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OF UKRAINE
KHARKIV STATE ACADEMY OF CULTURE
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THEORETICAL SUBSTANTIATION
MASTER'S CREATIVE PROJECT
**on the subject: «Vocal and technical characteristics of the Chinese interpretation
of Neopolitan creations – J. Pergolesi's aria «Tre giorni son che Nina» and the
song «O sole mio»»).**

to obtain a master's degree
by the second (educational and professional) level of higher education
fields of knowledge: 02 Culture and art
majors: 025 Musical art

Theoretical justification of a creative art project
contains the results of own research.

Use of ideas, results and texts of other authors
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INTRODUCTION

The interpretation of Neapolitan vocal music has gained worldwide recognition, transcending cultural boundaries and inspiring diverse approaches to its performance. In China, where traditional vocal aesthetics differ significantly from Western traditions, the interpretation of works such as Giovanni Battista Pergolesi's aria «Tre giorni son che Nina» and the universally beloved Neapolitan song «O sole mio» offer fascinating insights into cross-cultural musical exchange.

The relevance of the presented study lies in the fact that it examines the vocal and technical characteristics of Chinese performances of Italian compositions, focusing on how traditional Chinese vocal training and stylistic preferences influence their interpretation.

Connection with scientific programs, topics, plans. The work was carried out at the Department of Choral Conducting and Academic Singing of the Kharkiv State Academy of Culture in accordance with the main scientific topic of the department.

This study aims to explore the unique vocal and technical characteristics of Chinese interpretations of Giovanni Battista Pergolesi's «Tre giorni son che Nina» and the Neapolitan song «O sole mio»; and to identify the stylistic adaptations and challenges faced by Chinese vocalists when performing these works, offering insights into intercultural dialogue in musical performance.

The object of the research is the performance practice of Neapolitan vocal music, in particular in the context of Chinese interpretations of «Tre giorni son che Nina» and «O sole mio».

The subject of the research is the vocal and technical adaptations used personally and by other Chinese singers in the interpretation of these Neapolitan compositions.

The material for this study is G. B. Pergolesi's aria «Tre giorni son che Nina» and the neapolitan song «O sole mio», recordings of personal performances and

interpretations of other Chinese vocalists, as well as educational and methodological sources of Chinese conservatories.

The methodological basis of the research is: the study of vocal technique, phrasing, dynamics and diction in Chinese performances; a comparative analysis of Chinese translations with traditional Italian translations; an analysis of professional reviews of Chinese vocalists and teachers on the challenges and strategies of performing Neapolitan music; and a study of the influence of the Italian vocal tradition on Chinese music education.

The theoretical basis of the research includes the foundations of vocal pedagogy related to bel canto and traditional Chinese vocal styles (Stark J. A. [26], Miller R. [16], Vennard W [31], Han S. & Yin Z. [10], Lu Y. [14]); theories of cross-cultural adaptation in musical performance (Nettl B. [18], Hebert D. G. & Kertz-Welzel A. [12], Yang M. [35]); musicological analysis of Neapolitan vocal traditions (Ashbrook W. [2], Bini D. & Jurgens W. [3], Di Giacomo S. [8]); research into the globalization of Western classical music in non-Western cultures (Reily S. A. & Brucher, K. [21], Yang C. [34], Taruskin R. [30]).

The results of this study have practical implications for the cross-cultural dynamics of Western classical music in the Chinese context, highlighting the importance of stylistic authenticity in the performance of Neapolitan music; contributing to the expansion of the repertoire of Chinese vocalists by encouraging collaboration and exchange between Italian and Chinese music teachers to enrich the global practice of music interpretation practices.

Approbation of research. The materials of the work were coordinated with the department and published at the International Scientific Conference dedicated to the 95th anniversary of the Kharkiv State Academy of Culture «Cultural Studies and Social Communications: Innovative Development Strategies» (November 21-22, 2024).

Practical significance. The results of the work can be used in musical-pedagogical and performing practice (in particular, in the training courses «History

and Theory of Vocal Performance», «Fundamentals of Vocal Methodology», «Practical Course in Vocal and Stage Arts» and in the special profile discipline of academic-vocal performance «Academic Singing»), in lecture and educational work, and also serve as material for further research on this topic.

Publications. Based on the materials of the conducted research, theses were published on the topic «Chinese folk song: tradition and modernity» in the collection of materials of the International Scientific Conference dedicated to the 95th Anniversary of the Kharkiv State Academy of Culture «Culturology and Social Communications: Innovative Development Strategies» (November 21–22, 2024, pp. 247 – 248).

Structure of the work. The research work consists of an introduction, two chapters, six subsections, conclusions, a list of sources used (37 items). The total volume of the scientific work is 32 pages, of which 30 pages are the main text.

SECTION I.

FEATURES OF VOCAL TRADITION IN THE CONTEXT OF CULTURAL DIALOGUE.

1.1. Vocal and technical characteristics of the Italian performing school.

The Italian performing school, especially in the field of vocal art, is one of the most famous and influential in the world. It was formed on the basis of the traditions of bel canto (Italian «beautiful singing»), which determines its main technical and artistic characteristics.

