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A Study of the Development and Performing of Chinese Classical Drama

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**A STUDY OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND PERFORMING OF
CHINESE CLASSICAL DRAMA**

A Master's Thesis
By
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A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Lindenwood University
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2001

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A STUDY OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND PERFORMING OF CHINESE CLASSICAL DRAMA

I . INTRODUCTION

The Chinese classic drama, just like a shining star, on the stage of the development of drama in the world, is appreciated, and studied by fans of the drama around the globe.

According to some scholars, this art encompassing music, dance, and Chinese folk tales is a popular form of entertainment to nearly one – quarter of the world’s population. Its development has a long history from the beginning in ancient times and continuing today.

The focus of this paper will be to describe and illustrate the components of Chinese classical drama for the foreign fans so that they may have a fuller understanding of this beautiful art form.

The paper will be divided into three parts. The first part, will concentrate on the origins of the Chinese classic drama from the ancient times until now. The second part is an analysis of all the performance and production aspects of Chinese classic drama. Special attention will be given to the plays, characters, stage development, actions, make-up, costumes, stage props and wen-wu music. The final part of this paper will present the special intangible qualities of Chinese classic drama and prospects for its continued popularity in the future.

II. THE SOURCE OF THE CHINESE DRAMA

The Chinese drama has a 5,000-year history and can best be studied by focusing on five major periods of Chinese history:

- A. Pre-Tang Dynasties (?— a.d.907)
- B. Sung and Yuan Dynasties (a.d.960—a.d.1368)
- C. Ming and Qing Dynasties (a.d.1368—a.d.1911)
- D. Modern China and Taiwan (a.d.1911—a. d.1990)

A. DRAMA DEVELOPMENT OF PRIOR TANG DYNASTY

Most scholars agree that Chinese classical drama began as a religious festival and included singing and dancing. Zhuang Chou states in his book, *Zhuang-zi*, “Huang Ti displays the music of Hsien Chin in the field of Tung-ting for the playing of the harmony of heaven and earth and the illuminating as bright as sunshine (501).” From this book, we know that music and song were performed by the time of Huang Ti. As far as dance, the book of *Zhou Li* states, “...Ta Shih Yueh (the palace of music teacher) taught the people with music and dance which included yue men, ta chuen (the Chinese ancient dance names)... (336).”

The first records of dance come from the time of Huang Ti, China’s first emperor. Song and dance also appear in secular activities within the culture. There seems to be a human desire for self – expression to celebrate the events of life.

dance The drama developed to Shang Dynasty (1194-1112 b.c). Shang Dynasty believes in gods and devils. They had then a class of witch-dancers, called “*wu*”, and in the festival ceremonies they express special songs and dances. Shang Dynasty had a professional performing organization offering to amusement of the gods and the people. Wang Kuo-wei (1877-1927 a.d), one of the great scholars of the Chinese drama history in his *History of Sung-Yuan Drama* states, “Did song and dance start with ancient witchery in a time far distant to our written records (Teng2) ?” Some writers have suggested that drama itself originated within the witchery dances.

music In the Chou Dynasty (1122-314 b.c) the dance, though crude, was indispensable in the primitive plays. There were two kinds of dances: “civil” and “military”. Using feather and flute performance, the civil dance, called “shao” featured the use of feather and flute. Military dance was performed with shields and spears, and called “Hsiang” dance. The government as well as schools supported both types of dances, and the schools usually taught the styles according to the students’ ages. In *Li Ji*, a very important book in China stated, “those who are thirteen dance “Shao”, those who are fifteen dance ‘Hsiang’ and those who dance “Ta Hsia” are twenty (538).”

H In the Chou Dynasty, the civil dances and military dances were used in temple rites, but some were also slightly modified and performed for the ordinary folk. These three types of

dance haven't contains of any plots (Teng 3). Such dances formed the first phrase in the development of the dramatic arts.

The first actors appeared at court between 772-481 b.c. during a historical period called the "era of Spring and Autumn". These actors were dwarfs whose duty was to make people laughs with funny words and actions. They were also required to sing and dance. For example, Chu's (an ancient China country name) actor Meng could sing and used his repertoire for ridicule. A story says that Chu's actor Meng, portrayed a recently deceased prime minister in order to gain favor for his heirs from the Emperor. Meng's masquerade of the prime minister convinced the Emperor to grant land to the prime minister's son (Chang 1-10). Meng created a character and, while it was quite different from an actual play, we can say it become the basis for the development of the drama.

