OPINION

by Yavor Svetozarov Konov

Doctor of Art Studies

(under the scientific direction 8.3. "Musicology and Music Art")and **Professor of Polyphony**

(in the same scientific field),

from the Department of Music of New Bulgarian University – Sofia,

on the dissertation of

Honorary Professor of NBU Stefan Todorov Dragostinov

on the topic: "Polytempi – time and space"

developed under the scientific guidance of the

Prof. Dr. Simo Lazarov, Honorary Professor of NBU,

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for acquiring the educational and scientific degree Doctor

in the scientific direction 8.3. "Musicology and Musical Art"

Biographical data about the PhD student:

The pianist, composer, conductor and teacher Stefan Dragostinov (born 1948) is well known to the College. He defended the current, to the greatest extent author-efficacious and equally autobiographical dissertation, at the age of 75. What is said in these two sentences makes me feel uncomfortable giving him an "Opinion". But legally necessary. (Otherwise, if it were up to me, I would have invited Maestro Stefan Dragostinov to have a cup of coffee – or whatever drink he preferred – and to award him the doctoral diploma: he is more than proven competent in the topic of his dissertation and not only in it. I have written about Stefan Dragostinov: "Verski Stefan" https://yavorkonov.alle.bg/ publications/Verski-Stefan-Dragostinov/, before... 7 years. God, when did they pass!)

If we need to write reviews and opinions and have public protection – let them be a celebration for him.

According to the CV provided to me... – what to present data about Stefan here – there is a sum of you on the Internet, for example in the Bulgarian Wikipedia. I will just emphasize

– in connection with the dissertation – that I begin. Prof. Stefan Dragostinov since the late 1970s has been mentally and compositionally engaged in "polytempia" and "polyrhythmy". Decisive useful to him was the invented at that time by the composer Iliya Kozhuharov device "Photopolymetronome". (I know personally Assoc. Prof. Dr. Iliya Kozhuharov – an extremely knowledgeable musician, composer, musicologist and teacher, adept in mathematics before that, a very interesting mind and an interlocutor with a not quite ordinary character. I congratulate Stefan Dragostinov for paying attention and showing respect and gratitude to Iliya and considering his compositions in his dissertation.)

I read the dissertation fully and carefully, as well as the autoreferencing to it. The dissertation **submitted to me as an opinion file** is located on 216 pages, in a volume close to that on BDS, including a large number of illustrations – about 65 notation examples, screenshots, facsimiles of correspondence and a program of a concert, tables, calculations. **The autoreferat** (also provided to me as a file with a volume of 48 pages, equivalent as a symbolic composition to about 90-100 pages according to BDS) sufficiently reflects the dissertation.

A large volume of dissertation for educational and scientific degree of Doctor. **It is structured as follows**: Introduction, 11 chapters, Conclusion, Contributions, Bibliography, Publications, Contributions, CV of the doctoral student. It begins with an extensive historical exposition of the multiplicity (polytempaemia) ***in nature and in the development of mankind (in Chapter One*** – I point out the particularly touching, even enviable, subpart 1.2 "1.2.Polytempic sound processes in nature"). In prehistory, in the Middle Ages (I note only that the authorship of Philippe de Vitrie on the treatise Ars Nova, which does not cancel what is written in it, JAK), the Renaissance, the Baroque, Classicism, Romanticism (in ***chapter Two***). In the diversity of the twentieth century, with already so different and divergent techniques, constructions, stylistics – in polyphony, polyrhythmy, polytempia (***in Chapter Three***). In the evolution of polytempic processes (***in Chapter Four***). ***In Chapter Five,*** Stefan Dragostinov presents and comments on the so-called "controlled polytempa" (in connection with which he also introduces new concepts, musical-theoretical terms and designations), examines the historical prerequisites for the emergence and evolution of new technological-creative directions. It is here that he tells about the "composer Iliya Kozhuharov and the apparatus "Photopolymetronome" created by him – which a polymetronome with light signals shows and provides both for the conductor and for the performers the speed (temperate) of the simultaneously performed by them. ***Chapter Six tells about the*** creation of an improved photopolymetronome, in connection with which the author extensively comments on his Concerto for Piano and Orchestra ("Polytempi 4"). ***In Chapters Seven*** and ***Eight*** continues

with the different time parameters of the polytemperate period (in 7.) and for the subordination between 2 such (in 8.). ***In Chapter Nine*** we read about "Technological implementation of monotempic structures in polytempic space". ***In Chapter Ten*** – on "Controlled Polytempia and Emerging Psychological Obstacles to Conductors and Performers". ***In Chapter Eleven*** – on "Future Prospects in the Creative and Technological Development of the Method Controlled Polytempia and the Photopolymetronome Instrumentation".

