

REVIEW

by Assoc. Prof Eduard Magardich Sarafyan, PhD

AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev", Plovdiv

of dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor"

in professional field 8.3. Music and Dance Art

in the doctoral program Music Studies and Music Art

to

Guan Hao Wen

doctoral student at the Department of Classical and Pop and Jazz Performing Arts

Faculty of Music Pedagogy of AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev"

titled:

Preservation and Development in the Process of Inheritance: a comparative Analysis between the folk music of China and Europe

academic supervisor: Prof Toni Shekerdzhieva-Novak

General presentation of the procedure and the materials presented for review

Guan Hao Wen's **dissertation**, titled *Preservation and Development in the Process of Inheritance: a comparative Analysis between the folk music of China and Europe*, meets the regulatory requirements for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor". The candidate has presented a work of 191 pages, which in its volume and content meets the requirements for a complete and valuable scientific development in the field of vocal music art with an even greater contribution to the Chinese folk music culture.

The **abstract** is 63 pages, in which the author skillfully synthesized essential highlights of the research, which in turn are able to fully reveal the content of the dissertation work.

The personal **artistic biography** of the doctoral candidate (although scarce) reveals part of his artistic achievements and his affinity for teaching.

The **contributions** of the work listed by the author correspond directly with the goals and tasks of the research set in advance.

Brief biographical data for the candidate:

Guan Hao Wen is a tenor currently working at Hankou University in Wuhan, China as a vocal teacher. Before being enrolled as a doctoral student at the Academy of Music and Dance Art "Prof Asen Diamandiev" - Plovdiv, under the supervision of Prof Toni Shekerdzhieva-Novak, he received Master's degree at the National Conservatory of Music in Fermo, Italy, under the supervision of the famous Italian tenor Nazzarero Antinori. During his Master's studies, he performed leading roles in the opera of Fermo. He also participated as a soloist with the Rome Symphony Orchestra. He is the

winner of the first prize in the vocal category at international music festival Giulianova and the third prize in the same category at the "Pietro Argento" International Music Competition.

Characterization and evaluation of the dissertation work

The dissertation consists of 191 pages, structured in an introduction, 7 chapters, conclusion, contributions, bibliography and scientific publications on the subject. The candidate outlines in detail and clearly the parameters of the literature review on the subject of the study, the relevance of the subject and the author's personal motivation. The text emphasizes the conscious concern of the author to the need to make efforts in the research aspect to make a contribution to the development and affirmation of the Chinese folk songs in the future.

The **motivation** for the choice of topic is clearly evident in the scientific research and is expressed in the author's personal attitude and concern for the development of the Chinese folklore art. He aims to cover and systematize the path of development of the Chinese folk vocal music by tracing and analyzing the evolution of the genre up to the present day.

It is not surprising that in the following lines of the **Introduction**, the doctoral candidate precisely formulates the object, the subject, the goals and tasks of the research, namely:

Object: Comparative analysis of the origin, history, basic classification, musical styles, representative composers, methods of preservation and inheritance, international exchange between Chinese and European folk songs.

Goals: To reveal the common features and characteristics of traditional folk songs in China and Europe, and to promote the study and sharing of folk songs between China and European countries, in order to better protect, inherit and develop them.

Research methods: The candidate uses various research methods such as comparison, juxtaposition and research based on a large number of scientific works in the field of the Chinese and European folk songs, philosophy, mythology, poetry, sociology, cultural studies and musicology. From the point of view of the preservation, inheritance and development of traditional folk songs, the dissertation expands the definition of traditional folk songs, based on the definition of the Harvard Music Dictionary as: a musical genre created by the people that gradually formed the characteristics and system during its development. Also included are other musical genres with a high degree of proximity to the traditional folk songs, for example the Cantata, which borrows elements from the traditional folk songs.

The **first chapter** is an introduction that serves as a preface, in which the author reveals the object, goals and research methods of the presented dissertation work.

The **second chapter** consists of three main parts, in which the origin and development of the traditional folk songs in China and Europe are examined and compared. In the first part, the author traces the origins of the first compilation of folk songs in China, dating back to the 11th century BC, and subsequently examines the development and evolution of vocal folklore under the various

dynasties, the period of the Republic of China (1912-1949 .) and the People's Republic of China (after 1949). In the second part, the candidate examines the origin and development of the European folk songs during the periods of Ancient Greece, Ancient Rome, the Middle Ages, Renaissance, Baroque, Classicism, Romanticism, Nationalism and other various periods of evolution during which folk songs underwent development. In the third part, the author presents comparative studies and conclusions in which he points out the similarities and differences between Chinese and European folk songs.

