

OPINION

From Assoc. Prof. Dr. Stefka Venkova-Mosheva

On

Competition for holding the academic rank of Professor in

Music Studies and Music Art

(music culture and education),

professional field 8.3. Music and Dance Art,

INSTITUTE OF ART STUDIES - BAS,

(published in the State Gazette, issue 32 / 16.04.2021)

Candidate: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rositsa Slavcheva Draganova

In the competition, announced by the Institute of Art Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, documents were submitted by the only candidate Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rositsa Slavcheva Draganova. She covers the national minimum requirements, which is evident from the card submitted by NACID, as well as the additional requirements for candidates for academic positions at the Institute of Art Studies at BAS - published scientific monograph, number of scientific publications, participation in scientific forums and citations in scientific publications after she received her position as associate professor.

Rositsa Draganova presented as a habilitation work the monograph "Music in the Bulgarian School at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th Century."¹ as well as 13 articles. The publications have been issued after her previous habilitation. They are in Bulgarian and have been published in authoritative scientific journals and collections in our country, some of which are peer-reviewed and reviewed publications. The presented scientific production fully fits into the theme of the competition. Here we can outline several thematic research circles - the history of music education in secondary school in our country in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century; study of the lullaby in different contexts - in the musical cultural past of Bulgaria and Europe, in the music pedagogical practice in our country, in the

¹ "Music in the Bulgarian School at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th Century." Sofia: Institute of Art Studies – BAS, 2020, 211 p. ISBN 978-954-8594-00-44

internet space; the addition of information to Bulgarian musicians from the past and present - Petko Staynov, Lyubomir Kavaldzhiev and others.

The monograph presented by Rositsa Draganova is very important for the rethinking of Bulgarian music from the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, because this is the time when the foundations of the new musical and cultural life in the country are laid. On the one hand, the influence of the Revival educational traditions is still strong, but on the other hand, the ideas and aspirations are already different. This period needs detailed research, especially in the field of school music, because the personality of the music teacher then brings into focus all possible aspects of the musician - music teacher, songwriter, creator and conductor of choirs - secular and church, student and civil. He is a solo vocal or instrumental performer, organizer of music parties and concerts, director of operettas. The lack of differentiation of the individual musical activities - this is a process that will start later - makes the activity of the music teacher quite intensive. So the work of Rositsa Draganova is especially relevant as part of the necessary modern reading of the new musical history of Bulgaria.

In Chapter One *Foundation and Ideas (1878 - 1891)* the main documents and ideas characteristic of the period are examined. Work with key normative documents from the end of the 19th century is very fruitful - Provisional Statute (August 1878), Law on Public and Private Schools (1885), Law on Public Education (1891), which regulate and change the teaching of music in the Bulgarian school and have real influence on it. Rositsa Draganova quotes in the original what is written in them, and not retransmitting it from later interpretations. And the result of this approach is the introduction of authentic concepts. For example, it turns out that the name of the subject is not only "singing", but "church singing" (p. 15). The author manages to "wash away" the accumulated layers of interpretations and present the original. The paper also analyzes some methodological approaches that leave their mark on our entire further culture, such as the so-called Herbartianism. This is a contribution of the book, because it is not about the views of a particular person, but about a comprehensive line of philosophical education in our country, which was the basis of pedagogy.

The analysis of the first collections of songs considered in the Second Chapter *Problems and Solutions (1891 - 1903)* leads to some very important conclusions about the development of Bulgarian music from the period. An interesting focus in this chapter is the "investigation" conducted by Rositsa Draganova about the person hidden behind the publicist pseudonym "A-moll". Her hypothesis is that this is Emanuil Manolov.

Chapter Three *Debates and Achievements (1903-1918)* discusses the next stage in the development of Bulgarian music. I find very important the author's analyzed process of differentiation of musical activities - "between pedagogical work and the spheres of creativity and musical performance, between practice in general school and

teaching in specialized and newly established music institutions, which inevitably change, albeit gradually, the social position and the self-consciousness of the *pedagogical musician* (underline by the author)" (p. 101). As contributing I can also describe the detailed presentation of the main musical-pedagogical problems - "the change in the understanding of the relationship between theory and practice, between knowledge and skill... the distribution of material and the construction of the lesson as a basic methodological unit" (p. 115).

The Fourth Chapter *Musical Figures from the End of the 19th and the Beginning of the 20th Century, Tasks and Solutions Related to the Bulgarian School (1891 – 1903)* presents biographical data and varied information about 32 Bulgarian musicians from the period, as the information constructively complements the exposition in the previous chapters of the book.

Rositsa Draganova's book is one of the valuable musicological studies, offering a modern reading of the development of Bulgarian music from the years immediately after the Liberation and the beginning of the 20th century. I am convinced that it will contribute to strengthening the interest in the roots and traditions of music culture in our country.

From the 13 articles, presented by Rositsa Draganova that cover a wide specter of musicological problems, I would like to note on her research and study of the lullaby. Not only because they shed light on an understudied topic as a whole and address its various aspects, but also because they represent almost half of her publications – 6. The article *Lullaby as a subject of musical terminology* puts the research focus on the notions of lullaby in the various existing scientific and popular science sources. The following publications - *The Lullaby in the Musical Cultural Past*, *The Lullaby Today* and *The Lullaby - Traditional and Popular Examples from the European Past (an attempt to compare ethnological features)* focus on particular historical periods. Of special interest is the question of the ethnological similarities and peculiarities of lullabies from the musical and cultural past of different peoples. The article *Lullabies by Bulgarian composers in the school repertoire from the end of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century* is also contributive, in which samples of the Bulgarian composer's songs are considered.

Rositsa Draganova offered a variety of scientific production with clearly defined specifics and thematic scope of research, with appropriate methodology and high musical competence, which contribute to the successful achievement of her scientific goals. She is a scientist of high qualification, with a wide range of musicological interests, with active publishing and teaching activity. The works with which she participates in the competition contain valuable contributions.

Based on the above considerations, I propose to the esteemed scientific jury to elect Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rositsa Slavcheva Draganova to the academic position of "Professor" of Music Studies and Music Art (music culture and education), professional field 8.3. Music and dance art, for which I will vote for convincingly.

Sofia, September 13, 2021

(Stefka Venkova-Mosheva)