

REVIEW

by **Prof. Stefanka Angelova Georgieva, PhD**
Thracian university – Pedagogical Faculty – Stara Zagora
of the materials submitted for a competition
for taking the academic position of “Associate Professor”
in Plovdiv University „Paisii Hilendarski“ in:
area of higher education **8. Arts,**
professional trend **8.3. Art of music and dance (History of music)**
in the competition for “Associate Professor” announced in „State gazette“, issue 92 from
18.11.2022 г. and on the internet page of “Paisii Hilendarski”
Unievrsity of Plovdiv
for the needs of the Department of Music at the Pedagogical faculty.

1. General overview of the received materials.

With an order № RZZ-RD-21-74 dated 18.01.2023 of the Rector of “Paisii Hilendarski” Plovdiv University I was appointed a member of the scientific jury of a competition for taking the academic position of “**Associate Professor**” in **PU** in area of higher education **8. Arts,** professional trend **8.3 The Art of Music and Dance (history of music).**

The only candidate for participation in the announced competition is **Chief Assist. Prof. Zdravka Marinova Hvarkata, PhD** from the Pedagogical Faculty, the Department of Music in PU. The set of materials on paper and electronically, which was submitted for reviewing, contains administrative documents, certificates and references for the candidate’s teaching, research and artistic-and-creative activity. There are enclosed **3** monographs, **4** treatises and **2** academic manuals; copies of the publication of **28** articles and reports; annotations and self-evaluation of contribution, as well as a declaration about originality and credibility of documents. **In looking up all of them I found out that they comply completely with the requirements of the Rules for developing the academic staff in PU.**

2. Brief data from CV.

Chief Assist. Prof. Zdravka Hvarkata, PhD graduated the High School of Music in Varna, her specialty was “piano”. From 1982 to 1988 she studied in parallel two specialties in the Bulgarian State Conservatoire / National Academy of Music “Pancho Vladigerov” and graduated with a Master degree in Musicology, specialization “History of music” and “Choral and orchestra conducting”, specialization “Choral conducting”.

Between 1999 and 2005 Hvarkata studied Law in Sofia university “Kliment Ohridsky” and graduated as a Master in “Civil jurisdiction”.

In 2010 Hvarkata defended her dissertation paper and was awarded the scientific-and-educational degree PhD in specialty 05.08.03. “Musicology and art of music”. Her academic career took place completely in the Faculty of Pedagogy of PU, the Department of Music, where since 1988 until today she has taken the positions of Assistant, Senior Assistant and Chief Assistant Professor (in 1997).

3. General characteristics of the candidate’s activity.

3.1. Assessment of the academic-and-pedagogical activity.

In the period mentioned above, the academic-and-pedagogical activity of Zdravka Hvarkata, PhD comprised three main academic disciplines in the specialties “Pedagogy of teaching music” and “Music” (EQD “Bachelor”): *History of Bulgarian music, Harmony (part I and II)* and *Harmony with arrangement* (part I and II). The academic curriculum includes teaching seminars in the same disciplines and specialties, as well as individual classes with students in *Compulsory piano* (in VII parts) who develop their own skills in playing a musical instrument during the course of their university studies.

The two **academic manuals** written by the candidate are closely linked with her academic-and-pedagogical activity. They correspond in terms of the topics of her lecture courses and practical seminars. “**Collection of texts. Bulgarian musical culture**” (2016) is a publication tracing the well-established traditions in our musical-and-pedagogical tradition. The reasons for making the manual are well-grounded by the educational emphasis and the practical goals of using it in the teaching process. There are presented the artistic biographies of famous Bulgarian composers – such as the founder of our national school of music Dobri Hristov and so on. The second generation of composers are accompanied by an analysis of their pieces that are part of the composers’ choral and piano works. This deliberate choice of genre follows particular methodical considerations: it provides author’s works that are typical for his style; it gives the students a chance for independent work with scores; it enriches and integrates their musical-and-theoretical knowledge in other academic disciplines.

