

## OPINION

by

**Prof Katya Gineva Kayryakova, PhD**

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on

Dissertation work for awarding educational and scientific degree “Doctor”

Professional field (code 8.3) Music and Dance Art,

Doctoral program Choreography

Author: **Dragomir Valentinov Yordanov**, doctoral student at the Department of Choreography

Faculty of Musical Folklore and Choreography

Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts “Prof Asen Diamandiev”

Title: **Interaction between the Bulgarian stage folk dance and contemporary dance styles**

**Academic supervisor:** Prof Zhelka Tabakova, PhD

### **General presentation of the procedure and the materials presented for review**

This review is prepared on the grounds of Order RD-27-058/ 15.04.2024 of the Rector of the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts "Prof Asen Diamandiev" – Plovdiv, regarding the approval of a scientific jury and presented by the doctoral candidate a dissertation, an abstract, a report on the contributions of the dissertation, publications on the topic of the dissertation, meeting the requirements of Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA), and the Regulations for its implementation, for obtaining educational and scientific degree “doctor” and scientific degree “doctor of sciences”. On the basis of the submitted documents, there is every reason to conclude that the procedure for announcing and conducting the competition was carried out in full compliance with the DASRBA, and the Regulations for its implementation, as well as with the internal Regulations on the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions in AMDFA.

The candidate Dragomir Valentinov has submitted for review:

- ✓ Dissertation work consisting of 163 pages with the following structure: introduction, exposition in four chapters, conclusion, reference to contributions, bibliography and one appendix. The use of classical structure of this type of work is a good statement of the doctoral student for mastered basic skills and norms in scientific the stylistics. The bibliographic reference includes 88 sources, of which 67 in Cyrillic and 13 in Latin, 8 internet addresses. The 7 interviews and conversations that illustrate the main points of the dissertation work are proof of knowledge of the subject. The content of each of the four chapters is divided into paragraphs;

- ✓ Three publications on the topic of the dissertation work in academic editions and three participations in scientific conferences;
- ✓ An **abstract** of 56 pages, which analytically presents the main moments in the dissertation work and reflects the volume of the dissertation correctly and accurately - both in terms of content, as well as the conclusions and scientific contributions made.

#### **Brief biographical data of the candidate**

The biography and professional path of the author of the dissertation work, Dragomir Valentinov Yordanov, suggests the orientation to the researched topic related to the possibilities of interaction of different dance styles. His love for Bulgarian folk dances determines the direction of his education through studies at the National School of Folk Arts "Filip Kutev" Kotel, specialty Bulgarian Folk Dances, Bachelor's degree in Bulgarian Folk Choreography and Master's degree in Contemporary Dance Techniques at AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev" and the doctoral program Choreography - discharged with the right of defense on 15.12.2022.

The professional career of the doctoral candidate combines his work as a performer, teacher and artist, which makes the present study particularly valuable from the point of view of accumulated many years of practical experience and competences.

#### **Relevance of the topic**

The dissertation work *Interaction between the Bulgarian stage Folk Dance and Contemporary Dance Styles*, offers a new reading of the process in the modern development of the Bulgarian stage folklore dance. The author focuses his attention on the possibility of a synthesis between the Bulgarian stage folk dance and various contemporary dance styles, but not as a mechanical combination, but a technical, aesthetic and conceptual interaction performed by the same dancers. A topic relevant to the modern sociocultural context, imposing the need to improve the artistic value in the eclectic performance of folk-based stage art.

#### **Expediency of the research methods used to achieve the set goals**

The research methods used in the dissertation work are in accordance with the set goal, hypothesis and work tasks. The research is carried out through a complex of expediently selected methods: theoretical research, comparative analysis, surveys, interviews, an experiment with dance performers, and the doctoral student is able to present his ideas in an analytical form.