Stefan Dragostinov writes that "the theoretical contribution of this study lies in the construction of a comprehensive systematized concept describing the method of composition "Controlled polytempa", a detailed outline of the parameters and possibilities offered by the "Photopolymetronome" equipment; the development of a complex technological-creative platform containing all the main components of the compositing techniques based on "Controlled Polytempia." As practical significance of his dissertation points out "the real possibility of extensive use of the achieved theoretical results in future academic training of young artists and their acquaintance with the method of composition "Controlled Polytempia", respectively, with the technological-creative resource and capacity of the equipment Photopolymetronome.' (Autoreferat page 5). I agree with what has been said.

The PhD student bases his text mainly on his works: the miniature "Poly-Drums", the cantatas "The Fair" ("Polytempi 1") and "Polytempi 3", mostly on his Concerto for Piano and Orchestra "Polytempi 4", as well as on his choral instrumental suite "Sacraments of Christmas" (1991) – i.e. ***applies mainly the so-called "author-efficacious method" – historiographic***, *technological,* ***musically analytical and predictive. However, Stefan Dragostinov***'s dissertation discusses not only works by Stefan Dragostinov, but also by Iliya Kozhuharov ("Canon No. 2" for violin, horn and piano, and "Competition") and Bozhidar Spassov ("Temporhythms" for clarinet in B, violin and piano), all three of their pieces are premiered in their joint concert on March 12, 1979 in Plovdiv.

In ***the historical review,*** in the course of ***chapters the second – fourth*** are commented – and illuminated through musical excerpts from them – both the most famous works by different composers, as well as less popular and new ones. ***In chapter Two –*** Philippe de Vitry, isorhythmic motet "In arboris / Tuba sacre fidei / Virgo sum"; Johannes Okegem, "Missa Prolationum" /Cyrie – lapsus "calami", CC/ – double prolation canon between 2 pairs of votes; Josquin de Pré, "Missa L'homme armé super voces musicales" – 5th part (Agnus Dei), 3-vowel polymetric prollationary canon with a common beginning; J. S. Bach, "Musical sacrifice" and DTK1 – joint No. 23; L. van Beethoven, the double "Great Joint" (Große Fuge) for string quartet, op. 133 (1825). ***In chapter Three*** – I. Stravinsky, "Symphony of Psalms" for choir and

orchestra (1930) – second part (double 4-vowel joint); P. Hindemith, "Ludus Tonalis" (1942), and his opera "Hin und zurück", op. 45 (1927, CC) – a kind of 15-minute palindrome; A. Berg, his unfinished opera "Lulu" (1929-35), also with palindrome 2nd act. A detailed presentation of stretta constructions in the following joints follows: No 9 by 'Ludus tonalis' in Hindemith; part one (fugue) from "Music for strings, percussion and celestia" by B. Bartok; and the 5-vowel joint No 4 with exposure in ascending quints, from the piano cycle for two pianos "Fugue Integral" by Stefan Dragostinov; strett structures. The following are references to prolationary canons, in particular it is presented by: Shostakovich (in the first part of his 15th Symphony, 1971). ***Chapter Four*** is devoted to polytempia. *To note: it is true that on the Internet – and through Google – the Greco-Latin term polytempism introduced by the author ("for the first time here – in this scientific work") is found. Yes, the search for it comes out "polytheism" (which is a Greco-Greek compound term). But the Latin Latin term multitempo exists. There is also the term "polytempo" and there is an article about it in Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polytempo, which reads that initially theoretically commented on the matter also the American pianist, composer, theorist and composer Henry Dixon Cowell (1897–1965); Accordingly, there is the term "multitemporal music" – in which different sound streams have different pulsation rates, respectively. Pace; I'm just noting. So, in* chapter Four: polytempia in works by: C. Ivez (his chamber play in 2 music groups in different tempo groups "Question without an answer", 1908, but with world premiere only in 1946); S. Nancarrow (String Quartet No. 3, 1987 CC) – with a 4-vowel polymetric polymetric canon at the beginning of its first part; K. Gann ("Restless Night", 2004, for mechanical piano) – 5-layer (actually from 4 to 6) polymetric-polyrhythmic invoice, creating a sense of polytempicity; K. Stockhausen ("Gruppen" for 3 orchestras, respectively with 3 conductors, 1955-57 – polytempo, but in places and monotempo 3 ensembles; impressive polymetrics); M. Puchkov (born 1984 in Moscow in a family of programmers, JAK): "NE" (bayan/accordion quartet, saxophone, 4-string domra and cello, 2004). M. Puchkov specifies in the preface to the work that the title combines the chemical designation of neon (which does not bind to other chemical elements) with the Russian negation word "no!". Accordingly, every instrument in the work was similarly inert. The composition as such presupposes performing modification, YC. "Polytemporal music for accordion, domra, cello and saxophone" (author's description of the work, here: https://youtu.be/EMjJqpgWvSI?si=014pcogmDjoHjrvq, I did not want to listen to it until the end, CC).