“**Theory of music. Tests**” (2019) is a collection of tests meant for students from the music specialties of PU. Yet, it is addressed also to everybody who wants to test their basic knowledge in theory of the art of music.

3.2. Evaluation of the candidate’s research, research-and-applied and artistic and-creative activity

In the period after acquiring the scientific degree PhD (2010) until the current application for “Associate Professor”, Assist. Prof. doctor Zdravka Hvarkata’s research works include **3** monographs, **4** treatises in issues with ISBN code and **28** articles and reports published in foreign and Bulgarian referenced and specialized journals of music, as well as in collections of scientific works.

The **monograph** (1) *Dobri Hristov’s secular choral music. Genres, themes, issues* (2015) is submitted as the candidate’s habilitation paper. The research, first of its kind in our scholarly literature, is directed to the most significant part of the creative heritage of the most renown master in the new Bulgarian music culture. It is based on an analytical review of the historical assessment in monographic and musical-and-theoretical research works. In the context of their retrospective reading, there stands out the significance of the secular choral music both in Dobri Hristov’s works and its place in Bulgarian music.

The choice of criteria for classification and the adopted principles for systematization of the types of choir songs in separate groups is done by use of clearly defined dividing principles: genre – from the early “musical bouquets” - to choral ballads and fugues, folk-and-thematic songs and songs in general tone; according to themes and objective: for solo, concert, school and others. Each of the song opuses is viewed with analytical discourses about the specifics of the set of themes and particularities of the way they are done, the music form, the language of harmony and polyphonic technique. Through this approach the author encompasses the multitude of genre models of Dobri Hristov’s secular choral music and motivates its timeless artistic significance in Bulgarian musical culture.

The monograph (2) Aspects of the form and genre in Simeon Pironkov's works (2020) is the result of the author's year-long interest in the works of the composer Simeon Pironkov – a prominent figure in the **avant-garde** of Bulgarian music from the second half of XX C. The “Aspects” present some of his most famous works which belong to various periods and various spheres of genre. They serve as a rich research ground for summarizing important regularities in elaborating the genre, form and performing set in the author's concepts of Simeon Pironkov.

The monograph views the variety of approaches and genre interpretations in works like “A requiem about an unknown young person”, “Ballet music in memory of Stravinsky” and “Movements for 13 string instruments” – all meant for chamber instrumental ensembles; the various associations and allusions to the classic tradition in a group of works which are untitled and are called “music-s”: Music for two pianos and an orchestra, “Night music”; or in others like “The life of sinful Sofronia” – a major vocal-and-symphony work with the basic characteristics of the genre oratory. Parallel to it, in the analyses of the chosen works, individualized as separate sections in the monograph's structure, the author explains the particularities of the form and form-making principles; she comments on various discourses of the relation form – genre and others. Special attention is drawn to the specifics of the synthesis “text- music” – a manifestation of Simeon Pironkov's gift for literature and his skill to model words in unique images of sound.

The subject of research in the monograph (3) **“Youth's album opus 68 of Robert Schumann. Stylistic-and-interpretative and pedagogical issues” (2021)** is one of the most famous piano opuses of the German composer from the Romantic era. In the author's concept about the particular piece, there are clearly outlined three concentric circles. In the first chapter a general characteristic is made in respect to Schumann's style, the themes, images and moods typical for his creative manner; the variety of genres is pointed out, as well as the composer's untraditional attitude to the form. In the second chapter the author traces the history of creating “Youth's album” and comments on the achieved balance between the instructive-pedagogical beginning and the artistic imagery of the pieces in the piano sequence. There are differentiated three groups and respectively sub-groups of pieces which are the starting point for analysing the stylistic-and-interpretative issues viewed in the third chapter.

In analysing the pieces in this section, stylistic marks typical for Schumann's piano music come to the fore: imagery, music expression, form making and others that give the argumentation for the significance of the section in all composers' works for piano; whereas historically they make it a model for piano music for children among composers from various music cultures and schools.