The third chapter is based on a comparative study of the basic classification of the Chinese and the European folk songs. In examining the Chinese songs, the author reveals the number of the major ethnic groups in China, the main language families and dialects, and classifies the songs according to the following characteristics: from the point of view of the subject matter and the genre, and from the point of view of the singing style. The approach of examining the European folk songs is similar, after which comparative studies and conclusions are available.

The fourth chapter is a comparative study of the musical styles of the Chinese and the European folk songs. The author explores the musical style of folk songs from different regions in terms of modality, melody and rhythm, musical form, etc. The dissertation examines the musical styles of 8 regions, including Jiangnan, Northwest, Fujian, Guangdong and Taiwan, Hunan and Hubei, Southwest, North China, Northeast China, and Jianghuai, characterizing the musical style as a distinctive standard. The musical style of the European folk ballads is examined thoroughly. The author discusses the Scandinavian countries of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Iceland and their associated territories, the Faroe Islands, Greenland, the Åland Islands and Svalbard, the countries of Western Europe such as the United Kingdom, Ireland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, France and Monaco, the countries of Southern Europe: Spain, Italy, Bulgaria, Portugal, Andorra, Greece, Malta, Vatican City, San Marino, Slovenia, Croatia, Albania, Romania, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the countries of Eastern Europe – Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Armenia, Lithuania, Belarus, Croatia, Ukraine, Moldova, as well as the countries of Central Europe - Germany, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Austria, Liechtenstein and Switzerland.

The fifth chapter is based on a comparative study of representative composers of Chinese and European folk songs. On the Chinese side, the author singles out five composers whose work spans the period from the end of the 19th to the entire 20th century. From the European side, the doctoral student examines the work of Edvard Grieg (Norway), W. Williams (Great Britain), George Enescu (Romania), M. Glinka (Russia), B. Bartok and Viktor Janusz (Hungary).

The sixth chapter is based on a comparative study of the preservation and inheritance of traditional folk songs in China and Europe. Regarding China, the author addresses the issue from a political and strategic perspective, as well as organizational security and public level, by creating a library of digital audio-visual resources on traditional Chinese music, holding various heritage and development forums of traditional folk songs, organizing folk song festivals and competitions, etc.

The same aspects are also discussed from a European point of view, including tracing the history of the creation and development of community centres in Bulgaria.

The **seventh chapter** includes the international exchange of Chinese folk songs, comparative analysis and conclusion of the dissertation work.

Contributions:

The contributions of the presented dissertation are mainly expressed in the following aspects:

1. The author presents a comparative study of different cultures. Through a detailed comparative analysis of the themes, forms and means of expression of Chinese and European folk songs, this dissertation reveals the differences and similarities in the creation and popularization of folk songs in the two cultural systems.

2. The author offers strategies for the preservation of folk songs, by studying the successful experiences and problems related to the preservation of traditional folk songs in China and Europe, and scientifically based strategies for their preservation are proposed.

3. Methods of development and innovation in folk music are proposed. By analyzing the use and development of traditional folk songs in modern society, this dissertation proposes methods for combining traditional folk music with modern technologies and creative approaches.

4. Cultural exchange and integration are encouraged. The study of the similarities and differences between Chinese and European folk songs provides prerequisites for contributing to cultural exchange and understanding between China and Europe, as well as to stimulate the integration and joint development of musical cultures in the two regions.

5. The work combines theory and practice. By combining theoretical analysis with practical examples, this dissertation provides concrete and actionable recommendations for the preservation and development of folk songs. These recommendations are of great benefit to researchers and music professionals and support the application of theoretical research results in practice.

6. Enriches the academic resources. This dissertation contributes new empirical data and analytical methods to the field of folk music studies, thereby enriching the academic resources in the field.

7. Promotes social progress and cultural heritage.

Through the above contributions, this dissertation not only has significant scientific value, but also shows practical benefit by offering new ideas and methods for the preservation and development of Chinese and European traditional folk songs.

Recommendations:

- Make the necessary corrections in the title page of the work;
- To correct some minor inconsistencies in the content of the dissertation;
- First chapter to be separated as Introduction;
- The conclusion of the work should be distinguished and separated from the seventh chapter;

- The contributions should appear in the conclusion of the dissertation.

I give my positive assessment of Guan Hao Wen's dissertation work *Preservation and Development in the Process of Inheritance: a comparative Analysis between the folk music of China and Europe*, under the skillful scientific guidance of Prof Toni Shekerdzhieva-Novak. I believe that the dissertation fully meets the requirements of the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria Act. I propose to the esteemed scientific jury to award Guan Hao Wen the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in professional field 8.3. Music and Dance Art.

14.08.2024 г.

Plovdiv

Reviewer:

/Assoc. Prof Eduard Sarafyan, PhD/