

Andreas Zakos
Bouzouki: The National Greek Instrument

The Opponent's Report

I have known Andrea Zakos for five years, since the very beginning of his study at the Charles University - Faculty of Education. I always appreciated his reliability and responsibility; in my opinion, thanks to his hard work, he has made a great progress both in his theoretical knowledge and in all areas of practical musical skills during his study.

The theme of his diploma thesis is concerned to bouzouki, the traditional folk instrument of Greek music. The author interprets the theme from various points of view in seven chapters. At the beginning, he informs about the history of bouzouki from ancient Greece to our days. I mostly appreciate that he describes this development on the background of the social a political situation in each period. The following chapter is concerned in the most important musical style intepreted by bouzouki, the Rebetiko. After that, the author describes the construction of the instrument, the way of playing positions – the functions of the left and right hand and the special notation used for bouzouki. I concider chapter 6 very interesting, where Andreas informs about specific Greek folk modes. His thesis closes with short biographies of most important bouzouki intepreters and their individual contribution to bouzouki intepretation style. In general, I consider this diploma dissertation as a very succesful monography. It is necessary to appreciate schematic pictures, photographs and schemes which help to understand the text and several video records which are contained on the enclosed CD.

My following questions and notices concern several problems I would like to be answered at the oral state exam:

- 1) The whole work concernes bouzouki as a national instrument in Greece. Is there a difference in its importance among Greeks living in Cyprus?
- 2) I miss a mention of the author's personal relation to bouzouki. Do you play it?
- 3) To the way how to play bouzouki: I miss a notice, how the player uses the double strings. What is the effect of this constructive speciality? Why the lower strings are tuned in octave? (e.g. p. 52)
- 4) What was the role of Quido d'Arezza in the development of the notation and names of the tones? Explain it more precisely (p. 50).
- 5) To the Greek folk modes: I miss some examples of real Greek folk musik where these modes appear. Could you bring notations of some songs and analyse them in light of specific folk modes?

Even though I am not a native speaker, I can feel sometiomes the problems which Andreas has with English language. (Notice e.g. paragraphs concerning Thanasis Polikandriots on p. 81–82.) In my opinion, this is the most important reason why I can't appreciate this diploma work with better mark than **very well**.

Prague, 8th April, 2009

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