The remaining **research works** classified according to significance are: **1** article published in a scientific journal, referenced and indexed in a world-famous database; **4** treatises published in separate issues with ISBN code; **27** articles and reports in specialised issues and research works from international, national and university conferences. Of those **4** are in English and **1** in Russian. They elaborate both theoretical, stylistic-and-interpretational and genre aspects of the song genre in the works of Bulgarian composers, as well as methodical-and-pedagogical issues of teaching students in the specialty “Music” in basic academic disciplines. Of interest are the articles clarifying the experience of two leading pedagogues: in choral conducting – Prof. Anna Belcheva and Prof. Pencho Stoyanov in music analysis. Enclosed are proofs for the candidate's participation as a pianist-accompanist in **scientific-and-educational projects** and in **artistic-and-creative performances** with students.

The review of the scientific production of Chief Assist. Prof. doctor Zdravka Hvarkata submitted for participation in the announced competition in respect to topics complies with the scientific trend 8.3 Art of music and dance (History of music) and meets *the minimum*

national requirements, the Rules of PU and the additional requirements of the Pedagogical Faculty. There is complete compliance with them. The real number of points is 1145.

4. Scientific and scientific-and-applied contributions.

I accept the candidate's self-assessment concerning the contributions in the scientific activity and, summarizing my impressions from the general review of publications, I would like to emphasize some of them:

- in the centre of the candidate's research interest is *Bulgarian music culture* and the works of significant representatives from three generations of Bulgarian composers; (**Monographs №№ 1,2; articles №№ 20-23, 25**);

- in the analysis, observations and comments a unifying historical-and-theoretical approach is adopted which is focused on genres, forms and specifics of music-and-expression means; (**Monographs №№ 1,2,3 and in a number of articles**);

- the habilitation paper is actually the *first thorough study* of Dobri Hristov's secular choral music with clarification of the specific features of his individualised style and the historical contribution for Bulgarian musical culture (**Monographs №1, treatises №№ 1-3**);

- the issue of the "text-music" synthesis in the artistic concepts of Bulgarian composers presents various individual approaches and decisions from a creative point of view; (**Monographs №2, articles №№ 2, 7, 20**);

- the music-and-pedagogical issues are interpreted in a practical-and-applied plan and concern the training of students in "History of music", "Compulsory piano", music style; they suggest innovative decisions for a complex historical-and-theoretical background. (**Articles №№ 21,22, 24**).

To the scientific-and-applied contributions there are added also the two academic manuals which are thematically linked to the lecture course in "History of Bulgarian music" and the basic theoretical disciplines; yet, they rely on a broader application for testing students' knowledge and in students' writing course papers by use of the assigned main scientific literature.

5. Citation. There are noted **4** citations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review and **6** in non-referenced journals with scientific review. All of them are written by Bulgarian authors and refer to the period 2002-2022.

6. Critical remarks and recommendations.

On the ground of the topics of the candidate's research works, I would like to recommend:

- she could enrich her future research works with observations and comparative analyses on the evolution of genres and music forms in the music of XX C; finding out similar tendencies, for ex. in the works of B. Bartok, P. Hindemith, I. Stravinsky and other composers;
- the candidate could direct her interest to other significant spheres of the works of Bulgarian composers (rhapsodies, symphonies, and concerts) with analytical studies aimed at helping students to elaborate on them artistically;
- renaming the academic discipline "History of Bulgarian music" into 'History of Bulgarian music culture' or 'Bulgarian music culture'.

CONCLUSION

After getting acquainted with the materials and research works submitted for the competition, analysing their significance and the scientific and scientific-and-applied

contributions in them, I have the full ground to give my positive assessment and recommend the Scientific jury to make a report-proposal to the Faculty council of the Faculty of Pedagogy for electing Chief Assist. Prof. doctor Zdravka Marinova Hvarkata to the academic position of Assistant Professor in “Paisii Hilendarski” PU in: area of higher education 8. Art. 8.3. The art of music and dance, professional trend “History of music”.

15.03. 2023

Reviewer:
(signature)

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