

OPINION

by Prof. Dr. Magdalena Marinova Legkostup,

University of Veliko Tarnovo "St. Cyril and Methodius"

on a dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree "PhD"

by: field of higher education 2. Humanities

professional field 2.4. Religion and Theology

Doctoral Program Medicine, Psychology and Faith

Author: *Yuliyana Agop Odazhiyan*

Theme: *LITURGICAL AND MUSICOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE GREAT DOXOLOGY IN THE SLAVIC MANUSCRIPTS OF THE RILA CHOIR SCHOOL*

Scientific supervisor: Prof. DrSc Apostol Delipazov and Assoc. Prof. Dr Elena Arnaudova – Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv

1. General presentation of the procedure and the PhD student

By Order No. ПД -21-2360 of 17.12.2024 of the Rector of the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury for the procedure for the defense of my dissertation on " Liturgical and musicological aspects of the Great doxology in the Slavic manuscripts of the Rila choir school " for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the field of higher education 2. Humanities, professional field 2.4. Religion and Theology; Doctoral Program "Medicine, Psychology and Faith". The author of the dissertation, Yuliyana Agop Odazhiyan, has a solid education, teaching and professional experience. In 2005 he obtained a Bachelor's degree in Music Pedagogy and a Master's degree in Conducting at the Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts in Plovdiv. The candidate also has a theological education, acquired in 2013 in the Master's program of the Faculty of Theology at Sofia University. Kliment Ohridski", as well as pedagogical, realized through a master's program at the same university in 2016.

During his studies Yuliyana Odazhiyan started his pedagogical activity as a teacher of folklore and conductor of the orchestra at the National School of Folk-Loric Arts "Shiroka Luka" (2002-2003), as a music teacher at the Secondary School "Lyuben Karavelov", Lyuben Karavelov. Plovdiv (2003-2004) and as an educator, music teacher and choir director at Plovdiv Theological Seminary "St. Cyril and Methodius (1999-2009). In the period 2009-2018 she was a senior teacher of music and history at St. Kliment Ohridski, Sofia, Bulgaria. 2018-2019 she held the position of Chief Ex-expert at the Ministry of Education. From 2020 to the present she is the principal of Hristo Smirnenski Primary School, Kostelensky. He is also the president of the school.

Yuliyana Odazhiyan is enrolled in the Department of Theology as a PhD student in independent training by order of the Rector of the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv ПД 21-220/25.01.2024 in professional field 2.4. Religion and Theology in the doctoral program "Medicine, Psychology and Faith". Following early completion of the individual plan, the dissertation was dis-

charged with the right to defend in December 2024. The preliminary discussion of the thesis in the Department of Theology was held on 12.12.2024 (Minutes No. 138/12.12.2024). By order of the Rector of the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv No. ПД -21-2360 of 17.12.2024 the composition of the scientific jury and the deadline for the defense - until 13. 03. 2025 г. At its first meeting (Minutes No. 1/27.12.2024) Assoc. DrSc Stoyan Chilikov. The Scientific Jury decides that Yulian Hagop Odadzhian meets the minimum national requirements and admits the candidate to public defence. The reviewers are Assoc. Prof. Lyubomir Ignatov and Assoc. DrSc Stoyan Chilikov, and the preparation of written opinions is assigned to Prof. Dr. Vesela Geleva, Prof. Dr. Magdalena Legkostup and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ivelina Nikolova. The Scientific Jury sets the deadline for submission of reviews and opinions to 25.02.2025 and the date for public defense of the dissertation -13 March 2024.

All deadlines and rules of the procedure have been respected and no violations have been committed. Yuliyán Odazhyan meets the requirements and fulfils the criteria of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its implementation. The set of materials submitted by the PhD student is in accordance with Article 36 (1) of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

2. Topical relevance

The dissertation focuses on the study of the Great doxology with an emphasis on the Bulgarian contribution to the ecclesiastical tradition and in particular its liturgical and musicological aspects in the Slavic manuscripts of the Rila choir school. The topicality of the topic, belonging to the sphere of church singing as a part of practical theology, is determined both by the need for its theoretical illumination in academic terms and by the practical needs of enriching the beauty of contemporary church worship. The scholarly work makes a timely and relevant contribution, enriching the research field of Orthodox church music.