During the Han Dynasty (206 b.c.-a.d 219), the "Hiang Chuang Sword Dance" (a Chinese history) contained a few plot devices. A character named Hiang Chuang uses the sword dance to show a plan to kill his enemy Pei Kung (Teng 4). While this entertainment has a crude story line, it is a step toward true drama, and contains archetypes of later dramatic roles.

In the era of Three Kingdoms (220-280 a.d) according to the *Wei Shu*, actors named Kuo Huai and Yuan Sin played the "Magical Woman of Liao Tung" and perhaps originated the practice of male actors playing women (Chen 4267).

Pei Chi (550-577 a.d) created two “productions” using song and dance to tell the fact-based stories. “Ta Mian” describes Lan Ling King’s creation of an ugly mask used to defeat an enemy and win a great victory. The “Ta Yau Niang” is a story about a wife beater, Su Chung Lang, whose face became very red when he was drunk. Many writers believe Lang Ling King’s mask and Su Chung Lang’s red face were the precursors of the famous painted faces and masks in classic Chinese drama (Teng 5). In addition, the Lang Ling King wore a purple uniform with golden belt and Su Chung Lang wore scarlet clothes and cap. These garments marked the beginning of expressive rather than decorative costumes. The whip used by the Lang Ling King was a symbol of the horse in later drama.

The Tang Dynasty (618-907 a.d) heralded a climax in the political power and culture of mediaeval China, with significant forerunners of theatre already in place (Brandon 27). In that time T’ang Dynasty conquered many uncivil country and merge its music into T’ang theatre of play caused of an influx of foreign music. The performing arts were so encouraged by the rulers of this period that it has been said drama reached an apex (Zung 60). For example “Chan Chun His,” a comic skit, was highly developed by this time. It included dialogue, string and wind instruments and perhaps percussion instruments as musical accompaniment, and defined characters. In the T’ang Dynasty, drama flourished.

B. SUNG AND YUAN DYNASTY DRAMA

The Sung Dynasty ruled all China from 960 to 1127 we called Northern Sung, when Jin Dynasty seized Northern Sung capital and Sung Emperor move the capital to Southern, in this time we called Southern Sung and it until 1279. It was during this period that a turning point with regard to song and dance occurred. Whole stories began to be portrayed (Zung 60).

There were long forms of Sung stories called "Ta Chu", and a performance style using speech and singing to describe a story, called "Chu Kung Tiao". Now we have drama in its embryonic form. Furthermore, in the North Sung, performances were presented with two actors. The plays were shot, funny and might portray a love affair or satirize officialdom. These entertainments called "Zaju", and included dancing, acrobatics, the core play comic patter and a musical conclusion (Brandon 27). Sung plays from "Chu Kung Tiao", but content more richness the acting very similar to the Tang Dynasty's "Chan Chun His". In the Sung Dynasty, performances were put on by an organized troupe. Role categories included "Mo Ni (Lao-sheng)", "Yin His", "Fu Ching (Ching)", "Fu Mo (Clown)", and "Chuag Ku" etc. There was a tent structure which served as a separate performance space (Teng 5). It was called "goulan" (hook balustrades).

After the Sung Dynasty's court moved south of Wenzhou, "Nan His" theatre began. The plays of southern drama were longer and had more complex story lines than earlier performances,

and in this sense they may be taken as the first stage of a fully developed Chinese drama (Brandon 27). So, there are now sufficient ingredients to say the classic Chinese drama with song, dance, facial make-up and staging has finally taken shape.