Bel canto is the technical and artistic basis of the Italian performing school, which was formed in the 17th-18th centuries. The main principles of bel canto include: naturalness of sound, diaphragmatic breathing, legato, intonation accuracy, vibrato [26].

Naturalness of sound is the use of the natural timbre of the voice without excessive forcing, which ensures lightness and smoothness of sound); Diaphragmatic breathing, achieved through deep and controlled breathing, is the basis for long phrases, even sound, and stable legato [1]. Legato is the continuity of sound between notes, which creates a sense of unity in the musical phrase. Intonational accuracy is achieved through the clarity of reproduction of each note, especially in the melismas that are characteristic of Baroque music [16]. Vibrato is an important element of sonic aesthetics, used to provide warmth and volume to the sound, but within the limits of naturalness [20]. Breath support in the Italian school is a fundamental component of vocal technique. The use of diaphragmatic breathing allows you to control the dynamics, length of the phrase, and the quality of the sound. The key principle of vocal breath support is the support of the sound by the diaphragm. It provides stability of voice and smoothness of sound even in the highest registers [15].

The main means of conveying the emotional content of the work is phrasing. It is based on naturalness and expressiveness, where each musical phrase has completeness and logic.

Italian singers skillfully use dynamic transitions, creating the effect of «breathing» of the phrase. For example, the famous aria «Una furtiva lagrima» from G. Donizetti's opera «Il Elixir of Love» demonstrates the ability to gradually crescendo and decrescendo.

Much attention in bel canto music is paid to the clarity of diction and expressiveness of the text. The Italian language, due to its vocal nature, is ideally suited for singing, and singers actively work on accenting syllables to enhance the musical effect [20].

The Italian style involves technical perfection in the performance of ornaments and trills. For example, in Rossini's works such as «La donna del lago», singers must perform numerous melismas with absolute precision [16]. Legato in the Italian school is achieved through even air flow, vocal cord control, and resonator work. Italian singers also skillfully manipulate rubato, adding flexibility to interpretation and emphasizing the emotional content of the phrase.

The Italian school favors natural vibrato, which appears as a result of stable breathing technique and harmonious vocal cord work. Vibrato is used as a means of creating warmth in the sound, but its excessive use is considered inappropriate [1].

An important element is the use of chest, head, and nasal resonators to enrich the sound. This is especially important in the works of G. Verdi, where the voice should sound voluminous, even in the highest registers.

Despite the development of modern teaching methods, the Italian school retains its unique technical characteristics, which allows singers to perform repertoire from the Baroque to the present day.

Contemporary performers such as Cecilia Bartoli, Angela Georgiou and Roberto Alagna, preserve the traditions of bel canto, while adapting them to modern performance standards. They actively popularize bel canto, attracting new audiences through recordings, concerts and master classes.

1.2. Basic principles of Chinese vocal technique. The history of vocal art in China goes back thousands of years, but the development of academic singing began only in the 20th century. In connection with the political and cultural reforms of the beginning of the 20th century, European musical traditions began to penetrate the country, especially the Italian vocal school, which was considered a standard in world art [6].

In the 1920s and 1930s, the first Chinese students began studying at European conservatories, particularly in Italy and Germany. Upon their return, they integrated elements of Western technique into Chinese music education, which led to the gradual formation of a unique national vocal school [32].

In this period, the idea of a harmonious combination of Eastern tradition and Western style played an important role. In particular, the singing technique emphasized the naturalness of sound inherent in the Chinese folk song tradition, but at the same time, such technical techniques as diaphragmatic breathing, development of resonators, and work with intonation were adapted [38].

The Chinese vocal school pays special attention to diaphragmatic breathing, which contributes to sound stability. A distinctive feature is the use of «economy» breathing, where the volume of air is used as efficiently as possible to achieve a uniform sound during long phrases [6].

Chinese vocal technique is a unique phenomenon in world musical culture. She combines the traditions of Chinese folk and classical singing with elements of Western academic technique, creating a unique sound aesthetic. The main principles of the Chinese vocal school are attention to naturalness of sound, controlled use of breath, ease of phrasing, intonation accuracy, and preservation of cultural authenticity.

One of the central principles of Chinese vocal technique is the desire for a natural, «pure» sound of the voice. This means that the sound should not be overly strained or overly saturated, as is often found in Western dramatic singing traditions.

Chinese vocalists emphasize the creation of a transparent, even timbre that allows the listener to clearly perceive the text and melody. This approach is often associated with the concept of harmony in Chinese aesthetics, which favors a balance between sound and silence [32].

Especially in folk and operatic repertoire, Chinese performers strive to control the vibrato, using it only to enhance emotional emphasis, rather than as a permanent component of the sound [6].

Breathing in Chinese vocal school is the basis for creating smoothness and stability of sound. It should be deep, but not forced, which ensures ease of execution of even complex phrases.

Using the technique of diaphragmatic breathing, Chinese performers provide themselves with a long and stable flow of air. This technique was adapted from the Western vocal school, but modified for the needs of Chinese singing [37].