In Chapter Five, "The Controlled Polytempia" are presented, the composer Iliya Kozhuharov (born 1949, JAK; who graduated simultaneously from a high school with a

mathematics class and a music school in Plovdiv, a graduate of Marin Goleminov) and the electromechanical equipment created by him in the 70s of the last century (through a rotating disk and lights) "Photopolymetronome" ("Fhotopolymetronome)", with set 3 primary rates (M.M.♩=72, M.M.=78 and M.M.=84, in a ratio of 12:13:14) with a difference between them of 6 (Kozhuharov's non-random choice related to divisibility), showing them lightly. ♩♩ Today I say to myself: really very limited in its parameters, already completely anachronistic equipment, in our modern long and ubiquitous computerized life. I read in St. George's dissertation. Dragostinov that the notation by hand of works for this equipment was done with the preparation of the score with templates, slow and difficult, as the 3 lines prepared with them were called "Polytempic period". The writing of the composition was also slow and difficult. (As architecture and design was on drawing boards, and today it has long been software; and photography, and sound recording, and whatnot..., YK.) The author also presents graphically emerging (visually) structure, which he calls with an introduced term "Polytempic Fan", according to a figured analogy. It would have been good if this photopolymetronome had been shown in the dissertation through photographs and a technical scheme to make it really clear what it was talking about – because only with these verbal descriptions, although in their huge volume and with countless explanations and numbers, it does not work. Then in the same chapter the Fifth are analytically commented – and illustrated with notated examples of them – the works "Canon No. 2" for violin, horn and piano (pro-projection serial canon of 3 simultaneously started polytempo layers) by I. Kozhuharov, "Temporrhythms" by Bozhidar Spassov (for clarinet in B, violin and piano, also 3-layer polytempia with polymetric canonical imitation and polyrhythmy), and those of St. Dragostinov: the miniature "Poly-Drums" (1978, for percussion ensemble), the cantatas "La Foire – Polytempi 1", whose premiere, at the composition competition "Gaudeamus", was the first use of "Photopolymetronome" on stage - on September 10, 1978 in Hilversum, the Netherlands) and "Polytempi No 3", and "Concerto for piano and orchestra" (Polytempi No 4, 1980). The PhD student says that before he started writing his piano concerto, he had already thought that a newer equipment should be created - a photopolymetronome and turned to Eng. Ivan Marangozov (1925-98): already at 5 primary rates (M.M.=66, =72, =78, =84 and =90, ♩♩♩ with intertemporal proportions 11:12:13:14:15), with a button for switching the temp layer and ♩ with an advanced potentiometer for fine change of pace. ♩ The two engineers promised him that he would have the equipment within 3 months, and he already calmly sat down to write his piano concerto "Polytempi 4", which is very detailed and thoroughly presented and analyzed, part by part, ***in chapter Six*** (in its titles 6.2., 6.3., 6.4.

and 6.5.). This analysis would be really useful if the reader had the whole score and an audio recording. I will not comment on the techno-descriptive chapters ***Seventh*** and ***Eighth***. ***In Chapter Ten,*** we read about features and difficulties – technically and psychologically – in the rehearsals and concert realizations of the cantatas "The Fair" and "Polytempi No. 3" (and about the main role of the choral conductor Krikor Cetignan in writing and performing Polytempi 3, in tandem with his assistant Sashka Toromanova), as well as the Polytempi Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No. 4 (respectively by the Italian pianist Antonio Baccelli in Bergamo), also published by the worldwide Italian publishing house Ricordi. It is also valuable as a story.