Between 1234 and 1279, the Mongols conquered the Jin Dynasty and the southern Sung armies, and established the Yuan Dynasty (1278-1368 a.d) (Brandon 27-8). *Lu Kuei Pu (A Record of living and Dead Ghosts)*, written by Chung Szu Cheng in 1330, divided Yuan dramatists into three stages. The first stage covered the fifty year period when the Mongols vanquished the Jin and occupied North China. The second stage was after the overthrow of the Sung and conquest of China. Most of the dramatists belonged to the second stage in which playwrights created the most memorable master pieces in Chinese literature (Liu 11-2). The third stage was later Yuan Dynasty to be destroyed by Ming Dynasty. In 1314 Mongols abolished the examination (its one way to become an officer by scholar) in order to “ block off opportunities for educated Han Chinese to enter the bureaucracy” (Brandon 28). Playwriting became the outlet for their literary talent. Chung Szu Cheng divided the dramatists into two groups: those who belonged to the official ruling class and those who were professional playwrights belonging to playwrights’ guilds. It was the latter who were responsible for bringing Yuan drama to the position it occupies in Chinese literature (Liu 12). The five most famous dramatists were Guan Han-ching (*Tou E Yuan*), Bai Pu (*The Plane Tree and Rain*), Ma

Chi-yuan (*The Sorrow of Han and Wang*), Shih-fu (*The West Chamber*), and Cheng Te-huc (*Chian Nu Li Huen*).

The Yuan play version was no doubt influenced directly by “Ta Chu” and “Chu Kung Tiao”, called “Zaju”, but Yuan Dynasty’s “Zaju” was different from that of the Sung era (Teng 6). Yuan Zaju dealt with many different plots, like romance, courtesan’s, friendships between men, tyrannical rulers or rebels, recluses or supernatural beings (Brandon 28). So we can say it was the first great age of Chinese theatre mark. There were also significant improvements in face painting, costumes and stage props, a tiled stage and “the famous wall painting of a scene from a Yuan “Zaju” performance” (Brandon 28). The main role categories of “zaju” were, mo (*male*), tan (*female*), jing (*villain*) and chou (*clown*)” (Brandon 28). The music like its people was powerful and brave, heroic and elegant, noble and simple, liable to be a little rough. Musical accompaniment was mainly by stringed instruments.

C. MING AND QING DYNASTY DRAMA

The Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 a.d) marks a most important chapter in the history of Chinese drama and theatre. More than four hundred playwrights produced over fifteen hundred plays, ranging from one-act skits to works with more than fifty scenes (Hu 60). Theatre performed with polished singing, intricate choreography and splendid costumes, has been rarely, if ever surpassed. The play form contains three sections: **1. Zaju 2. Chuanqi 3. Kunqu**

1. Zaju

In the early Ming Dynasty was a prolific period for “Zaju” and quality was also good. In contrast to Yuan drama, that of the Ming may be regarded as essentially the product of the aristocracy and the learned for their followers. Its language and sentiments were fundamentally those of the literati, not of the common people (Hu 61). Major authors of this period include Zhu Quan (1378-1448 a.d), Zhu Youdun (1379-1439 a.d), Yang Na, Wang Jiushi (1468-1551 a.d), and Kang Hai (1475-1540 a.d), Xu Wei (1521-1593 a.d). Zhu Quan was the seventeenth son of the Hongwu Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang. Zhu Youdun was another Ming prince. Xu Wei, a most versatile and eccentric genius, was an excellent calligrapher, painter, poet, and dramatist (Hu 81). The most famous of his plays was *Sisheng Yuan (The Four Shrieks of a Monkey)*. This play is unconventional in two ways. First, he departed from the rule that “Zaju” should have four acts and a “wedge” (Lin 13). He wrote one-, two-, and even five-act “Zaju” plays. His deviation from the form signaled the collapse of the traditional structure. Second, Xu Wei combined northern and southern music (Brandon 30). This drastic departure from standard practice won universal acclaim. Wang Jide (a.d.1623), a famous playwright and theoretician, commented, “Mr.Xu’s *Four Shrieks of a Monkey* is really a marvelous literary work in the world (Hu 81).”

His opinion was widely shared by others. Additional changes in the “Zaju” plays also

included a short prologue and a poem to conclude the action, which had once been distinctive features of the southern plays. Some historians prefer to call plays with these features “southern zaju plays.”