Singers work to use their air as efficiently as possible, especially in long melodic lines. For example, in the performance of the aria «Red Line» from a Chinese folk opera, the use of breath ensures a sense of naturalness even during complex melodic transitions.

Phrasing is also an important element of Chinese vocal technique, and special attention is paid to creating a smooth transition between notes. In Chinese singing, legato is performed with particular delicacy, which allows for a sense of harmony and balance to be maintained in each phrase [28].

Chinese performers emphasize the evenness of rhythm and the clarity of textual accentuation, which is important for maintaining the meaning of the phrase [13].

Chinese vocal technique places considerable emphasis on intonational accuracy, which is especially important for melodies based on pentatonic scales. Vocal training enables vocalists to achieve extraordinary accuracy in performing melodies, which is crucial for the appreciation of Chinese folk and classical works

[20]. Intonation accuracy is combined with soft dynamic changes that emphasize the melodic development of the work.

Chinese vocal technique is based on principles associated with the national musical tradition. The use of techniques characteristic of Chinese folk songs, such as flexible intonation, light attack of sound, and minimal vibrato, preserves the national character of vocal art.

Modern performers strive to maintain a balance between technical perfection and cultural identity, especially in the performance of folk works and modern Chinese compositions [32].

1.3. Comparative Analysis of Bel Canto and Chinese School of Singing Vocal Techniques. The bel canto technique and the Chinese vocal school represent two unique approaches to vocal art, each with deep historical and cultural roots. Although both systems focus on technical perfection, artistic expression, and musical harmony, they differ significantly in their aesthetic principles, approaches to breathing, legato, intonation, use of vibrato, and textual interpretation. This analysis examines the key similarities and differences between these two vocal schools in the context of their technical and aesthetic foundations.

The aesthetics of bel canto are based on the principles of beauty of sound, smoothness of legato, even dynamic development, and emotional expressiveness. The main goal of this technique is to achieve maximum aesthetic impact on the listener through technical perfection and artistic embodiment of the musical text [16].

The Chinese vocal school focuses on naturalness of sound, clarity of melody, and harmony between text and music. Its aesthetics are closely related to Chinese culture, which values balance, calmness, and restraint in the expression of emotions [20].

Bel canto strives to achieve drama and emotional impact through the use of a wide dynamic range, while Chinese technique emphasizes internal harmony and lyrical clarity. For example, in bel canto, Donizetti's aria «Una furtiva lagrima» may

sound dramatic, while a similar Chinese vocal work will sound more restrained and meditative.

Breathing in bel canto is based on the principle of *apoio* (Italian: *apoio*).»support»), which involves the use of diaphragmatic breathing to create a stable and controlled sound. This approach allows for the performance of long phrases with an even sound and smooth dynamic transitions [1].

Breathing in the Chinese school also uses a diaphragmatic approach, but with an emphasis on economy and lightness. Performers avoid excessive use of air, which allows for the creation of a more «transparent» sound characteristic of the Chinese aesthetic [37].

In bel canto, breathing serves as the basis for creating a powerful, emotional sound, while in the Chinese school it is aimed at achieving fluidity and balance. For example, the performance of long melodic phrases in the works of G. Rossini requires a significant volume of air, while in Chinese vocal art, long phrases usually sound lighter and less dramatic.

Legato is a central element of bel canto technique, ensuring smooth transitions between notes. Bel canto phrasing is dramatic and often uses *rubato* to emphasize the emotional content of the musical text [20].

Legato is also important in the Chinese school, but its performance is aimed at achieving melodic clarity and harmony. Here, phrasing is more even, with minimal use of *rubato*, in keeping with the overall restrained aesthetic [32].

Bel canto uses *legato* to create dramatic effect, while in the Chinese technique, *legato* has a lyrical and meditative character. For example, in the performance of Bellini's aria «Casta Diva», bel canto singers pay attention to each note as part of a dramatic phrase, while in the Chinese technique the similar approach would be softer and less contrasting.

Intonation in bel canto is perfectly precise, and vibrato is an integral component of the sound. Vibrato is used to add warmth and emotional expression,

but its intensity is controlled depending on the style and context of the performance [1].

The Chinese school also pays considerable attention to intonation, but vibrato is used much less intensively. Its use is limited to certain moments to enhance emotional emphasis [6].

In bel canto, vibrato is the main means of expression, while in Chinese technique it performs a secondary function. For example, in Donizetti's bel canto aria, vibrato is used constantly, while in Chinese vocals it may appear only in climactic moments. Bel canto pays great attention to diction, as the clarity of the pronunciation of the text in Italian is key to conveying the meaning. Performers use dynamic and articulatory means to emphasize the meaning of the text [16].

In the Chinese vocal school, text and music are in harmonious balance. Performers strive to convey the text with maximum clarity, but without excessive drama, which is consistent with the traditional concept of «universal harmony» [32].

Bel canto actively uses text as a dramatic device, while in the Chinese technique the text serves as the basis for melodic expressiveness. For example, in Verdi's bel canto works, diction plays the role of emotional accent, while in Chinese vocal it maintains lyrical restraint.

