

REVIEW

By

Prof. Yavor Svetozarov Konov, PhD,

Department of Music, NBU

Professor of Counterpoint

(professional field 8.3 "Music and Dance Art")

on the dissertation for the acquisition of the degree of *Doctor*

in the professional field 8.3. "Music and Dance Art"

by MIRNA MLIKOTA-DIZDAREVIĆ

Topic:

THE ROLE FOR A FLUTE SOLOIST IN THE XVIII, XIX, XX CENTURY: A COMPARISON OF QUALITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Research supervisors:

Prof. Dr Luisa Sello and

Prof. Dr Milena Shushulova-Pavlova

Performance supervisor (flute) - Prof. Dr Luisa Sello

NBU, Sofia, 2021

Briefly about the PhD candidate (from the information about her at the end of the abstract):

Mirna Mlikota (b. 1993 in Zenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Primary and secondary music education with Summa cum laude), Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the Academy of Music in Sarajevo (2016 and 2018, all under Prof. Saqib Lacevic). Mirna accomplished a second Master's degree at the Ljubljana Academy of Music (2019, Prof. Matej

Župan). She has participated in many masterclasses with distinguished flautists. She was awarded the "Gold Badge" from the University of Sarajevo for outstanding artistic achievements.

Mirna participated in numerous national and international competitions. She has an extensive concert activity (flute, piccolo flute and traverso - solo, chamber music, soloist of orchestras, from baroque to contemporary music). She performs at festivals in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Slovenia and Italy.

She founded the Trio Flavia (2019) for flute, violin and viola with colleagues from the Academy. Member (2021) of the ensemble Le agane (flautists under the direction of Prof. Louise Sello, founder). Currently works as an assistant professor of flute at the Academy of Music in Sarajevo.

The dissertation submitted to me for review contains 122 pages, in a volume about 1.3x larger than the BDS (its text is printed in the standard 28 lines of 85 characters instead of 30x60), i.e. its size is approx. One hundred sixty pages according to the Bulgarian State Standard). The dissertation is written in English. The abstract is in English as well as Bulgarian. I immediately note that I would translate the title of the dissertation 'The Role of the Flute Soloist in the 18th, 19th and 20th Centuries: A Parallel between Achievements and Expectations', but this is just my personal opinion.

The abstract of the dissertation is available on the Department's website "Music" NBU ("Doctoral Students") - translated into Bulgarian, which relieves me of the need to present here the content of the dissertation and/or retell it. The abstract has its specific content - you can see that it mainly shows chapter 1 (only two pages) and chapter 3 (in 18 pages) of the dissertation, i.e., the most self-authored for the PhD candidate.

The translation of the abstract in Bulgarian is good and literate. I do not know whose work it is; congratulations to the translator! Perhaps the author should write his name out of respect and gratitude... Because it is clear that this translation is not the work of a doctoral student) Well, there is a small need for a proofreader, here and there for an editor (e.g. in some places, I would use past tense rather than present historical because it gets mixed up with "now-present" :) tense).

The dissertation is structured as follows: Abstract (one page) with keywords, Table of Contents, Introduction, 3 Chapters (I am retelling them: History and Evolution of the Flute, Styles and Changes - Baroque, Classical, Romantic, 20th and 21st centuries; Past and Present - what was expected and what happened), Conclusion (with which ends the dissertation on page 108), List of Contributions, Publications (1) and concerts (7) relating to the dissertation. Each epoch is presented in its characteristics, including stylistics and musical forms. The most famous composers are indicated, particularly for music for flute, respectively flute players, the flute as an instrument and its use are commented on; parallels are drawn with modern days. (Much of this information is well known to professionally educated musicians...) The dissertation is illustrated with photographs of numerous flutes (pp. 19-29 in the dissertation). There are no sheet music examples. There is much to be elaborated on (including activation of the links).

Sources of information used in the dissertation research are:16 printed books (in Latin, various languages: English, Serbian, French; some of the bibliographic descriptions need to be completed). Internet sources are 69 (only in English, if I am not mistaken; I am not impressed with the use of Wikipedia as a source of information on dissertation research). Plus three interviews of famous flautists (2 with Emmanuel Piauud and 1 with Jean-Pierre Rampal, which are given special attention in the dissertation).

The dissertation could also be used as a reference and educational material; it would be good to edit and publish it, perhaps as a monograph; it could include a video disc with the recordings of the concerts performed by the candidate in connection with it.

The doctoral student is a European graduate, excellently trained both practically and historically, and theoretically (in particular, in terms of history and evolution of the flute and the flute repertoire, in concert and teaching practice), presented very detailed findings, reflections and hypotheses (thereby activating her reader's mind¹) and from the last years of Covid-pandemic, online teaching, learning, performing, recording, changes in the functions of music, the place, role,

¹ For example, this: 'Music is a living thing, changeable, unpredictable like water, we cannot and do not try to shape or tame it, but let it be free' (abstract in Bulgarian, p. 19). And further, "In all this anarchy and complete freedom, however, many composers, musicians, amateur flautists, who greet with great joy this time when everything can pass' (ibid., p. 21), with which I fully agree

activities of musician and musicians, changes in audiences, marketing, markets, conversions, commercialisation issues ("Some of the best contemporary musicians are getting far fewer followers on social networks or people who care about their music than musicians who play commercial music", p. 18 of the abstract). Online access to sheet music, recordings, listening and viewing options, changes in attitudes, understandings, habits, readiness... I didn't come across a comment about online rehearsals - something virtually impossible (I know from personal experience - through internet two, let alone more, musicians cannot be sonically together).

"Plato once said, 'The better the music, the better the state' - this comparison (Plato's era with the city-states of the time - and his ideas of such a well-ordered city-state and the music of then - with the music of today...) is highly tentative, but let us assume that it remains valid in principle.

I accept, in general, the contributions of the doctoral candidate, which very fully illustrate what has been done in the dissertation.

In connection with the dissertation are the seven concerts performed by the doctoral student (in ensembles: flute and harpsichord, flute and piano, two flutes and piano - in Sarajevo and other cities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in Milan and Venice in Italy - in these already with her flute teacher and research supervisor Prof. Dr Luisa Sello). The concerts feature works from Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Contemporary... And one live radio broadcast performance (all in 2020). There are internet links to all performances

There is one publication related to the dissertation, which is cumulative with the concerts,

I accept that the dissertation - a performance - has been done and, through the recordings on the Internet, is sufficiently available to the public and colleagues.

According to the literature used, the doctoral candidate has sufficient knowledge of the state of the issues, and her knowledge and experience as a performing musician, historian and theorist, and a teacher are impressive.

Congratulations to her supervisors, Professor Dr Luisa Sello (her flute teacher) and Prof. Dr Milena Shushulova-Pavlova.

The material used in the research is reliable. The dissertation and contributions of the doctoral student prove that Mirna Mlikota-Dizdarevic has profound historical and theoretical knowledge of the speciality and a high ability of independence in conducting scientific research. Her participation in the preparation of the dissertation is indisputable.

Based on the preceding, I am IN FAVOR of awarding a Doctor of Musicology educational and academic degree to Mirna Mlikota-Dizdarevic for her dissertation, the subject of my present review.

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Sofia, 25 March 2022