

## **SHORT REVIEW**

By Prof. Dr. Ganka Nedelcheva, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

On a dissertation on topic:

### **„RHYTHMICS, MUSIC AND SOUND PICTURE AS POSSIBLE SUBSTITUTES FOR A MISSING DRAMATURGICAL STRUCTURE IN NON-VERBAL THEATER AND PERFORMANCES BASED ON NON-THEATRICAL TEXT”**

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For awarding of the educational and scientific degree PhD

in professional field 8.4 Theater and Film Art

The submitted dissertation contains 122 standard pages allotted, according to content, in a structure of Introduction, 4 thematic chapters, Conclusion, Scientific Contributions and Reference with modules – Cited Literature, Books in Bulgarian, Books in English. The academic procedure for preliminary consideration and endorsement of the dissertation at an extended meeting of the Drama Theater Acting Department at NATFA "Kr. Sarafov" and referral of the doctoral student to defense has been duly followed.

The author of the submitted work has formatted her scientific and research searches through the theater-music relation in order to offer her effective models of working with students. This is a sign of a professional reflex which frequently starts with pedagogic practice and is finalized by similar theoretical developments.

In the **Introduction** to her text, Petya Dimanova specifies the object, the subject and the goals of her study, communicates her methods and working hypotheses, and also introduces terminological clarification of the conceptual apparatus used. These attributes of the Introduction are relevant to the

presented reflections on theatrical performance as a manifestation of “symbolism” and the presence of music as its partner.

**Chapter I.** *Functions of Rhythm and Music in Non-Theater Conditionality* extensively traces the prehistoric existence of music which in its authenticity overlaps with primitiveness and rituality in a constant and peculiar game between the magical and the real. Interesting aspects of interaction between the folklore and the canons of Eastern Orthodox singing in the context of genesis and evolution of musical-theater practices are sought.

**Chapter II.** *Functions of Theatrical Music in the Performance* focusses the observations of the doctoral student on the sound field as a part of the theatrical, i.e. the semantic suggestion. She comments on Turner’s publications, Stanislavsky’s practices, Wagner’s musical-dramaturgical experience, takes the musical-historian time back to Aristoteles and Vitruvius in order to meet the Music with its autonomy, with the Theater the conventionality of which gives life to the music worlds. The semantic content of this coalescence is further clarified by the author also through other dimensions of musical-theatrical ritual placed in a different genre environment treated as a convention of fiction as well as through various functional aspects of sound as an acting character in the performance.

The entry of the doctoral student in the zone of musical pedagogy which is the subject of the presentation in **Chapter III** is explicable and logically reasoned. Despite the essayistic verbal approach, she manages to convince the reader of the dissertation about the need of musical-pedagogic methods in the work with future actors. A basis for this are the fundamental musical abilities – musical hearing, metro-rhythmic sense, musical memory. *„The actor must be musically and tempo-rhythmically literate in order to be able to handle the text and the pauses in it, to master the rhythm adequate for the performance and to develop his “musical intuition”... he must pay particular attention to the following manifestations of the rhythm related to its stage performance: the rhythm of dialogue exchange between the characters; rhythm in the character’s walking; rhythm in the reactions of the characters towards the drama events; rhythm in the character’s speech; rhythm in the reiteration of words and phrases; rhythm in stylized or synchronized movements of the characters;*

*rhythm in speed changes of scenes; rhythm in non-vocal sound made by an actor". (p. 49)*

Thus, the turn logically goes to Petya Dimanova's pedagogic ideas presented in group and individual rhythmic exercises as part of the actor's practical training in music. In her conception, two zones are presented as a foundation – the musical-theoretical knowledge and the vocal practice of the future actor (voice staging, breathing, sound production). All the findings and summaries are deduced and considered by the doctoral student through the prism of physiology and manifestations of human higher nervous activity with its psychic functions.

In the last **fourth chapter** of the dissertation, the author exposes her design of a "Vocal Training" for students majoring in the specialties of Drama Theater Acting and Puppet Theater Acting at the Stage Art Faculty, which has the status of a mandatory subject for 4 years. The curriculum includes 27 topics she arranged in 3 modules: *Module 1. Elements of vocal-technical culture of the actor, Module 2. Artistic means of expression, Module 3. Performance issues and their practical handling through various methodological forms.* The author's motivation is high enough for the high professional goals she has stated: *„Formation of a universal actor in modern theater, for whom the vocal competence as a set of knowledge, skills and experience, is a condition for professional formation, development and improvement in the field of drama and puppet theater acting.” (p. 103)*

In the **Conclusion** of her dissertation, Petya Dimanova shares the results of her creative production which are the strongest attestation for her research work.

I endorse the scientific contributions of the doctoral student, and the content of the Abstract, as documents in the current procedure.

I allow myself to make several critical remarks regarding the technical precision of the type-setting, recommending more attention to the use of articles in Bulgarian and compliance of the Bibliography reference with the affirmed Bulgarian and international standards. I would also make another recommendation about the clarifications about authors and individuals in the

footnotes who will gain if presented with the years of their birth and death which automatically specifies the historical time.

These critical remarks are a matter of goodwill and are meant as a recommendation to a capable colleague. They don't alter the positive overall impression and appraisal of the dissertation presented by Petya Dimanova.

I propose to the Distinguished Scientific Jury to award the scientific and educational degree of PHD to Petya Dimanova.

Member of the SJ:

(Prof. Ganka Nedelcheva, PhD)