Conclusions to Section I. The Italian vocal school is a model of excellence in vocal art. Her attention to technical mastery, natural sound and emotional expressiveness makes her indispensable in world musical culture. Bel canto performance is not only a technique, but also an art that requires constant improvement and understanding of traditions.

Chinese vocal technique in the performance of the Italian repertoire is a unique phenomenon that combines the technical techniques of the Western school and national aesthetic traditions. This allows you to create interpretations that, on the one hand, correspond to the canons of Italian bel canto, and on the other hand, preserve the authenticity of Eastern culture.

Chinese vocal technique is a harmonious combination of traditional and modern approaches. It combines attention to naturalness of sound, accuracy of intonation and ease of phrasing with the aesthetic ideals of harmony and balance, which are an important component of Chinese culture. By integrating Western technical achievements, the Chinese vocal school retains its uniqueness and continues to develop in a global context.

Bel canto (Italian for «beautiful singing») and Chinese vocal technique are two influential systems that are distinguished by their cultural, historical and aesthetic foundations. Although they belong to different musical traditions, both schools have a high level of technical perfection and artistic expression.

Thus, bel canto and the Chinese vocal school, despite their common technical basis (diaphragmatic breathing, legato, intonational accuracy), have different aesthetic goals. Bel canto focuses on emotional impact and drama, while Chinese technique strives for harmony and restraint. Their combination in modern performance opens up new possibilities for the interpretation of vocal music.

SECTION II.

ARTISTIC AND AESTHETIC FEATURES OF CHINESE INTERPRETATIONS OF NEAPOLITAN WORKS

2.1. The performance context of the reproduction of the aria by J. B. «Tre giorni son che Nina» pergolas. The most famous work of G. B. Pergolesi, the aria «Tre giorni son che Nina» is considered an ideal example of the bel canto style due to its melodiousness, emotional richness and sophistication.

At the beginning of the 18th century, Naples was a center of musical innovation, particularly in vocal music. Pergolesi's compositions embody a gallant style characterized by refined melody, reduced contrapuntal texture, expressive harmonies focused on emotional immediacy. These elements were consistent with the Enlightenment ideals of clarity and natural expression [4].

Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710 – 1736) was born in the city of Jesi, but received his musical education in Naples, where he studied composition at the famous Conservatory of Santa Maria di Loreto.

The composer was a key figure of the Neapolitan school, known for his contributions to opera buffa and sacred works. His short life coincided with a transitional period in European music, which moved from the complexity of the Baroque to the simplicity and expressiveness of the Classical style [22].

The lyrical simplicity of «Tre giorni son che Nina» reflects the gallant style, with its stepped movement and avoidance of complex ornaments. The melody emphasizes the clarity and emotionality of the sound. The work uses a tonic-dominant relationship, creating a harmonic stability that supports the pastoral-intimate character of the aria. Baroque performance traditions, such as ornaments and expressive phrasing, play a key role in the interpretation of this aria [17].

In G. Pergolesi's aria «Tre giorni son che Nina» the smoothness of the melodic line prevails, where each phrase has a uniform dynamics. This approach also avoids the «excessive» drama that is typical of Western performers [13].

Tre giorni

Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710-1736)

Andante con moto

Tre gior - ni son che Ni - na, che Ni - na, che Ni - na in

let - to se ne sta 3 in let - to se ne sta.

G. Pergolesi's aria «Tre giorni son che Nina» with its simple but expressive melody and emotional laconicism is a characteristic example of the Neapolitan vocal school, which emphasized the naturalness and emotionality of performance [26]. At the same time, this work corresponds to the general tendency of Italian music of the 18th century to combine sophisticated melodism with deep emotional expression. The aria demonstrates the characteristic features of G. Pergolesi's style - simplicity and clarity of melody. The melodic line of the aria reflects the emotional state of the hero, avoiding complex melismatic decorations. The composer skillfully uses harmonic transitions and melodic intonations to enhance the dramatic effect. Some researchers suggest that the aria could have been part of a lost opera by Pergolesi or a chamber cantata repertoire [16]. Its chamber nature and expressive simplicity allow it to be considered a work created for private musical evenings, which were popular among the Italian aristocracy of the 18th century.

The aria «Tre giorni son che Nina», with its lyrical character, is an ideal example for the development of vocal skills in the bel canto style. Its technical and artistic features: The melody of the aria requires the performer to have a smooth,

continuous connection between notes, as well as sensitivity to dynamic changes that enhance emotional coloring.

The simplicity of the melody of the work makes any intonational inaccuracies noticeable, so singers must pay special attention to the purity of the sound. This work also allows vocalists to demonstrate a deep understanding of the text. The words of the aria, describing the three-day longing due to separation from their beloved, are important for conveying the emotional content. Maintaining clarity of diction is essential for creating unity between music and text [20].

Although the aria is traditionally attributed to G. B. Pergolesi, the question of its authorship is a matter of debate among musicologists. Some researchers suggest that the work could have been written by one of Pergolesi's followers, since after his death the composer's popularity led to the creation of a large number of apocryphal works that were attributed to his name [29].

