Joanna Michaelidou – a student of Music Education and Choir Conducting - entitled her bachelor thesis Cypriot Folk Music in Historical Context. Her first intention to write it in Czech language was later changed into the project in English language. In some way she had also to modify the former notion about the structure of the work. Though the Cypriot history itself is full of indelible events, which dates belong to the fundamental knowledge of every Cypriot student, in this case it was necessary to reduce them and use only facts, which discover the specific features of art and music. Even this short version introduce some facts, which are more important from the point of general history than musical one.

Chapter 2 of the work is devoted to the music at Cyprus, observing its evolution from the ancient times through era of Byzantine, French, Turkish and British influences to the present time. Some statements of this chapter are somehow „static“, not explained from the detailed comment and arguments. But this is caused also by the amount of bachelor thesis of 40 pages, where the demands on the scientific quality are not so strict, compared with the magister dissertation.

Interesting is the chapter about musical instruments (3) enriched by pictures of exhibits from museums and description of its corpuses, tuning and the way of resounding. In the next text J. Michaelidou pays attention to the repertory of songs which were very typical for Cypriot territory, songs „by researchers usually classified as a folk song, or civil urban song or civil urban folk song“ (quotation from the Summary, p. 41). It is rembetiko, usually accompanied by bouzouki, particular and typical cultural phenomenon of Cyprus.

The whole life style in the student’s native country is connected with and decorated by music, which is performed at many occasions. Therefore she chose the specific period of Christmas and Easter, when the music has a traditional, original and unrepeatable quality. The type of church songs, carols and particular Cypriot songs are mentioned in a brief chapter where appears also some specification of their kinds.

I concern chapter n. 6 a focus of diploma thesis. On sixteen pages (23-39) student cites and analyses samples of ten chosen folk songs. She examines their scales, forms and melody, following the text of the voice and introducing the modes, which have a specific connection with the areas of its origin. I don’t agree with the statement „the rhythm of this song is Moderato (or Allegretto)“. It is a term for tempo, which of course demands adequate type of rhythm, but we cannot use it in this way, it is a mistake.

The last chapter inform us about the present Cypriot music. It creates a kind of addition to the theme itself. It presents above all the traditional music and but also the artificial one, their interpreters and composers. Student also mention the system of education, main performing ensembles and festivals.

I. Michaelidou’s English and stylisation is tolerable, she elaborated her diploma thesis diligently and continuously. It is a pity that she dis not caught the winter term of state exams, as her work was finished in a great hurry to wait several months to be defenced.

My questions are: when did you have opportunity to sing your folk songs in your native country (at school, in the family?)

At what occasions are the instruments used to accompany the songs?

I reccomend the qualification VERY WELL

5.5.2011

supervisor ---------------------------
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