on

the dissertation work of

Nadezhda Simeonova Petrova

titled

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT OF FOLK SONGS

for awarding the educational and scientific degree *Doctor* in

professional field 8.3. Music and Dance Art

Academic supervisor: **Prof Konstantin Buradzhiev**

Nadezhda Petrova is a student in the doctoral program Music Studies and Music Art at the Department of Musical Folklore of the Faculty of Musical Folklore and Choreography – Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts "Prof Asen Diamandiev", Plovdiv. A graduate of the same educational institution, with Bachelor's degrees in two specialties – pedagogical and performance, and a Master's degree in piano, Nadezhda Petrova has been working as a full-time accompanist at the Department of Musical Folklore since 2013. She also performs at concert as a solo pianist and accompanist for singers and instrumentalists, choir formations, and actively participates in musical events organized by the Academy. Over the years, she develops her skills in the field of performing arts as an organist-accompanist for choral concerts, and gives solo concerts with works for harpsichord. The autobiographical reference shows that the candidate has different interests, and her work as accompanist covers a wide range of events in different formations and genres. Nadezhda Petrova also has awards from academic and university competitions.

The topic of the dissertation is inspired by her interests and work, and this, along with her strong personal qualities, determine the thoroughness and competence with which she approaches the problem. First of all, I want to large amount of information used as basis of the research. The bibliography contains 173 titles of works related to the topic - books, textbooks, articles, reports, and other publications, as well as three internet sources. Due to the specificity of the issue, the scientific literature used is mainly in Bulgarian. For the purposes of her work, the author also refers to 78 collections of songs and vocalizations, and the actual research part of the work and the analysis of the chamber-vocal works are supported and illustrated by 7 tables and 189 score examples. The dissertation is a total of 360 pages and is

structured in introduction, four chapters, conclusion, bibliography, contributions of the dissertation and 5 appendices. The appropriate way of structuring and shaping the chapters is essential for the consistent disclosure of the interrelationships and interactions between the various aspects and angles of the topic, where two main directions clearly stand out, outlining its contributions – an overview and a comparison of the specifics related to the creation and the development of piano accompaniment of folk songs for classical singers, and those studying the genre of folk song with piano accompaniment for folk singers.

The author starts with explanation of the definition of the two main terms in the work - the concepts of "folk song" and "accompaniment". She outlines professionally and in detail the characteristics of the rural folk song genre, as well as those of the of the urban song culture. The interaction of the two types of singing seen in the works of our first composers results in the appearance of the *genre folk song with piano*. Here, the candidate devotes considerable space to an essential and not completely clarified question, concerning the differentiation of the varieties of the genre "folk song with piano accompaniment". In order to clarify it as much as possible, she examines a number of works in the theoretical realm - not an easy task, considering the controversy and the various ideas on the matter, as well as the many existing variants of classification and categorization according to the various authors regarding the way, quantity and quality of using the folk melody in the songs. Here, as well as at the beginning of the dissertation, where an overview of the theoretical works on which the research is based, the author demonstrates excellent knowledge of the used literature, ability to synthesize and freely handle a large amount of theoretical information and facts. As a result and after a thorough study of scientific literature and music scores, the author chooses to use the classification of Bozhidar Abrashev, which he makes in relation to processed folklore and on this basis categorizes the following types of arrangements - harmonization, actual arrangement and author's arrangement. In this part of the dissertation, the question of the existing different names of the genre is also discussed, as a result of which the following conclusion is drawn: the definition "folk song with piano accompaniment" is used when there is the presence of elements of folklore, regardless of the way in which they are processed. And songs with original lyrics and music are defined as "solo songs with piano accompaniment." This categorization applies to songs written for both classical and folk artists.

Only after this important and imperative clarification it is possible to enter the essence of the work. Three major sections follow, dealing with the analysis of compositional structure and the specifics of the piano accompaniment in: the work of First, Second and Third

generation composers written for classical singers, and a review and analysis of compositional form and accompaniment in existing music sheets relating to folk songs with piano accompaniment for folk singers. The practical experience that Nadezhda Petrova has as an accompanist for both opera and folk performers is extremely useful for the correct and precise analysis of the characteristics and peculiarities of piano accompaniment in both genres, as well as for the comparison between them. Each of the analyzed songs is also presented in historical terms - there is information about when it was deciphered, the year and place of publication, what kind of arrangement it is, the variation of the songs in the different editions is also mentioned. The author makes a parallel between the same folk songs in the works of the different composers, each of them bearing a signature and the characteristic of the individual composer's style. Such are the songs "Grozdanka and Bogdan the Voivode" by Dimitar Popivanov and Dobri Hristov, "Tatars are coming" by Dobri Hristov and Lyubomir Pipkov, "Old Dimo" and "Bilyana platno beleshe" in arrangements by Dobri Hristov and Pancho Vladigerov, etc. The conclusions of the candidate after she analyzes the chamber-vocal works of the composers of the different generations are significant contributions and directly related to the topic of the development and the specifics of the piano accompaniment in the folk song. Particularly important and with a substantial contribution is Chapter Four, which traces the birth and development of the genre of "folk song with piano accompaniment" for folk singers. In this part of the work the author offers systematization of the previously existing and published music literature of arrangements of folk songs with piano accompaniment for folk performers. She examines and analyzes the work of nine authors of arrangements and arrangers of folk songs, and makes conclusions regarding the peculiarities of their style, relating to the form, structure, harmonization and piano texture in their works. The comparison between the folk songs for classical singers and those written for folk singers in terms of rhythmic organization, manner of writing, harmonization, purpose and practical application has an indisputable contribution. On the basis of the registered similarities and differences in the works, Nadezhda Petrova finds points of contact and differences in the accompaniment of the songs in the two genres. Based on her personal experience and interviews of several composers and accompanists, the author summarizes and systematizes the characteristics and peculiarities of the styles of the different composers in the creation of piano parts, as well as common performance and ensemble problems associated with accompanying classical and folk performers.

In support of all of the above, I give the following opinion: the dissertation work *Development of the piano accompaniment of folk songs* has indisputable qualities and

testifies that the doctoral student has in-depth knowledge of the subject and a high scientific style. And with the publication of three scientific articles on the researched topic, Nadezhda Petrova convinces us that she has fulfilled all the requirements for a successful defense of her doctoral dissertation. With this motivation, I confidently propose to the esteemed scientific jury in the current competition to award Nadezhda Simeonova Petrova the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" according to PN 8.3. – Music and dance art.

Sofia, 05.09.2022

Prof. Boryana Lambreva

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