2. Chuanqi Drama

“Chuanqi” originally referred to the “marvel tale” of the Tang Dynasty (618-907 a.d), is the dormant southern drama revived. The term used to refer to the form was one which had been in use to describe stories or novellas, during the Tang dynasty “Chuanqi” literally means “transmitting the marvelous” (Brandon 29). This style of drama developed after the Mongols conquered the whole of China and many “zaju” playwrights migrated to the south Hangzhou area, where they wrote both “southern plays” and “zaju”. Their contributions helped bring about a revival of southern plays (Hu 62-3). A “Chuanqi” play is divided into scenes from at least thirty to as over fifty, with a prologue that always introduces the action. The prologue explains the story and announces the title of the play (Brandon 29). These plays were very popular because of the fastmoving events, powerful and genuine emotion of the characters, and unselfconscious delight in buffoonery and bawdy jokes. These style of drama appealed especially to the common people (Hu 64). The greatest writer of “Chuanqi” was Gao Ming, the dramatist of *Pipa Ji (The Lute Song)*. Four additional famous “Chuanqi” plays include Ko Dan *Chu Jingchai Ji (Thorn Hairpin)*, Shih-wei’s *Baiyue Ting (The Moon Prayer Pavilion)*,

Anonymous *Baiy Ji (The White Rabbit)* and Hsu Ch'en *Sha Gou Ji (Killing a Dog)* were the five famous "Chuanqi" works.

3. Kunqu Drama

At the time "Zaju" was declining, various local dramas rose to prominence. The most important contributor to this style was Wei Liangfu (a.d 1522-73), a 16th-century musician and actor. Wei adapted various familiar musical styles including not only "Haiyan qiang" but also "Zaju" "Yiyang qiang" and the local music of "Kunshan," to create a new dramatic form which was called the "music of kunshan (Kunshan Qiang)", known as "Kunqu" (Brandon 30). The plays of this southern type, mostly romantic love stories, were the work of literary men, and were performed in a more exquisite and refined manner than the Northern kind (Zung 63).

Haiyan was a trade port and salt manufacturing center in Zhejiang province starting in the Sung Dynasty. From that time its people were reknown for their excellent singing, and during the Yuan Dynasty, its music was further enriched by Northern music (Hu 69). The singing was soft and quiet, not accompanied except percussion instruments such as a clapper or a fan to beat the time at small scale performances, or a drum and clapper at large-scale ones (Hu 69-70). The audience came mainly from the educated classes, rich families and officials. Role categories followed the normal patterns of southern drama.

The origin of Yiyang is traced to the rice planting songs, these plays used local dialect the

ordinary people did not normally understand the official words of the bureaucrats, it home in Jiangxi province. Southern drama and “Zaju” were heard there about the 13th century and melodies from these combined with local folk music to form the “music of Yiyang” (Brandon 31). It had no instruments to accompany the singing except drums and gongs that beat out the time. “Yiyang qiang” spread to other places, including the capital at Beijing in the 16th century (Hu 70).

While these original forms were prevalent everywhere, Wei Liangfu, a native of Jiangxi Province, devoted ten years to studying the music styles Yiyang and Haiyan, in order to create innovations and refinements of the local music of Kunshan. He created a smooth, delicate, slow-moving rhythmic melody. As a result, the music of Wei Liangfu acquired the appellation “water polished tune” (Hu 71). Its full orchestra included percussion, string and wind instruments including side-blown and straight flutes, sheng, lute, and moon guitar (Hu 71). “Wei’s major contribution lay obviously in adding such instrument as the flutes and integrating them all into one harmonious unity (Hu 71).”

The most famous play of this style was Liang Chenyu’s (1520-1594 a.d) *Washing Gauze*. This play led to efforts to standardize Kunqu literary form.

Shen Jing (1553-1610 a.d), one of the most influential, dramatists of his time, concerned himself with rhyming, intonation, and the relationship between libretto and music (Hu 72). He

dogmatically insisted that lyrics be in harmony with pre-existing tunes (Hu 72). His most famous and successful play was *Yixia (An Upright Hero)*, which was adapted from a chapter in the famous novel "Water Margin".

Another most successful and influential dramatist was Tang Xoamzu (1550-1617 a.d). His five extant plays include: *Zixiao Ji (The Purple Flute)* (1577-1579), *Zichai Ji (The purple Hairpin)* (1587), *Mudan Ting (The Peony Pavilion)* (1598), *Nanke Ji (The Dream of Nanke)* (1600), and *Handon Ji (The Dream of Handan)* (1601), all dealing with the topic of romance (Hu 73). In a treatise published in 1610, Lu Tiancheng wrote:

"The affair of Liniang is quite marvelous. The deliberate elaboration of a young woman's longing for love and marriage is evocative to the heart and disturbing to the soul. Furthermore, every dramatic situation is a novelty, with one ingenious stroke after another. The play is really a work for all times(230)."

