

REVIEW

by **Prof Borislav Aleksandrov Yassenov, PhD**

Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts

“Prof. Asen Diamandiev” – Plovdiv

With order No RD-27-103 dated 25.10.2022 of the Rector of AMDFA “Prof Asen Diamandiev”, Plovdiv, I have been appointed a member of the scientific jury to supervise a procedure for the defense of a dissertation work titled *A Comparative Analysis between the Peking Opera Jingju and the Italian Opera*, for acquisition of the educational and scientific degree Doctor in Higher education field 8. Arts, Professional field 8.3. Music and Dance Art, doctoral program Music Studies and Music art. The author of the dissertation is Wang Ye – full-time doctoral student at the Department of Classical, Pop and Jazz Performing Arts, Faculty of Music Pedagogy, with academic supervisor Prof Toni Shekerdzhieva-Novak from AMDFA “Prof Asen Diamandiev”.

The materials presented to me include the following documents: CV, dissertation work, abstract, list of scientific publications.

In 2010 he receives Bachelor's degree from Quanzhou University, China, and in 2015 Master degree at the Conservatory of Music Giovanni Battista Pergolesi, Fermo, Italy. Administrative Assistant at the Italian Academy of Music "Sophy Arte Musica". He studied with the well-known tenor Nazzareno Antinori and Sabrina Trojse. He has participated as a soloist in concerts organized by the Conservatory and the region. In 2018, he continued his studies at AMDFA “Prof Asen Diamandiev”- Plovdiv, as a doctoral student, with a scientific adviser Prof Tony Shekerdzhieva-Novak. Winner of awards from a number of international competitions in Italy and Bulgaria.

The artistic work of the doctoral candidate is very active. He has participated as a soloist in numerous concerts and festivals, some of which are organized by AMDFA “Prof Asen Diamandiev”- Plovdiv, as well as in the performances: *Ba-Ta-Clan*, operetta by J. Offenbach, staged in the Concert Hall of AMDFA (2020), Second Festival of the Chamber Opera in the Lumiere Hall of the National Palace of Culture, Sofia (2020), AOT (2021); *Rita* by G. Donizetti, staged in the Concert Hall of AMDFA (2021, 2022), A'Part Theater (2022), Third Festival of the Chamber Opera in the Lumiere Hall of the National Palace of Culture - Sofia (2022).

The pedagogical work of the candidate is associated with the National Music Conservatory Giovanni Battista Pergolesi, Fermo, Italy, as an assistant and his doctoral studies at AMDFA “Prof Asen Diamandiev” - Plovdiv.

The scientific publications reference shows that they are three in number and are directly related to the topic of the dissertation.

- ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PEKING OPERA – Yearbook of AMDFA “Prof Asen Diamandiev”, Plovdiv, 2020, pp. 139 - 147;

- FEATURES OF THE PEKING OPERA IN SHANGHAI - Spring scientific readings of AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev", Plovdiv, 2021, pp. 189-194;

- DIFFERENCES IN THE STAGE PERFORMANCE OF PEKING OPERA - Spring scientific readings of AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev", Plovdiv, 2021, pp. 195-202.

His work also includes a textbook: *An introductory course in solfege in Bulgarian for Chinese* - translation and editing, Plovdiv, 2020. ISMN: 979-0-9021225-0-4.

Wang Ye chooses the research topic, provoked by the fact that the Peking Jingju opera and the Italian opera are leading, the former in the eastern and the latter in the western musical-dramatic cultures. Taking into account the distinctive national characteristics of the East and the West, the doctoral student notes the cultural value of the two types of opera based on a long history and tradition. The increased globalization, exchange and integration between the East and the West in the sphere of culture, motivates the author, who has rich educational, scientific and research experience acquired in China and Italy, in the present study to contribute to a deeper insight and understanding of these two representative forms in the art of music.

The relevance of the topic of the dissertation is determined by the fact that in the music-theoretical literature there is a lack of comparative analysis between the Peking and Italian opera. The existing sources examine the two types separately. The availability of rich information creates a prerequisite for comparative research. A more comprehensive study and understanding of the essence of Peking and Italian opera will contribute to the enrichment of knowledge and awareness of specific interpretative features, improvement of professional potential, and also promotion of exchange and interaction between the two cultures.