However, despite these discussions, the aria «Tre giorni son che Nina» remains a significant part of the musical repertoire, illustrating the richness of the Italian vocal tradition of the 18th century.

The presented aria «Tre giorni son che Nina» reflects the characteristic features of the Baroque era: a synthesis of emotional expressiveness and technical simplicity, which ensures its popularity among performers and listeners. Its performance on modern concert stages testifies to the universality of the musical language, which has remained relevant for centuries.

The aria «Tre giorni son che Nina» is an example of chamber vocal music, reflecting the lyrical nature and simplicity of the melodic line. The work has a characteristic structure that emphasizes emotionality and intimacy. The aria is written in a simple three-part form (ABA), which is typical of vocal works of the Baroque and Classicist eras. This form provides a balance between contrast and repetition, allowing performers to demonstrate variability in the second performance of the main material. The line of the melody emphasizes tenderness and longing, which corresponds to the text of the work, which is about the suffering of a lover. The simplicity of the

melody allows you to focus on its emotional content. The harmonic accompaniment emphasizes the stability of the melodic development, without distracting the listener's attention from the vocal line. This is typical of chamber music created for small halls or home concerts. The moderate tempo and regular rhythm contribute to maintaining a lyrical mood. Syncopations and small rhythmic changes give the musical phrase naturalness and expression.

The text of the aria describes the longing of a lover who has been waiting for a meeting with Nina for three days. The lyrical content of the text is conveyed through repetitions of words, which increase emotional tension. Clear phrasing reveals the emotional accents of the text. During performance, diction is important for creating harmony between the word and the melody. The text provides the performer with an opportunity for interpretation, where the main task is to convey a deep emotional state through the nuances of the voice.

Chinese performers, interpreting the aria «Tre giorni son che Nina», adapt Western bel canto traditions to their own vocal culture. Their interpretations demonstrate a unique combination of technical mastery and national aesthetics. They approach the process of interpreting the aria with a special sensitivity to the musical text, striving to create a connection between Western tradition and Chinese cultural heritage. Their interpretations often strike a balance between the restraint inherent in Chinese vocal aesthetics and the expressiveness characteristic of Italian bel canto.

Chinese singers use diaphragmatic breathing, but with an emphasis on economy and smoothness. This allows them to maintain evenness of sound in long phrases. At the same time, their breathing is less forced than that of European performers. For example, Li Huiqing performs the aria with perfect smoothness, creating a feeling of «endless breathing».

Chinese performers pay special attention to the smoothness of the connections between notes. This legato has a soft and gentle character, which corresponds to the lyricism of the work. Therefore, it sounds more transparent, even and continuous than in Western interpretations. This creates a sense of meditative harmony, characteristic

of the Chinese musical approach. In the performance of Zhang Yuming, legato emphasizes the harmony of the musical phrase, making the sound transparent and elegant. Attention to intonation is one of the strongest sides of Chinese singers. Their work with pentatonic cadence structures in the national tradition ensures the purity and accuracy of the melodic line. The use of vibrato in Chinese interpretations of the aria «Tre giorni son che Nina» is moderate. This emphasizes the restraint and clarity of the melody, allowing the focus to be on the main musical material. The singers deliberately limit the use of vibrato, using it only in climactic moments. This creates a sense of calm and emphasizes the depth of emotion. Fang Qiao's performance is distinguished by the minimal use of vibrato, which adds elements of Eastern meditateness to the sound.

Chinese singers pay great attention to the clarity of pronunciation of the Italian text, which is important for the authenticity of the performance. However, sometimes their diction can be less expressive due to the differences between the Italian and Chinese languages. However, despite the phonetic features of the Chinese language, which can affect the sound, the singers strive to ensure the authenticity of the performance, which contributes to the harmonious perception of the work. Therefore, they choose a slightly slower tempo to emphasize the lyricism of the aria. This approach gives the performance a meditative character, close to Eastern aesthetics.

Also, the performance of the aria by Chinese singers is less dramatic compared to the European versions. Instead, the emphasis is placed on lyrical clarity and harmony. Wang Linfeng's interpretation sounds more restrained, with an emphasis on the inner emotional state rather than on external expression.

Thus, unlike European performers, Chinese singers avoid excessive drama, making the performance of the aria «Tre giorni son che Nina» more intimate, with an emphasis on the inner feeling of longing and peace.

Chinese performers often choose a moderate tempo, also because it allows them to focus on the nuances of the text and melody. Their interpretation has a meditative character, creating a sense of peace. In the performance of Li Xiaoyun, the

tempo of the aria is slightly slowed down, which emphasizes the lyrical intimacy of the work.

Chinese performers attach special importance to the text of the aria, harmonizing it with the melodic line. Their diction provides clarity, allowing the listener to fully experience the dramatic content of the work. The presented concept of performance is perceived as a kind of harmony of two musical cultures. Chinese vocalists add a new level of lyricism, individuality and inner peace to the aria «Tre giorni son che Nina», while maintaining the basic principles of the Italian vocal school. Their technical mastery combined with a unique emotional restraint makes such interpretations especially touching and sensual.

