

## OPINION

by Prof. Dr. Vesela Stoyanova Kazashka

AMDFA "Prof. Asen Diamandiev" - Plovdiv

on dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree “**Doctor**”

Field of higher education 8. Art

Professional field 1.3 Teaching Pedagogy in...

Doctoral program: Methodology of Music Education

Department of Music Pedagogy and Conducting

Faculty of Music Pedagogy

AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev" Plovdiv,

**Author:** Wu Meihong

**Title:** *A Comparative Study of the State Educational Standards for "Music" in the School Education in China and in Bulgaria*

**Academic supervisor:** Prof Tsvetanka Kolovska, PhD - AMDFA "Prof Asen Diamandiev" Plovdiv

### 1. Information about the doctoral candidate

The candidate Wu Meihong was born in June 1982 in Chongqing, China. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Musicology from Chongqing Changjiang Normal College (2003-2007). For excellent achievements, he was awarded a national scholarship and award. He obtained his Master's degree at Zhejiang Normal University (2007-2010), and his Master's thesis was related to the construction of rules for music education in the modern Chinese schools. Already during his studies, he participated in choir competitions and worked as a trainee music teacher in schools. His scientific interests are also in the field of music pedagogy and as a result of his work he has published three scientific articles.

From June 2010 until now, Wu Meihong has been working as a music lecturer at Jingdezhen Ceramic University, Jiangxi Province. He won second prize at the young teachers' lecture competition; award for advanced personality in teaching and education at Jingdezhen Ceramic University; a good teacher award at the same university, as well as dozens of other provincial and municipal honors and awards. He has published more than 10 articles, has supervised one university-industry cooperation research project of the Ministry of Education of China, and supervised and participated in three other projects at the university or higher level.

In July 2019, he started a pre-doctoral course at the Academy of Music and Dance Art in Plovdiv, and in July 2020 he completed his one-year preliminary course in Bulgarian language and professional subjects. From November 2020 to December 2023, he is a full-time doctoral student in the doctoral program Methodology of Music Education with supervisor Prof Tsvetanka Kolovska.

During his studies, he has published three scientific publications in specialized editions in Bulgaria. He was discharged with the right of defense on 18.12.2023 by order RD 27-181.

## **2. General characteristics of the dissertation**

The dissertation is developed on a total of 207 pages, of which 77 are literary sources, 6 normative documents, two appendices.

The dissertation includes introduction, 6 chapters, conclusion, contributions of the scientific work, bibliography and appendices.

The doctoral candidate has set himself the goal, through a comparative study of the standards for music curricula for primary and secondary schools in China and Bulgaria, to make a comprehensive and systematic analysis of the methods of teaching music, the means of educational technologies, the learning process, the evaluation of teaching, the effect of teaching, music activities, music teacher training, teaching materials, learning outcomes. Achieving this goal goes through solving 6 tasks, detailed on page 6 of the dissertation.

The subject of the scientific research is the similarities and differences in the concepts, goals and methods of teaching music between the two countries and providing new perspectives and ideas for promoting the development of primary and secondary music education by comparing and studying the relevant state standards in China and Bulgaria.

The object of the research is the state standards for music education in ordinary primary and secondary schools in China and Bulgaria, and the content related to them. Since most of these standards are based on the music curriculum, in this work they are equated with it in a narrow sense.

The research methods used by the author are: scientific research, theoretical analysis and synthesis, comparison, concretization and generalization, research of experience.

Wu Meihong successfully validates the hypothesis that presenting the history of music education and curriculum standards in China and Bulgaria, as well as more than 70 years of musical culture and history of educational exchange provides a primary source for the formulation of current music curriculum standards and music reform of these programs in both countries.

The first chapter presents the concept of international cultural relations between China and Bulgaria. World music-pedagogical systems established by Dalcroze, Kodály, Orff and others are presented (see pages 30-40). Emphasis is placed on the need for more sustainable support of policies supporting the music education.

The second chapter presents the history of the Chinese music education and the development of curriculum standards. Here, attention is paid to the historical evolution of the music education in China, and the need to introduce state curriculum standards in modern Chinese education is justified.

The third chapter interprets the curriculum standards in China, focusing on the concept of "Curriculum Standard for Compulsory Arts Education" and presents a comparative plan of standards from 2017, 2020 and 2022. A general structure of high school music education, number of credits,

course selection and teaching performance is presented (Table 4, p. 102), as well as course content, teaching and assessment recommendations are presented.

The fourth chapter presents the Bulgarian education and the current state educational standards for music curricula. A brief history of the country, the educational system by levels, the normative base that regulates the educational process or is related to it is presented. A separate paragraph discusses the music education, including in the context of the Bulgarian musical tradition, a connection between knowledge of music in the initial stage of education and key competencies (Table 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, pp. 129 - 140).

The fifth chapter offers an analysis of the standard for the music curriculum (compulsory preparation) in the Bulgarian school, emphasizing the peculiarities of the different stages of education - elementary, junior high and high school.

In the last chapter of the dissertation, a comparative analysis of the standards for music education in the curricula of Bulgaria and China is presented. The author specifies the similarities and differences and outlines the distinctions in concepts, teaching methods and other aspects, as a starting point for the development and reform of curricula for the benefit of both countries. It also contains examples of textbooks and teaching materials from Bulgaria and China and classrooms from both countries.

### **3. Evaluation of the obtained scientific and applied results**

The comparative study that Wu Meihong offers us is new and up-to-date. The literature review was done analytically.

The doctoral student has formulated 5 contributions that concern the exchange and improvement of the quality of music education in Bulgaria and China.

The candidate's work helps to gain a deeper understanding of the characteristics of music education in China and Bulgaria, but also provides an essential reference for both countries to borrow knowledge and experience from each other and promote music education reform.

The present doctoral dissertation could serve as a reference point for the development of joint curricula between Bulgaria and China in music in higher schools if the topic is expanded.

The author's desire to influence and participate in the construction of new policies related to music education in China is commendable.

### **4. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, I think that a positive assessment could be given regarding the dissertation work, the overall research and work of the doctoral candidate. In this context, I propose to the members of the esteemed Scientific Jury to vote in favor of the awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" to Wu Meihong in the professional field 1.3 Teaching pedagogy in..., doctoral program Methodology of Music Education.

**18.04.2024**

**Author of the opinion:.....**

(Prof Vesela Kazashka)