

STATEMENT

By **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nina Kubratova Naydenova**

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For obtaining the scientific degree of Doctor **with candidate Ismet Bexheti**

a full-time PhD student in the Doctoral Programme in Music

Department of Music, New Bulgarian University

Dissertation on:

PERFORMING WORKS BY KOSOVO COMPOSERS AT FESTIVALS OF CLASSICAL MUSIC (From 2000 to 2018)

Scientific supervisor: Prof. Dr. Milena Shushulova-Pavlova

The topic of the dissertation, "**PERFORMING WORKS BY KOSOVO COMPOSERS AT FESTIVALS OF CLASSICAL MUSIC (From 2000 to 2018)**", is the first to be researched, and as such it is determined to be of definite relevance in applied terms to the history and development of the Kosovar school of composition and the dissemination of national music in a given period. The collection and systematisation of the historical chronology of events of this order by the doctoral candidate enables the analysis and derivation of trends in two main areas - compositional creativity and management of cultural processes, with a focus on the creation and development of national culture, in particular classical music in Kosovo. With precise temporal and geographical parameters, Ismet Bexheti guarantees objectivity and enables the subject to be the basis for tracing historical processes in the field of classical music creation in Kosovo, in different scales and ratio formats. The significance of the theme is also enriched by the fact that it traces and analyses a great and important period of change in the field of art after 2000 in Kosovo, by focusing on historical, social, economic and legal circumstances, as well as including institutional support for creative initiatives.

The task set by Ismet Bexheti in his dissertation is justified by the possibility of improving festival conditions and incentives for Kosovar composers to include or create new creative works

commissioned by music festivals, and therefore provide financial support - part of a national cultural policy. The issue of building the country's missing opera and ballet hall is also raised, and the information gathered confirms its urgent need.

Ismet Bexheti divides his dissertation into three areas of research: festivals - festival events with different content, presenting different performers from Kosovo, Europe and the world; Kosovo composers - authors from Kosovo whose works are performed at festivals in the country; Kosovo - historical background of musical life since its inception. This approach and scope of the work is comprehensive enough to outline the main problems and to enable the formation of hypotheses for their overcoming and development. Ismet Bexheti defines the aim of this dissertation as follows " *...to investigate the classical music festivals in Kosovo and to prove the presence of works by Kosovar composers in Kosovo*".

I note, however, that Bexheti's objectives are much broader, and their lack of specific articulation in the course of the research would be considered an oversight if the results achieved in the work were not clearly visible and significant for the historical legacy they leave behind. For example, in order to achieve the completeness of his research, the doctoral student brings out five generations of Kosovar composers, skillfully dividing them by stylistic approaches in their works - from national music and neo-romanticism to the most recent stylistic treatments of 20th century music. The following festivals are examined: Kosovar KamerFest, ReMusica, DAM Festival and Chopin Piano Fest. Bexheti divides the artists participating in the festivals into international and local performers. It is also interesting to examine some of the festival's guidelines for non-performance activities such as master classes, workshops, etc. The set tasks are comprehensive and are achieved by answering the questions posed by the doctoral student in his research, namely citation:

- *Is it true that classical music festivals in Kosovo are the events that present works by national composers?*

- *What is the criterion for including musical works by national composers in festivals in Kosovo?*

- *What effect do festivals have on the creative activity of Kosovo composers, on the creation of certain musical genres?*

- *What is the perspective of composers and performing events in Kosovo?*

For the analysis, the Ph.D. candidate used a bibliographic approach by collecting and describing all the testimonies about the festival concerts held between 2000 and 2018, such as: review of printed brochures, review of online brochures, direct information from festival directors and organisers;

Ismet Bexheti defines the research method as analytical, which is combined with the quantitative method to collect the full number of events through descriptive statistics, and for the characteristics of the concepts of the events and other aspects related to the composers, the PhD student clarifies that he is using the qualitative method. I believe that the chosen methods are well chosen and meet the objectives.

On the basis of the material examined, Bexhetti makes the following statistical contributions

- Number of Kosovo performances at classical music festivals in Kosovo;
- Number of international performances at classical music festivals in Kosovo;
- Number of performances by artists per country at classical music festivals in Kosovo;
- Number of performances by Kosovo composers at classical music festivals in Kosovo;
- Number of performances by foreign composers at classical music festivals in Kosovo;
- Number of works by foreign composers at classical music festivals in Kosovo;
- Number of works by composers by country at classical music festivals in Kosovo;
- Number of Kosovar composers by generation.

The conclusions that Ismet Bexheti draws after a thorough research of four classical music festivals are of utmost importance for the continuation of the traditions of these musical forums and their transformation into cultural policies for the development of national composers and performers. I consider the preparation of a numerical index of the percentage of works by composers in general and by Kosovo composers in particular, as well as by performers from 2011 to 2018 in the mentioned festivals to be of important applied significance. This statistical data would definitely justify the formation of the above-mentioned cultural policy, namely to enable

Kosovo artists and the country's classical music festivals to fulfil one of the main objectives that derive from their mission and programming concept, namely to form /quote/ "*intercultural dialogue as a fundamental spirit of the new Europe*" and last but not least /quote/ "*educational and upbringing function - such as is more than necessary for Kosovo*".

The text and its conclusions could also serve to motivate and shape a stable and sustainable financial support that would ensure the reliable functioning of the festivals and thus contribute more to their quality and thus to a greater motivation of Kosovo's composers and performers.

The dissertation has a sufficient length, bibliography and correct citations.

In conclusion, I believe that the dissertation defends the set thesis and objectives, has its contribution and application and **I give my positive evaluation and my vote to award the degree of Doctor of the New Bulgarian University to the candidate Ismet Bexheti.**