

OPINION

by Prof Nikolay Motsov, PhD
NMA "Prof Pancho Vladigerov" – Sofia

on dissertation work
for awarding educational and scientific degree "DOCTOR"
authored by

Li Minhui

Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts
"Prof Asen Diamandiev" – Plovdiv

Faculty of Musical Pedagogy
Department of Classical, Pop and Jazz Performing Arts

Title

COMPARISON OF THE SINGING STYLES OF COUNTERTENOR AND NANDAN OF THE PEKING OPERA

The dissertation of Li Minhui deals with an interesting topic - *Comparison of the Singing Styles of Countertenor and Nandan of the Peking Opera*. The subject of research is useful, and as the author herself points out, "*this is the first comprehensive and systematic presentation of a comparison of the singing styles of countertenor and nandan of the Peking Opera*". This is indeed the case, and this fact in itself gives the work a contributing character. The desire to promote academic interaction between the European and the Peking Opera, the strengthening of cultural exchange, the opening of the countries' cultural markets, inspired the desire to research and write this interesting doctoral dissertation.

I agree with the author's conclusion, who notes, "*I hope my efforts will help fill this academic gap so that countertenors and nandan performers can get to know each other's performance styles. In this way, the cultural and technical barriers between them can be removed and it becomes possible for the same singer to perform roles from both repertoires, which would be an important contribution to solving the problem of the lack of "specific performers" in opera performances*". I believe that the topic will be useful in the training of future Chinese students, as well as their desire to further develop the already existing research in this field.

The dissertation contains a total of 176 pages, which include an introduction, five chapters, a conclusion, bibliography, appendices and a list of scientific publications on the topic of the study. They are arranged in a regular manner, chronologically tracking the research on the topic. The work logically discusses the appearance of the *castrate*, as the predecessor of the countertenor, as well as the nandan tenor in the Peking Opera. After analysing and researching a large number of sources, the author focuses on the appearance, rise and fall of these three vocal types, which is related to certain

historical reasons and the specific social situation. An important contribution is the comparative analysis, which is an essential part of the work and provides clarity on the similarities and differences between the analyzed objects.

I totally agree with the author's conclusion that "*This study also has a very important practical significance. In practice, there are few excellent countertenors and a shortage of distinguished Nandans for the Peking Opera. Considering the deficiency of these two types of singers, the study and elimination of existing differences in their singing methods is extremely necessary. This work can not only promote the academic exchange between European and Peking Opera, but also indirectly support the cultural exchange between Europe and China*".

I accept the contributions presented by the author in the study as credible and practically applicable. For me as a performer and teacher, the most valuable thing is the fact that for the first time, due to the differences in the singing styles of countertenor and nandan, a scientifically based teaching methodology is proposed to overcome the differences between singing art, stage performance, language and cultural code of both genres.

I am convinced that the professional work with the academic supervisor Prof Toni Shekerdzhieva-Novak has made a significant contribution to the success of the dissertation. There is a serious theoretical and practical doctoral work, which Li Minhui has successfully managed.

I express my positive opinion about the contribution nature of the presented dissertation work. I recommend to the esteemed scientific jury that Li Minhui be awarded the educational and scientific degree "Doctor", professional direction "Music and Dance Art".

Sofia, 28.08. 2022. Prof. Nikolay Motsov, PhD