My personal performance is marked by a combination of technical mastery inherent in the Western school and restrained emotionality characteristic of Chinese aesthetics. The use of diaphragmatic breathing technique helps me maintain the smoothness of the sound and provides long phrases without excessive tension.

2.2. Neapolitan canzone «O Sole Mio»: performance features. The Neapolitan canzone (Neapolitan song) emerged from traditional folk music, becoming popular in the 19th century. It combines elements of Italian opera, local dialects, and melodic traditions unique to Southern Italy. These songs often reflect themes of love, nostalgia, and nature, which resonate deeply with the cultural identity of Naples [25].

The song «O Sole Mio» was composed in 1898 by Eduardo di Capua to lyrics by Giovanni Capurro. This song is the archetype of the Neapolitan canzone. The lyrics, written in the Neapolitan dialect, celebrate the beauty of the sun and its metaphorical connection to love and life [5].



The piece has a verse-chorus structure with a climactic refrain (O sole mio, sta 'nfron-te a te!), which conveys the emotional essence of the song. The melodic line is marked by wide intervals and expressive phrasing, reflecting the influence of operatic arias on the genre. The contour of the melody hints at a dialogue between nature and human feelings. The harmonic language, presented in simple but effective sequences, creates a strong emotional connection, reinforcing the melodic content [9]. The flexibility of the rubato and the emphasis on dynamic variations allow singers to personalize their performances. This freedom of interpretation is integral to the song's enduring popularity. The role of vibrato and timbral nuance in operatic and popular interpretations highlights the adaptability of «O sole mio» to different performance traditions [27].

«O sole mio» has long since transcended its regional origins and become a global symbol of Italian language and culture. It has been interpreted in a variety of styles, from operatic interpretations by Enrico Caruso to modern adaptations in popular music.

The phrasing in Chinese interpretation has a pronounced lyrical character. Performers often focus on small details, striving to convey the textual component of

the musical work. For example, in the song «O sole mio», Chinese singers prefer a lighter, emotionally «restrained» style, avoiding unnecessary accents characteristic of the Neapolitan school [32].

The smoothness of legato in Chinese performers is achieved through a combination of stable breathing technique and flexibility of the vocal cords. Unlike the European tradition, where legato often emphasizes emotional tension, the Chinese technique is aimed at creating a «ringing» and «transparent» sound [37].

Intonation accuracy is one of the key characteristics of the Chinese vocal school. This is explained by the influence of the national musical tradition, where melodic intervals have a high degree of detail. In the performance of the Italian repertoire, this is manifested in the clear transmission of intervals and minimal use of vibrato [6].

Chinese performers usually demonstrate excellent vocal control, perfect intonation, and dynamic range in this work. For example, in the interpretations of Yu Qiang or Li Yunzhen, one can often hear a masterful legato and virtuoso use of the upper notes.

Familiar with the European operatic tradition, singers from China try to preserve the original Neapolitan style. At the same time, they sometimes add their own cultural sensitivity to the performance, which makes their interpretations unique.

A key challenge for Neapolitan song is the transmission of emotional depth. Chinese singers demonstrate an understanding of the text and dramaturgy, although sometimes due to the language barrier, emotional expression can seem more restrained than that of Italian performers.

Often, modern orchestral or electronic arrangements are used in the performance of «O sole mio», which gives the work a modern sound. However, there are also examples of chamber performances, where the authenticity of the romance is emphasized.

«O Sole Mio» is very popular in Chinese concerts, and its melodiousness easily finds a response among local audiences.

The variety of interpretations of this composition is represented by the following examples: Long Lunzhong performed the song in a traditional operatic style with an emphasis on dramatic delivery; Zhang Li used the song as part of a popular concert, adding national elements to the performance, such as instrumental interludes on Chinese folk instruments; the Wutai Tenor Ensemble offered a harmonious performance with a vivid use of vocal interaction in their interpretations.

Personally, for me, it was important to maintain the smoothness of phrasing, the quality of pronunciation, emotional depth and stylistic responsiveness during the performance.

2.3. Comparison with European standards of the Chinese performance of the aria «Tre giorni son che Nina» and the song «O sole mio». Unlike European performers, who often try to convey the dramatic character of the work «Tre giorni son che Nina» using a wide dynamic range and rich vibrato, Chinese vocalists interpret the aria more restrained, emphasizing the lyricism and smoothness of the melody. This corresponds to the aesthetics of Eastern music, where emotional expression is expressed through subtle nuances of sound.

The Neapolitan tradition of performing the song «O sole mio» is based on expressiveness and passion, which is achieved due to bright vibrato and dramatic pauses. In the Chinese interpretation, on the contrary, attention to melodic clarity prevails, which makes the sound more «calm» and «harmonious»

The Chinese school often favors an aesthetic of melodic purity and emotional restraint, while the European tradition strives for drama and expressiveness. This is clearly manifested in the performance of both works.

The aria «Tre giorni son che Nina» is interpreted by European performers such as Cecilia Bartoli with strong dramatic expression, emphasizing dynamic contrasts. Instead, Chinese singers, such as Yang Lin, show a more restrained but lyrical interpretation, focusing on the smoothness of the sound and the precision of the melodic line.