I also think (like K. Cetignan and the orchestral conductor from Milan, I do not know why, left without a name by St. Dragostinov), that such equipment, soullessly measuring one or another pulsation and setting the tempo, presupposes a "stiff" flow of music, which, like everything in living nature, must flow flexibly and uniquely non-uniformly.

In the course of the exhibition, a large number of composers and their textbook polyphonic works are also indicated, so that the text can also be used in teaching polyphony.

I read intrigued Stefan Dragostinov's ideas and comments in the direction of opportunities for technological-creative development of "Controlled Polytempia" and the "Photopolymetronome" apparatus (in Chapter Eleven): I think that the incredible and increasingly comprehensive computerization and the evolution of software capabilities presuppose really unimaginable as potential modifications of supporting polytempo composition and execution.

Yes, in his dissertation, St. Dragostinov, of course, defends the thesis that it is imperative to construct modern (computer) equipment Photopolymetronome, because the technology has a future in composing, respectively. organizing training of young composers to work with her.

В разказаното, описаното, коментираното в текста й, са и приносите на настоящата дисертация. Те са систематично описани в края на автореферата и ги приемам като цяло.

The bibliography of the dissertation contains descriptions of 20 monographs, textbooks, articles, Facebook publications in Cyrillic, of which 18 in Bulgarian (including 1 translated biography from Russian) and 2 in Russian, and 11 in Latin (of which 6 in English, including 2 translated from German and 5 into German).

Publications in connection with the dissertation indicated by the doctoral student:

Scores

Stefan Dragostinov. Polytempi № 4 (Concerto per pianoforte e orchestra №1) - Casa editrice Ricordi, 1980. ID: PART 05142.

Stefan Dragostinov. La Foire – Politempi № 1. Edition Dragostin Musik International, 2000.

Стефан Драгостинов. Politempi № 3 (за женски хор). Държавно издателство „Музика“, 1981.

Stefan Dragostinov. Fugue Integral (for two pianos). Edition Dragostin Musik International, 2006.

Articles and reports

Драгостинов, Стефан. Контролираната политемпия – технологично-творчески ресурс на бъдещето. В: „Музикални хоризонти“ – брой 9, стр. 20 – 24, и брой 10 (продължение), стр. 17 – 21. 2019. ISSN 1310-0076.

Драгостинов, Стефан. Слово и музика в съвременния свят на контролираната политемпия. В: „Музикални хоризонти“ – брой 3, стр. 13 – 19, 2020. ISSN 1310-0076.

Драгостинов, Стефан. Спомени за Крикор Четинян и неговата хорова школа – Ангелският Божи хор се сдоби с великия диригент Крикор Четинян. В: „Музикални хоризонти“, брой 6, стр. 23 – 27, 2018. ISSN 1310-0076.

Драгостинов, Стефан. Политемпо. Пропорции, интеррелации и триединство на темпа́та. В: Млад научен форум за музика и танц, Нов български университет, стр. 61-73, 2020. ISSN 1313-342X

I have no data provided on citations of the PhD student by other authors, reviews in the scientific press. But the composer Stefan Dragostinov is quite authoritative and famous.

Does the PhD student know matter – more than anyone else in the world.

Is it author's work – it could hardly be more author's.

Is the topic of the dissertation relevant – yes.

I do not express opinions, **recommendations** and comments.

Naturally, I would like to congratulate his scientist prof. Dr. Simo Lazarov.

In conclusion: on the basis of the above, I vote FOR the PhD student Honorary Professor of NBU Stefan Todorov Dragostinov to be awarded the educational and scientific degree of Doctor in the scientific field "8.3. " Musicology and Music Art" for his dissertation "Polytempi – Time and Spaces" (2023).

Sofia, October 06, 2023 Prof. Yavor Svetozarov Konov, Ph.D., DSc.