

# **OPINION**

**by Prof. Dr. Georgi Metev Petkov, Music Department, New Bulgarian University – Sofia, Professional field 8.3. “Music and Dance Arts”**

**for the PhD thesis**

**of**

**Iva Margaritova Georgieva**

**on the topic**

**BONCHO BOCHEV, THE "BODRA SMYANA" CHOIR AND THE PRACTICE**

**OF CHILDREN'S CHOIRS IN BULGARIA**

**(1940s - 1970S)**

**for acquiring a PhD**

**Professional field: 8.3 Music and Dance Art**

**Scientific supervisor: Prof. Dr. Rositsa Draganova**

Iva Georgieva is a PhD student at the Institute of Art Studies, BAS.

She graduated from the National Academy of Music "Prof. P. Vladigerov". Bachelor in Sound Direction, Sound and Media Design in 2012 and Master in Choral Conducting in 2013. Her creative biography is related to choral singing and work as a Kapellmeister. From 2017 to the present, she has been a music teacher and accompanist in the choir "Bodra Smyana", which is a strong prerequisite that provoked her interest for this research.

The thesis consists of 237 pages, of which 188 pages of main text, structured in an introduction, six chapters, a conclusion and a bibliography including 109 titles in Cyrillic and Latin, and seven appendices. The activity of Boncho Bochev, founder and chief conductor of the chorus "Bodra Smyana", as part of the practice of children's choirs in Bulgaria in the period from the 1940s to the 1970s is studied in detail.

**The aim of the research** to systematize and interpret the sustainable characteristics of the work in the chorus "Bodra Smyana" under the direction of Boncho Bochev, are achieved by solving the following tasks:

- 1) studying the conductor's archive and revealing his ideas about the organization of training, solfege and vocal work.
- 2) the study of the specifics of sound production, repertoire selection and concert activity of the ensemble during his work as head conductor (1940s-1970s).
- 3) a discussion of the influence of Boncho Bochev and "Bodra Smyana" as a model for the practice of children's choirs in Bulgaria.

**The tasks** to achieve the aim of the research set by the dissertation are well defined and contribute to the achievement of the set objectives.

The available part of the documentary heritage of the conductor Boncho Bochev, which comprises a huge array of choir documentation, correspondence, reports on choir activities, plans, reports, articles, sheet music, etc. has been analyzed and arranged. The conclusions drawn are confirmed by the results of a survey conducted with former alumni of the choir, as well as in interviews with some of our leading conductors.

The methods used are historiographic - when studying the past of the ensemble; descriptive - when presenting the formal organization of training and concert activity; theoretical and historical - when studying the repertoire, the principles of musical literacy and vocal work; comparative-analytical method - when presenting the practice of other children's ensembles, etc.

The work is of practical and applied value, aimed at the conductors of the active choral ensembles in Bulgaria. The principles of vocal training in the "Bodra Smyana" model, as well as the overall organizational-technical and vocal-pedagogical activity, can serve, in part and nowadays, as a benchmark for successful work with adolescent choristers, after appropriate specific adaptation. The study can also serve as a basis for further research on issues related to children's choral singing.

The abstract faithfully reflects the structure and content of the work and highlights the most important points, results and conclusions of the research. The contributions of the study are correctly brought out at the textual level and are the author's personal work and contribute to enrich and significantly complement the previous research related to the development of choral art in Bulgaria.

The six publications realized by the dissertation are directly related to the topic of the research and have been published in appropriate scientific journals with the corresponding ISSN-number.

Finally, based on all the above, I stand in full support of the author and her dissertation work, giving my positive assessment and confidently recommending the esteemed Scientific Jury to award Iva Margaritova Georgieva the degree of Doctor of Education and Science in the professional field (8.3) "Music and Dance Art".

I congratulate the doctoral student and her supervisor Prof. Dr. Rositsa Draganova for the success of the research!

Sofia 28.07.2023.

Prof. Dr. Georgi Petkov