



Fr Ivan Moody with Galina Alexeeva (Russia) and Alla Generalow (USA).

IVAN MOODY

## TRADITION AND CREATION IN BULGARIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH MUSIC:

### THE WORK OF PETAR DINEV

While the name of Petar Dinev is familiar to anyone with an interest in Bulgarian church music, his work as composer, transcriber and musicologist is relatively little-known outside Bulgaria, to the extent that he has not even merited inclusion in the latest edition of the *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. During his long life, however, he was extremely influential, working as a teacher and lecturer and holding official ecclesiastical positions of considerable responsibility. As a composer, he was a pioneer in the way in which he brought together the heritage of Byzantine music and the traditions of Russian church music to which he was exposed during his studies. These apparently contradictory influences contributed to the vocabulary of a scholar and composer who continues to occupy an absolutely unique position in the history of Bulgarian church music; the purpose of this paper is, essentially, to introduce his work to a wider public.

The biographical facts of Petar Konstantinov Dinev's career are briefly told<sup>1</sup>. He was born on 14 July 1889, in Kumanichevo, in the region of Kostur. He studied at the Ecclesiastical Seminary in Constantinople, and then went to St Petersburg, where he studied law at the University and composition with Sokolov, Petrov and Glazunov, and Eastern music with Saketi (Sacchetti) at the Conservatoire, thus receiving, like the controversial Ioannis Sakellarides in Greece, a thorough grounding in both Byzantine and Western European traditions.

He himself subsequently lectured in Eastern music at the Conservatoire of Kazan from 1919 to 1922, and then returned to Bulgaria. For the next two years he worked as a music teacher, and in 1925 became a lecturer in church music at the State Academy of Music, where he remained until 1936. At the same time, he taught at the Ecclesiastical Seminary, where he was Associate Professor from 1926-1946, and from 1944 to 1951 he was a music inspector, and deputy director, of the Department of Culture and Education of the Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. He died in 1980.

It is obvious from such a trajectory that Dinev not only worked within the Bulgarian educational and ecclesiastical system, but that he came to occupy an increasingly eminent position within it. His educational mission is amply proved by his extensive list of publications, covering theoretical texts, transcriptions, harmonizations and original compositions. Whereas the bulk of Dinev's original work appeared during the late 1920s and late 1940s, his principal musicological articles, which dealt particularly with similarities between chant and folk music, appeared during the 1950s.

During the course of his life, he made many arrangements of folk music from Macedonia, produced a volume of transcriptions of the music of St John Koukouzelis (*Духовномузыкални Творби на Иван Кукузел*) and also published an extensive series of transcriptions of chants from neo-Byzantine notation, with Slavonic texts, which have been reprinted many times and are still widely used in the Bulgarian Church today.

This was the projected 6-volume *Църковно-Певчески Сборникъ*, the first part of which appeared in 1947<sup>2</sup>. These included an abridged and a more complete Octoechos (which includes polyeleii, velichania, katavasias and podobni), music for the Divine Liturgy, from the Triodion and Pentecostarion, and a Trebnik, with material for special services. All the transcriptions include prescriptions

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1 Basic biographical and bibliographical information about Dinev comes essentially from two sources: *Енциклопедия на Българската Музикална Култура*, София, 1967: 230-231 and Кирил Попов, "За Църконопевческото творчество Петър Динев", in *Българска Музика* 5.89: 24-26 I am extremely grateful to Professor Dimitar Dimitrev for locating published material relating to Dinev's life in Bulgaria.

2 As far as I have been able to ascertain, the sixth volume was never published; I am grateful to Prof. Dr Svetlana Kuyumdzhieva for discussing this matter with me following the original presentation of this paper at the Third International Conference on Orthodox Church Music in Joensuu, Finland, on 10 June 2009.