Kuriakos Koursaris:
Main conducting Techniques based on Greek and Cypriot folk music

OPPONENT'S EVALUATION

Mr. Koursaris's topic is of a great interest and this is a big advantage on the one hand but on the other it is also a big responsibility. It is truth that this kind of projects are very rare in Cyprus and maybe also in Greece and if we bear in mind that the level of music education (and not only) increases rabidly, the necessity of their existence becomes more obvious. Another fact that makes this diploma work interesting is the utilization of the so called "Design Science Thesis" model, a "modus operandi" that as the author mentions in the introduction influenced the structure of his final thesis.

The discussed diploma work is comprised of four chapters; the first offers the required "background" information concerning the art of conducting and some basic information about the Greek and Cypriot music. In the following chapter a more detailed analysis of the two previous topics is offered in which the author tries to answer several questions that derive from his topic. The third chapter is the longer and the most important because here we can follow the presentation of the most important conducting "problems" (I am not sure if this is the right word) and their "solutions". In the last chapter an evaluation of the thesis concludes the whole project.

The structure of the work is very comprehensible and it enables the reader to follow the development of the project without any difficulties. The author uses also a very rich vocabulary though while reading his thesis I had often the feeling that he was translating each word from the Greek language. It is evident that Mr. Koursaris worked very hard and fortunately not worthless. I believe that he wrote an excellent thesis that can be very useful for musicians in Cyprus and I strongly recommend that his work should be used by the foreign students of the Charles University.

I have to mention though that I had noticed some mistakes, the following are just some of them: page 10 last line of the 2nd paragraph, page 29 last paragraph 3rd line, page 83 2nd paragraph 2nd line etc.

In pages 16, 18 and 94 the author speaks about the Ancient Greek modes and their relationship with the so called "European Church" modes and subsequently Greek folk music. From his analysis it becomes obvious that his is not aware of the fact that the two are not identical, for example the Dorian mode of the European music (from Gregorian chant to nowadays) and the Dorian of the Ancient Greek music are not the same scale. This is another minus of his thesis.

In the beginning, as well as in the last chapter Mr. Koursaris writes that he uses Greek and Cypriot music, this is not truth since a lot of the compositions he uses are "Art songs" of contemporary composers.

In the section about "divided starts" it seems that every composition that begins on the second half of a beat should be conducted by subdivision of a beat, this though is not possible in fast tempo. I would like to argue also with the way that Mr. Koursaris "solves" the "Staccato problem" as well as the "short" and "long" ends.

There are many points that I would like to discuss with the author, but unfortunately here is not enough space. Before finishing I would like to mention that while having a look at the bibliography I have noticed some books that have no connection with the topic of the thesis (e.g. A. Amarandidis, The Music Tonal System).

Despite the above mentioned "negatives" of the work, I consider this diploma work to be one of the best that I ever read and if we bear in mind the fact that it is so useful for Cypriot musicians as well as for the students of Charles University it becomes obvious that it should be marked as **excellent**

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