3. Knowledge of the problem

The work demonstrates an exceptionally good knowledge of the problem as an important part of both Eastern and Western liturgical tradition, arousing strong research interest in the origins, historical development, various redactions of the Great doxology, their content and liturgical use. The doctoral student directs the focus of his scientific work to the Eastern ecclesiastical tradition and its enrichment in the hymnographic and singing practice of the Rila Monastery during the Renaissance, demonstrating a very good knowledge of both the scientific works exploring the musical aspects of the Great doxology and the problem of the Rila choir school. Demonstrating a very good knowledge of the theoretical and practical-applied aspects of the subject, Yuliyán Odazhyan focuses his research interest on the Slavonic manuscripts of the Rila choir school, thoughtfully and precisely formulating and realizing the object, subject, aim and objectives of his research. Working with original sources and manuscripts, theological competence, excellent knowledge of the music

theory of eastern singing and professional vocal-performance knowledge and skills allow the realization of qualitative scientific analysis and the formulation of contributory conclusions and precise generalizations.

4. Methodology of the study

The main empirical methods used in the dissertation are conditioned by the interdisciplinary nature of the research, which implies a wider range of methodological approaches. One of the main methods of the study is the historical-critical one, which allows to trace synchronically and diachronically the origin, historical development and contemporary state of the text of the Great doxology, as well as its place in the liturgical practice of the Eastern churches with an emphasis on the Rila choir school. The philological approach in dealing with the liturgical Slavonic texts, in turn, necessitates the method of diachronic analysis used in close connection with the exegetical method in its specific textual and theological dimensions.

5. Characteristics and evaluation of the thesis and contributions

The dissertation is organized in an introduction, three chapters, conclusion, scientific contributions, references and appendices. The language in which the thesis is written is academically proficient and terminologically precise. Yuliyana Odazhiyan demonstrates very good skills in synthesizing the basic concepts related to liturgical aspects of the Great doxology (first chapter of the dissertation), as well as the ability to formulate ecclesiastical-historical, musicological and philological conclusions and findings when examining the Rila choir school and the Slavonic musical manuscripts studied in the Rila Monastery (chapter two). His scholarly and practical-applied contribution to the dissertation topic is extremely valuable in the content of Chapter Three, showing a mastered research approach through the musicological analysis of each song individually, the presented neume notation and followed by an analysis of tropes of the corresponding verse (Chapter Three).

The techniques and contributions of the dissertation research formulated in the abstract. It is indeed the first study of the Great doxology in the Orthodox liturgical tradition, which outlines a new research field that remained outside the interest of Bulgarian and foreign research on the topic. The clear, detailed and documented research findings and conclusions related to the Great doxology in the activities of the Rila scribes, as well as the wide-ranging and innovative for theological and musicological science musicological and tropological analysis of the Great doxology from manuscript No. HP 115 from the Rila Holy Monastery in the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth voices, represent a scientific novelty. The interdisciplinary nature of the research, involving various scientific fields - theological, musicological, hymnographic, church-historical, philological - also has a contributory character.

6. Assessment of publications and personal contribution of the PhD student

The author has presented five articles on the topic of the dissertation, one of which was published in an international collection abroad. The presented publications are a very good testimonial

for the scientific competence of Yuliyana Odazhiyan in the field of the dissertation, the only concern being that a large number of them are still in print.

7. Abstract dissertation

The abstract has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the relevant regulations of PU and reflects the main results achieved in the dissertation. Developed within 30 pages, it correctly conveys the content of the dissertation and can serve as a presentation of the main theses and conclusions of the dissertation.

8. Recommendations for future use of the dissertation contributions and results

I highly recommend that the dissertation research be published as a monograph, as it can be useful both to academic researchers and in practical application to clergy and psalters, as well as to anyone interested in Orthodox church music and the Bulgarian contribution to the enrichment of the church hymnographic and chant tradition.

CONCLUSION

The dissertation contains scientific, scientific applications and applied results, which represent an original contribution to science and meet all the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, The Rules of its application and the relevant Rules of the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv. I give my positive evaluation for the presented dissertation, the abstract of dissertation work, the results and contributions., and I propose the Honorable Scientific Jury to award the degree of Doctor of Education and Science to Yuliyana Agop Odazhiyan in the field of higher education 2. Humanities, professional field 2.4. Religion and Theology; Doctoral Program "Medicine, Psychology and Faith".

26.01.2025 г.

Drafted the opinion:

(подпис)

Prof. Dr Magdalena Legkostup