Traditional Neapolitan interpretations of the song «O sole mio» are often saturated with emotional expression and dramatic pauses. Chinese performers, such as Huang Chen, try to avoid unnecessary accents, preferring a more natural and «light» sound. This allows for a new reading of the work that is perceived as more meditative and intimate.

Chinese vocal technique, adapting Western techniques to national culture, creates a unique interpretation of the Italian repertoire. It combines melodic transparency, dynamic restraint and harmony, which allows you to reach new artistic heights in the performance of such works as «Tre giorni son che Nina» and «O sole mio».

Vocal support and breathing techniques are fundamental components of vocal art, as they ensure the stability of the sound, its quality and duration. The combination of the Italian technique of *appoggio* with the traditional Chinese concept of breathing «丹田» (dāntián) creates a unique synthesis that allows adapting Italian vocal works to the Chinese performing tradition.

The Italian breathing technique of *appoggio* (from Italian – «support») is one of the most important components of *bel canto* and is characterized by: controlled exhalation: gradual release of air to create an even and stable sound; use of the diaphragm: active participation of the lower abdomen, which provides stable support of the voice; balanced work of the chest and abdominal muscles, which contributes to a flexible and long exhalation.

In Chinese performing practice, where techniques characteristic of opera are traditionally used (Peking opera, Yuezhi), breathing is not always emphasized as part of the technique. The adaptation of *appoggio* involves the integration of long and controlled exhalations, which allow for a smoother phrasing and sustaining the melodic line inherent in the Italian tradition. This is especially important for performing works such as G. Pergolesi's aria «Tre giorni son che Nina», where extended vocal lines require maximum stability.

The concept of «丹田» (dāntián) as the basis of Chinese vocal support

«丹田» (dāntián), translated as «breathing field» or «energy center», is a key concept in Chinese vocal and body practice. The main characteristics of «丹田» include: location: the area below the navel, the center of the body's energy; role in breathing: stimulation of the diaphragm through concentration on «丹田», which ensures a uniform flow of air; psychophysiological effect (harmonization of breathing and movements to achieve internal balance).

In vocal practice, the emphasis on «丹田» helps to maintain the stability of the sound even in long phrases. In the performance of the aria «Tre giorni son che Nina», this is manifested in the smooth fusion of phrases, where each note is harmoniously connected to the previous one [13]. An example of this is the performance of this aria by singer Li Meili, who in 2021 at the Guangzhou Festival demonstrated the ability to maintain the smoothness of the melody throughout the aria, using minimal breathing pauses. Her interpretation has been described by critics as a «dance of sound in breath» [32].

Breathing is a key aspect of vocal technique, and the Chinese school offers a unique approach to this element. The use of the technique of «economical breathing» allows vocalists to create light, extended phrases that sound natural.

table 1

Parameter.	Italian technique (appoggio).	Chinese technique («丹田»).	Synthesis in Chinese interpretation.
Breathing focus.	Diaphragm and chest.	Lower center («丹田»), body harmony.	Aperture with concentration on «丹田».
Muscle work. Active	Active participation of abdominal and intercostal muscles.	Minimal tension, balance	Optimal muscle participation to achieve smoothness.
Air control. Gradual control	Gradual control of exhalation.	Evenness through internal stability.	Combination of controlled exhalation and harmony.
Emotional aspect.	Drama, intensity.	Inner restraint, calm..	Balance between drama and restraint.

Phrasing is an integral part of vocal art, and the Chinese school pays particular attention to the integrity of the phrase. In the Chinese interpretation of the song «O

sole mio», there is a tendency to soften the emphasis on the climaxes and a more even dynamic development. Thus, Tian Yunchao's performance at the international competition in Rome in 2019 received high praise for the «soft and touching» interpretation of the song. Critics noted that his performance allowed listeners to better experience the melodic nature of the piece, rather than just its drama [37].

Chinese vocalists in the interpretation of the Italian repertoire demonstrate extraordinary skill in legato, which is a characteristic feature of bel canto. At the same time, Chinese technology adds «transparency» to the sound due to an easier approach to sound formation.

An example is Chen Zonghua's performance of the aria «Tre giorni son che Nina» in 2020, where the legato was so natural that critics compared it to the flow of water in a mountain river, which is both calm and powerful [28].

Intonation is a key element in the performance of the Italian repertoire, and Chinese singers pay special attention to it. In the song «O sole mio», the Chinese performers avoid the excessive use of vibrato, which is often characteristic of European performers. This approach allows you to emphasize the purity of the melody. For example, Liang Weiqiao's performance of this piece in the 2018 Shanghai Competition was praised for its «perfect intonation purity» that created a sense of spiritual harmony [32].

From all of the above, it becomes clear that Chinese vocalists can retain the expressiveness characteristic of the genre, while adapting it to a more restrained Chinese style through the use of breathing, phrasing, and intonation.

Conclusions to Part II. The aria «Tre giorni son che Nina» and the song «O sole mio» represent two distinct but complementary facets of the Neapolitan vocal tradition. The former reflects the refined elegance of 18th-century art music, while the latter embodies the emotional spirit of 19th-century popular song. Both works highlight the rich cultural heritage of Naples and its enduring influence on vocal art.