The object of research in the work is the Peking Jingju opera and the Italian opera.

The aim of the author is to carry out a comparative analysis between the two leading national arts.

The problems are discussed on the basis of scientific sources, as well as the accumulated educational and research experience of the doctoral student, acquired during his studies in China, Italy and Bulgaria.

The main task of the dissertation is the scientific classification and professional systematization, on the basis of which the comparative analysis can be effectively applied.

The dissertation contains an introduction, four chapters, a conclusion and appendices.

In the introduction, the doctoral student presents the reasons for choosing the topic, the condition of scientific research, presents his hypothesis and the relevance of the topic, object, purpose, tasks and research methods.

In Chapter One, the author examines in detail the origin and development of the Peking and the Italian opera.

In Chapter Two, through the works *The Drunken Concubine* and *Madame Butterfly*, a comparative analysis was made of the two types of opera, which have the same theme - about love, but

describe in a different way the tragic fate of a woman deeply in love. Wang Ye analyzed the differences between the two works in four aspects: storyline, artistic image formation, dramaturgy, and musical expressive means.

In Chapter Three, the doctoral student carries out an in-depth comparative analysis, bringing to the fore the differences in the cultural, philosophical and staging characteristics in the vocal performance, in the plot and dramaturgical structure, and in the ways of art inheritance in the two types of opera. The author comes to the conclusion that the origin is fundamental factor in both opera arts, and the differences in the cultural and social systems predetermining their national characteristics, leading to the reported differences in the studied problems.

The fourth chapter examines the problems facing both types of opera and suggests constructive solutions to overcome them.

The conclusion summarizes the results of the study and comments on its significance.

The research contributes to the knowledge about the national characteristics and the traditions that influence the development of the genre, as well as the characteristics of the two operas, it will also enhance the theoretical-practical skills of the singers, and will also expand the competences of the music educators. The above determines the contributory nature of the dissertation.

The methods used in the work are empirical and theoretical. The first method includes a study of the available literature, social surveys, interviews and observations. The second - comparative analyzes and summaries.

The paper meets the requirements for doctoral dissertation. The information is presented in a total of 175 pages, of which 157 are the main text. The appendices include fragments of opera arias - sheet music examples presented in 10 figures and photographic material (11 pieces). The bibliography contains 38 sources, of which 3 are internet sources.

The abstract is prepared according to the requirements and reflects the main results achieved in the dissertation.

The contributions of the work are the following:

- it is the first study to compare the educational and hereditary models of the Peking and the Italian opera;
- it presents the teacher-student relationship in the learning process in the opera genre. Through the analyzes and conclusions made, it provides opportunities for enrichment and collaboration of methods and approaches in the lessons of classical singing;
- taking into account the negative impact of digitization on musical art, the author offers ideas for attracting young people to the world of opera productions;
- in support of this thesis, surveys were made with students and teachers dealing with vocal music in Chinese, Italian and Bulgarian music institutions, and also with actors, and the results obtained were subjected to a comparative analysis. Practical and effective solutions to the problems currently faced by the two operas are proposed;

- the dissertation is the first complete and systematic study in a comparative aspect of the Peking and the Italian opera. It summarizes the similarities and differences in the historical origin, in the classification of the roles as well as in the vocal techniques, the linguistic peculiarities, the musical-expressive characteristics and the stage presence of the performers are compared. The construction of the plot and the dramatic structure, as well as the ways of inheriting the art in the two operas, are traced in detail and in a comparative plan, taking into account the cultural and historical context of the process;
- the study has the potential to provoke interest and promote academic exchange between the Peking and the Italian opera.

I share the author's opinion that the discussed issues will broaden the horizons of the specifics of the Peking and the Italian opera, will lead to a deeper understanding of the essence of the two varieties of the genre, and will also contribute to cultural exchange.

The theoretical development of the candidate has practical applicability and is oriented towards both academic work and artistic activity. This determines the contributory nature of the dissertation.

I believe that the theoretical development fully meets the requirements for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree Doctor stipulated by the Law for the development of the academic staff and the Regulations for its application. This gives me the reason to propose to the esteemed scientific jury to award Wang Ye the educational and scientific degree **Doctor**.

18.11.2022
Plovdiv

Reviewer:
(Prof Borislav Yassenov)