

## OPINION

by Assoc. Prof Dimo Enev Enev – AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev"-Plovdiv

on dissertation work for awarding educational and scientific degree “**Doctor**”,

Professional field 8.3 Music and Dance Art, Doctoral program Choreography,

scientific specialty Choreography, Department of Choreography,

Faculty of Music Folklore and Choreography at

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

**Author:** Rumyana Vangelova Filkova

**Topic:** *Specificity in the performance of the maiden ritual songs and dance practices in some settlements of Southwestern Bulgaria*

**Academic supervisor:** Prof Daniela Dzheneva, PhD

The doctoral candidate Rumyana Vangelova Filkova has presented a set of electronic and paper documents related to the procedure for defending the dissertation work, as well as 4 publications related to the main topic of the scientific research. All of them comply with the regulations for the development of the academic staff and the scientific activity of AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev" - Plovdiv and therefore I have no objections to the presented documents and materials.

**Rumyana Vangelova Filkova** is born on 04.09.1980 in Blagoevgrad. Already at the age of seven, she began to study the accordion, and a year later folk singing and solfège. In 1994 she was admitted at secondary music school in Shiroka Laka, which she graduated in 1999. In the same year, she was admitted to AMDFA - Plovdiv in the specialty Instrumental Art - Folk Singing, which she graduated in 2003. In 2000, she joined the Folklore Ensemble Trakia - Plovdiv, as a folklore singer, where she works to this day. She has made numerous recordings for radio and television shows and is participant and laureate in singing festivals and competitions in the country and abroad. In 2004, she completed postgraduate qualification in major Pedagogy of Music Education and Bulgarian Folk Choreography, and in 2007 she obtained Master's degree in Performing Art - Folk Singing at AMDFA – Plovdiv.

From 2010 to 2015, she works as a part-time teacher of folk singing and pedagogical practice at AMDFA - Plovdiv, and from 2013 to 2015 she was a teacher of folk singing at National School of Music and Dance "Dobrin Petkov" - Plovdiv.

The problems discussed in the scientific work *Specificity in the performance of the maiden ritual songs and dance practices in some settlements of Southwestern Bulgaria* adds another point of view to the research interest in the folklore of Southwestern Bulgaria. The relation between ritual – song – dance is known in the scientific circles, but the one presented to us builds on the research done and leads to the highlighting of the unique specificity of the local folklore culture.

The dissertation work of Rumyana Filkova is structured correctly according to the regulations for scientific writing in AMDFA. It consists of 174 pages, including an introduction, three main

chapters and a conclusion with contributing points. The list of names of the informants from the various settlements and the bibliography of 126 book titles complete the work and give it an adequate expression in terms of research and application.

Already in the introductory part, the dissertation student defines his motivational orientation and sets her priorities for "... *study and a complex study of the customary-ritual song-dance tradition, the connection with the dramaturgy in the custom and the stylistic specifics in the singing performance art.*" (p.4) Gives specifics of the introduction, mentioning his research quests, through the customs of **Voditsi Lazaruvane and Easter** and correctly integrates the object, the subject and the purpose of the scientific research into them. The author formulates the tasks of the research, as well as the methodology used in empirical and theoretical terms, and makes a brief summary of the upcoming study and goes into its individual details.

**Chapter I. The review of the scientific research on the subject** is presents by the author in many aspects. First, she directs us to researchers with outstanding contributions to ethnographic science in Bulgaria. Then she goes through specialists dealing with the folklore of the studied region, arranging them chronologically and thematically, depending on their professional orientations.

**Chapter II. Characteristic features of the music and dance folklore in Southwestern Bulgaria**

Here, the author focuses first on the **historical-geographical and ethnological characteristics of the region**. Makes an overview of the historical reality in accordance with the geographical features and identification of the individual ethnographic sub-regions of the region. She takes into account the migration processes and subordinates them to the main theme of the work, concluding: "*As a result of the demographic processes, there is a change not only in spiritual communication, but also in the folklore culture. As a result of refugee settlement, different regional and local values are mixed*". p. 17. The doctoral student builds on this chapter with more of the specifics of the folklore from this region. First, she introduces us to the peculiarities of two-voice singing, analyzing its melodic and poetic diversity in the individual sub-regions and local micro- regions. After that, she discusses the peculiarities of the dance folklore of the region, based on the same regionalization, and presents the individual dance practices according to the regional, social-life, music-song and gender characteristics of the performers. At the end of the chapter, she purposefully summarizes the specifics of the folklore area: "*The Pirin ethnographic area is distinguished by a rich variety of unique song and dance patterns, revealing the creative genius of the Bulgarian people.*" p. 27

The actual part of the thesis is developed by the doctoral student in **Chapter III Specificity in the musical-performance style and dance practices of the maiden customs**. In it, she refers to the ritual practices of the customs **Voditsi** from the village of Dobarsko, **Lazaruvane** from the village of Igralishte, **Easter** from the villages of Nikudin and Igralishte and **Lazaruvane** from the village of Pirin. For each of them, Romyana Filkova makes a short theoretical-applied review and focuses on the specific description and analysis of the custom. She properly identifies the ritual moments in each

custom, detailing them with the song-dance examples with their characteristic features and performance style, conforming them to the customary-ritual practices. She compares the well-known theoretical examples with the field studies made by her and, analyzing them, makes findings and conclusions about their transformation in time, space and the socio-cultural presence of the public group. *“...The discussed customs have a socializing meaning - they legitimize the initiation of girls into the group of sexually mature women, those who have the right to settle down. In a general sense and direction, the ritual actions in them are related to wishes for health, love, happiness, well-being...”* p. 155.

The concluding part is extremely comprehensive with many specifics in every single aspect affecting the main part of the work. The generalizations made in the music-song and dance examples are formulated on the basis of theoretical-field studies, descriptions and analyses. All of them are subordinate to the common ritual beginning and are the highest stage in the development of the young women, their initiation and socialization.

The contributions of the work correspond adequately with the exploratory-analytical realizations made and complement the overall structure of the dissertation, as the author weaves them purposefully and in detail into its individual directions.

The candidate's articles and reports are correctly referenced, showing various stages of her research work.

The **abstract** of 51 pages is based on the dissertation and follows its sequence and content.

In conclusion, I express my positive assessment of the candidate's scientific work and, with a recommendation for its publication, I strongly recommend the Scientific Jury to award Rumyana Vangelova Filkova the educational and scientific degree "Doctor", professional field 8.3, Music and Dance Art, doctoral program Choreography.

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