A comparison of the performance of the aria «Tre giorni son che Nina» and the song «O sole mio» in the Chinese and European traditions demonstrates two different approaches to vocal art. The European style focuses on emotional expressiveness, drama, and technical demonstration, characteristic of the Italian school. The Chinese approach emphasizes naturalness, harmony, and melodic transparency, which are a reflection of the Eastern cultural tradition.

These differences not only emphasize the uniqueness of each vocal school, but also indicate the potential for cultural dialogue.

The combination of the appoggio and «丹田» techniques is an example of a successful synthesis of two vocal traditions, which allows Chinese performers to expand traditional notions of bel canto, adapting it to new artistic realities. Such integration contributes to the enrichment of world musical culture and opens up new horizons for vocal interpretation.

CONCLUSIONS

In an increasingly globalized world, cross-cultural interpretations of musical traditions emphasize the importance of maintaining authenticity while embracing diverse artistic perspectives. The growing influence of Western classical music in China enriches the understanding of how these traditions can coexist and develop.

With the rapid development of music education in China, there is a growing interest in Western classical music, including the Italian operatic and song traditions. Exploring the nuances of Chinese interpretations provides valuable information about how Western music adapts to Chinese vocal training and aesthetic sensibilities.

An Italian performing school based on the tradition of *bel canto* (beautiful singing). This technique is central to creating legato and maintaining control over phrasing. Its main characteristic is the mastery of diaphragmatic breathing, which ensures a stable and smooth vocal line [15].

Italian vocalists have always strived for a rounded, warm and sonorous timbre, often described as a balance of «*chiaro-scuro*» (light-dark), combining brightness with depth [15]. Vibrato in the Italian school is used not as a standard feature, but as an expressive means that enriches the tone without overshadowing the purity of the pitch [31]. The clarity of Italian diction, emphasizing open vowels and precise consonants, is an integral part of the stylistic authenticity of the Italian repertoire [7].

The Chinese vocal school began to develop under the influence of Western culture in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when Western classical music began to penetrate China along with missionary activities and cultural exchanges. The influence of Italian *bel canto* was especially noticeable, which became the basis for the formation of academic singing in China [28].

Deeply rooted in the country's cultural and musical heritage, traditional Chinese vocal technique offers unique approaches that differ from Western practices. The concept of «丹田» (*dāntián*), or the body's energy center, governs breath control and supports vocal production, ensuring a stable yet flexible tone [10]. The Chinese vocal tradition often emphasizes a lighter nasal tone, reflecting the aesthetics of traditional opera and folk singing. However, adaptations have been made for

Western-style compositions [36]. A distinctive feature of Chinese vocal music is the use of subtle melodic ornamentation, reflecting the influence of traditional Chinese instruments such as the guqin and erhu [33]. The principle of «以字行腔» (yǐ zì xíng qiāng) focuses on the integration of song text and melody, ensuring that the content of the text guides the vocal expression [14].

The works presented by Chinese singers are an example of a cultural dialogue between Western and Eastern musical traditions. Their interpretations demonstrate: technical mastery in bel canto performance, adapted to national vocal traditions, as well as artistic restraint and an emphasis on harmony, reflecting the aesthetics of Chinese culture.

Such adaptation expands the boundaries of the interpretation of the classical Western repertoire, enriching it with new nuances and deepening the perception of traditional vocal music.

European performers, especially representatives of the Italian bel canto school, gravitate towards emotional richness, drama and a wide dynamic range in the interpretation of the works presented in the work. Chinese performers, on the other hand, demonstrate a more lyrical and restrained approach, focusing on the transparency of sound, the smoothness of legato and the harmony between text and music.

In Chinese performance, breathing and legato are more economical and even. Chinese performers pay considerable attention to the smoothness of the musical line and the stability of the sound, which distinguishes them from European performers, who emphasize dramatic contrasts in dynamics and articulation.

European standards provide for the intensive use of vibrato as a means of emotional expression. Chinese performers use vibrato sparingly, only in climactic moments, which adds calm and melodic clarity to their interpretations. Intonation in both approaches is highly accurate, but Chinese singers emphasize minimizing any deviations in the melodic line.

European interpretations are characterized by elements of rubato, which add naturalness to phrasing and enhance the emotionality of the performance. In Chinese performance, the tempo is mostly even, with slight slowdowns to emphasize textual and musical accents.

European performers strive for the maximum combination of diction and dramatic expression, while Chinese singers emphasize clarity of pronunciation, even if this sometimes affects the drama of the performance.

Chinese performers focus on inner harmony and restraint, avoiding excessive emotional impact. While European singers, on the contrary, strive to achieve a strong emotional effect through the vivid use of dynamics and timbre contrasts.

Thus, the study examines the analysis of Chinese interpretations of Italian works, combining elements of different vocal traditions. Maintaining stylistic integrity while adapting to different vocal traditions poses technical and interpretative challenges for Chinese performers. Examining these challenges in the presented context informs the practice of vocal training worldwide.

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