

## **OPINION**

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

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

Professional field Music and dance Art, Doctoral program “Choreography”

Department of Choreography, Faculty of Musical Folklore and Choreography at

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

**Author:** Svilen Krastev Hristov

**Topic:** Influence of the Vayats on shaping the style and character of the dance folklore from Varna

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

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

The doctoral candidate Svilen Hristov has presented a set of electronic and paper documents related to the procedure for defending the dissertation work, as well as 3 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.

### **Brief biographical data of the PhD student**

The author of the dissertation has many years of experience as a performer, choreographer and manager. His development in the professional field of dance began in his early childhood, passing through various stages of development: from a dancer in SMK-Varna to the head of Folklore Ensemble “Gergana” - Varna. He acquired his professional education as follows: Bachelor’s degree in Choreography from Varna Free University "Chernorizets Hrabar" in 2000 and Master’s degree as Choreographer-Director from AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev" - Plovdiv in 2011. Under his leadership, folklore ensemble Gergana - Varna has won the "Grand Prix" at Sofia Eurograde and is the representative ensemble of CIOFF - Bulgaria. He is author of four significant folklore dance shows performed on various prestigious stages in the city of Varna.

### **Relevance of the topic**

The research subject of the proposed dissertation have its relevance in the study of dance folklore from Varna and the region and corresponds to the candidate’s long-standing interest in this ethnographic focus. This is clearly evident even in the introductory part of the work, where the different thematic lines in the research are specified and developed in detail in the subsequent chapters of the work.

### **Feasibility of research methods for achievement of the set goals**

Methodologically, the dissertation adheres to the stereotypes of theoretical and field studies built by scientific thought, formulating them as general methods of research, synthesis and analysis of research, comparisons and abstractions of research, and classification of research. The methods thus presented give a general perspective in the construction of the work, but with the introduction of the specific goals and tasks of the dissertation, the direction of the studied problems becomes clear.

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

The dissertation consists of 258 pages and is structured according to the standards and requirements for scientific writing, being made up of:

Introduction, objective, tasks and methods of the research, overview of scientific research, three main chapters in the main part, conclusions - including conclusion and contributions, researched and described people and dances from Varna region, named list of informants, vocabulary of unfamiliar words, used and cited literature of 102 titles, as well as 1 appendix with photographic material.

The candidate introduces the main part of the work through historical information about the Vayats, explaining the origin of this ethno-diaspora. He pays attention to the material and spiritual culture of the Vayats, interweaving the main livelihoods of agriculture, animal husbandry and applied crafts in the specifics of the subject. It describes their migration processes and their interrelationships with the other ethnographic groups inhabiting the Varna region, through which he tries to formulate the idea about the creation of the Varna dance style. He presents the traditional Vayats clothing and the clothing of the other ethnic groups of the region and the changes that occurred in them as a result of their coexistence. The author reviews the ritual-customary system of the Vayats, adding to their general description some stage works based on the Vayats folklore, such as: "Erkech Dance" by Margarita Dikova, "Silivrii" and "Na medenik" by Belcho Stanev and "Dances from Golitsa" by Petar Angelov.

An essential part in the construction of the dissertation is chapter five *Influence of the Vayats in the shaping of the Varna dance style*. The author chronologically presents the formation of the folklore identity of the Varna region, goes through the formation of the Varna dance folklore and ends with its stage transformation, giving references to the Vayats folklore tradition in each subsection. This is how he comes to the conclusion that the villages of Erkech, Golitsa and Chenge and the settlers from them created, enriched and developed the Varna folk dance tradition.

Svilen Hristov builds the concluding part in a retrospective plan, making references to individual chapters of the work and adding some personal impressions from his research and creative activity. He concretizes the stylistic features of the individual currents in the construction of the Varna dance style and shares: *"The conclusion we can allow ourselves to make about the stylistic*

*characteristics of the Varna dance folklore is the marked influence exerted by the Vayats in its construction. With their aggression and conservatism in their lifestyle, they subordinate and transmit to the groups they come into contact with their folklore tradition”.*

To the concluding part of the work, we can include the proposed thirteen ring and individual dances from the region, which are correctly described and deciphered by the candidate. His attempt to concretize and compare the individual people and bring them to the Varna dance culture is impressive, but for greater clarity of the studied topic, it would be more correct to weave them into the main text of the study or to be punctually mentioned in it.

### **Contributions and significance of scientific work and the publications on the topic of the dissertation**

The author's emotional and professional commitment to the subject of the dissertation is clearly visible. The textual justification is in symbiosis with the proposed topic and gives concreteness and relative completeness in the presented conclusions. The scientific contributions thus formulated by the doctoral candidate are in a clear interrelationship with the investigated problems and reflect the author's idea in the dissertation work.

### **Critical notes and recommendations**

I would also like to make a few recommendations regarding the actual structure of the work.

For greater clarity, the review of the scientific research on the topic could be arranged in chronological order.

There is noticeable tautology of expression and meaning, which at times weighs heavily in the construction of the dissertation. There are no specific (visualized) examples of identity and interrelationships between the individual folklore groups in favor of the main theme of the work. It is appropriate to emphasize these juxtapositions, both in lexical-compositional terms of the described dances, and through the photographic material provided in the appendix.

### **Abstract**

The abstract is 58 pages, complies with the requirements and adequately and fully reflects the dissertation. The contributions of the study are also presented. The required minimum of three publications in eligible journals are submitted. Each of them reflects a different stage of the candidate's work on the topic of the dissertation in theoretical and practical aspects. The contributions formulated by the author adequately reflect the results of the research.

### **Conclusion**

Considering everything above and my positive assessment of the merits and contributions of the dissertation work, I strongly recommend the Scientific Jury to award Svilen Krastev Hristov the educational and scientific degree "Doctor".