

OPINION

by Prof Violeta Gorcheva, PhD

for the dissertation work of

Sun Xiaofang

full-time doctoral student

in the Department of Choreography at Faculty of Musical Folklore and Choreography – AMDFFA

on the topic: *Principles of Teaching in Choreography - Theory and Practice*

for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree doctor

in a professional field 8.3. Music and Dance Art

doctoral program Choreography

Academic supervisor: Prof Zhelka Tabakova, PhD

Relevance of the topic

The teaching methodology in every educational activity /in particular and specifically choreography/ is the foundation, the starting point, which lays a solid scientific basis and is an essential component for the development of future qualified and high-quality specialists. In addition to adhering to the canonical principles, each system /in this case choreographic/, constantly adds new colors and segments, gives space to creative thinking and imagination, to innovative approaches, thus effectively enriching and renewing its dance stylistic and lexical palette, in accordance with the spirit and dynamics of the time.

In the context of the above, the presented dissertation fits into the current searches and trends and lays new touches in our scientific thought.

The interest is understandably inspired by the personal biases and experience of Xiaofang who has serious theoretical training and successful career as performer, choreographer and teacher. /proof is the presented reference, containing information about the educational qualifications and qualifications, the many awards received and realized performances/.

Structure of the dissertation

The dissertation work is of the theoretical-applied type and is presented in a total of 207 pages. It consists of an introduction, 3 chapters, and a conclusion. The bibliography contains 79 sources: 70 in Chinese, 9 in other languages, and 5 Internet addresses.

The abstract correctly summarizes the essence of the content, the contributing points are clearly and precisely formulated. The doctoral student has 6 publications /2 in Bulgaria and 4 in China/, 1 participation in a scientific conference.

Description and evaluation of the dissertation work

The introduction foregrounds the personal motives of Xiaofang, which provoked the appearance of the work, specifies and clarifies the important details regarding the selection and development of the material, refers to the approach and methods used – universal and private, based

on empirical experience. Precisely formulated are the object of research, the subject, the leading goal. The main focus is on the methods of teaching choreography and the requirements for teaching skills.

Chapter one focuses on the professional characteristics of the choreographer-teacher. Working concepts and terms are defined /choreography teacher and dance director/, very important clarifications are made regarding the set and array of knowledge, the specific dual professional and teaching skills required of the choreographer-teacher. The paradigm of his professional duties, responsibility and functions in relation to society is outlined in great detail. The author provides an important current overview of the teaching of choreography in Chinese higher education institutions, and also reaches the relevant conclusions related to the future prospects of the specialty of choreography in China.

In the **second chapter**, the emphasis is placed on the development of the choreographer's professional skills and his teaching and creative potential. The aesthetic, stylistic, lexical and genre reflections, the level of their mastery and the creative handling of their unique specificity and nature are studied in detail. Their direct connection and key importance for the overall formation of the choreographer's teaching and artistic profile /high technical training and creative inventiveness/ are analyzed. Xiaofang, based on her own experience and on prominent Chinese researchers, draws valuable conclusions and gives important characteristics and guidelines regarding dance thinking, the structure of dance and the choreography of classical, contemporary and Chinese dance works, with a view to their application in the educational process and teaching practice.

The **third chapter** is central and contributing, analyzing the use of creative techniques in dance choreography on the one hand, and on the other hand, emphasizing their teaching in the educational process. The significance of the choice in each of the specific methods and the scope of the learning content /for example, in solo, duets, trios, group dance techniques, action choreography/ is taken into account. I would highlight the dance vocabulary /of modern and Chinese classical and folk dance/, the requirements and dynamic analysis related to training in the techniques for choreographic creation of dance performances, as well as the structured components and stages accompanying the integral creative process. I would call **contributions** the similarities and differences drawn between the creation of Chinese modern dance and the creation of Chinese classical dance, as well as the analyses of classical dance works /*The Nutcracker*/ and the classical Chinese drama classical dance Wing Chun.

The **conclusion** explores three main aspects: "*New trends in dance art and its performance in the 21st Century*" based on the characteristics of the contemporary development of dance art, "*Achievements, shortcomings and guidelines for improving the teaching of dance choreography in the Chinese universities*" summarizes the current state of dance choreography and teaching in Chinese universities, "*New trends in the creation and presentation of the Chinese dance*" discusses the new mission that dance art assigns to the Chinese dance choreographers. In the end, after a thorough argumentation, the author reaches the conclusion: "...*Choreographers and dance teachers must*

thoroughly study and understand the excellent traditions of the Chinese dance art, pass it on to the next generation, and through teaching and practice, popularize Chinese dance...."

Contributions

Based on everything said so far, I believe that the work provides up-to-date information in theoretical terms, as well as practical guidance on which not only trainee dancers, but also active teachers and choreographers could successfully rely.

Among the contributions, I would like to highlight that for the first time it analyzes:

1. the structure of dance education in the higher education in China,
2. the prerequisites for the development of the professional qualities and talent of contemporary Chinese choreographers,
3. the differences and similarities, the interaction between choreography teachers and choreographers,
4. the choreography between three dance styles – classical dance, Chinese dance and modern dance.

Conclusion

Based on everything presented so far, I give my positive assessment to Sun Xiaofang's dissertation work, and I confidently propose to the members of the respected scientific jury to award her the scientific and educational degree "doctor" in science specialty Music Studies and Music Art, professional field 8.3 Music and Dance Art.

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