#### **Evaluation of the dissertation work**

In the **Introduction**, the doctoral student Dragomir Yordanov substantiates the significance of the problem and outlines the direction of the research, its goals, tasks and methodology. The object and subject of the research is stated, as well as the author's thesis that it is possible to combine the Bulgarian folk style of performance with other dance styles, as long as this is part of the general idea and the final product has a high aesthetic value. The lack of in-depth scientific studies of this process provokes the doctoral student to delve deeper into this serious field.

In the **first chapter**, the emphasis is placed on innovative creative manifestations in the stage

presentation of traditional Bulgarian folklore. For this purpose, two works of Bulgarian choreographers representative of different periods of the development of the stage art based on folklore have been analyzed. Attention is paid not only to the figurative and lexical enrichment of the traditional ring-dance, but also to the construction of a dramaturgical line giving a thematic form to the final artistic product. Based on a serious analysis, the candidate concludes that the stage dance based on folklore, bearing the authenticity of the Bulgarian dance, is interpreted and developed in response to the new needs of modern times.

The **second chapter** is focused on the stylistic features of the ring-dance as a basis for structuring contemporary dance patterns. The diversity of the dance in different regions of the country is presented with its specifics in figurative, lexical and musical terms. The analysis emphasizes characteristic movements from each region and the possibility of combining them with other dance styles. The author makes an attempt to prove that, for the most part, the development and improvement of the Bulgarian folk dance can combine other dance styles popular today.

In the **third chapter**, the conceptual emphasis is placed on the characterization of various contemporary dance styles. Special attention is paid to the standard Bulgarian *exercise* and the possibility of creating a new form of exercise. In a seminar held for the Academic Dance Ensemble at AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev", the doctoral student Dragomir Yordanov conducts an exercise based on a combination of cardio and training exercises combined with traditional folk dances, which has a positive effect in the complex preparation of the performers for the subsequent workload. As a proof, "*... that the Bulgarian folk dance, custom, ritual, music, needlework, can be a fertile ground for the development of future choreographers, who, through a modern expression, present their works, without, however, depersonalizing the folk style characteristics.*" /p.112/ the author makes an analysis of a dance, a part of the dance project Six Rooms presented at the international contemporary dance festival Black Box.

**Chapter four** focuses on the interaction between the folk, classical and contemporary dance. The candidate examines Bulgarian ballets, whose dramaturgy contains moments from the Bulgarian folklore, Bulgarian ballets on non-ballet music, but the emphasis is placed on the analysis of two dance performances - *Swan Ring-Dance* and *Orisia*.

In the **conclusion**, as a natural finalization of the research, the doctoral candidate summarizes the most essential that is contained in it. I consider the conclusion that modern dance techniques **must** be studied in dance training to be inappropriate. The introduction of elements from other dance styles when building the dancing qualities of the performers can be accepted only in developing the technical skills, without having a significant impact on the style in the performance of Bulgarian folk dances. The enrichment of modern choreographic art based on folklore with new, non-traditional forms and solutions depends above all on the talent and professionalism of the creator and presupposes in-depth knowledge of the richness of the Bulgarian folklore, the way of life and folk psychology of our ancestors, the stylistic characteristics of various dance genres, and at the same time the ability for a

precise creative approach from the position of modernity.

**Contributions and significance of the thesis and the publications on the subject of the dissertation**

I accept the listed and analytically presented five contributions of the work. The reviewed dissertation work has serious scientific value and meets the requirements of the DASRBA and the regulations for its implementation.

The doctoral candidate has indicated four publications on the topic of the dissertation. The publications made in terms of number and content fully meet the requirements for admission to public defense.

**Conclusion**

In view of everything mentioned above, I hereby give my positive assessment of the dissertation *Interaction between the Bulgarian Stage Folk Dance and Contemporary Dance Styles*, and propose to the respected scientific jury that Dragomir Valentinov Yordanov be awarded the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in professional direction 8.3 Music and Dance Art, doctoral program Choreography.

2 June 2024

Varna

Reviewer:

Prof Katya Kayryakova