The Peony Pavilion is by general consensus the greatest of all Chuanqi plays. After Tang Xianzu and Shen Jing, Kunqu was established firmly as a respectable dramatic genre, and as a decent pursuit for literati as well.

The year 1644 marked the beginning of the Qing Dynasty. In the ensuing 267 years there were substantial, even fundamental, changes in the Chinese drama (Mackerras 92). During the Qing Dynasty, Kang-Hsi (1662-1723 a.d) and Ch'ien-Lung (1736-1796 a.d), were two important Emperors to who influenced Chinese classical drama. Kang-Hsi introduced "Kunqu" into the imperial palace there by helping to make "Kunqu" reach its peak of popularity.

Ch'ien-Lung visited the South, saw "Kunqu" and liked it so much he brought back to the capital whole troupe of "Kunqu" actors to palace. Rich and extravagant salt-merchants and local officials sponsored the company of actors (Zung 63). All this made the "Kunqu" the most popular entertainment of the day. Ch'ien-Lung set up schools to train eunuchs as actors to perform on special occasions the seasonal plays. Theater was an important part of court life. The emperor himself created schools to train performers and opera singers. A new department, the "Literary Society" presented only Kunqu plays (Zung 63). Another very important department was set up parallel to the reorganized old theatrical system. The new department called the "Floral Society" performed the following types of play: **Yiyang Kao Cling P'ang-tzu Ts'in Pi-huang Luan-tan and Local play** (Zung 63).

Yiyang This type originated in Yiyang district Jiangxi Province, is a local play and spread to Beijing, Nanking, and the provinces of Hunan, Fukien and Kwangtung. Its origin can be traced to a period earlier than the reign of Emperor Van Lih.

Kao It has been said that when "yiyang" became popular in Beijing it was discarded in its native place; it found favor and flourished in Kao-yang district where it received the new name "Kao". No stringed instruments, only drums, gongs, trumpets, etc., are used in this type, so the music is very loud.

Cling Also called clapper opera. During years of performance in Beijing “Yiyang” was gradually altered into an almost entirely different form, constituting a separate school, popularly known as Qing Dynasty the chief characteristic linking the styles of the clapper-opera system is the use of the clapper, a datewood block struck with a stick, to beat out the rhythm.

P’ang-tzu The name was derived from the piece of bamboo called p’ang-tzu, which is employed by the director of the orchestra to beat time. Some important alterations gave a softening effect to the tune and made it very pleasing to the ear.

While the original form was declining, this altered branch, now known as “Nan-p’ang-tzu” was chosen by the “p’i-huang” school to accompany romantic songs in love scenes.

Ts’in This type, though reputed to have originated in Shensi province was in fact started in the province of Kansu. Its songs are never accompanied by the flute, but by “hu-ch’in” (the Chinese violin) assisted by “yueh-ch’in” (the Moon guitar). Therefore, it is said that the essential constituent, “his-pi” of the “p’i-huang” type, always accompanied by these two instruments, is but a synonym of Ts’in.

Pi-huang It is known to be a combination of “his-pi” and “erh-huang” music.

The name “erh (literally, two) huang” is derived from the fact that it originated in the two Huang districts in Hupeh province, namely, Huang-kon, and Huang-pi.

Its songs are introduced into China from the northern tribe, Hu.

Luan-tan This school consisting of all the other types except Kunqu is called a “medley”, because of the mixture. Some writers, however, hold that it has been so named because the orchestra of this school consists of many kinds of musical instruments.

Local play In many districts plays are given in the colloquial dialect, which is little known or appreciated outside of that locality. While these are of small dramatic value they do provide entertainment for the country people who have all too little to alleviate the monotony of their lives. (Zung 63-4)

In the Qing Dynasty, dramatists gathered all of different style drama, discarded the overgrowing weeds and kept the lush grass. They eliminated the impure and retained the pure, made the Chinese drama achieve to unprecedented brilliance.

During the Ch’ien-Lung Emperor’s 70th-birthday celebrations, a group of actors of female roles (tan) from Sichuan, led by Wei Changsheng (1744-1802 a.d) were captivating Beijing audiences with their Ts’in performances (Brandon 32). Changsheng stayed there for six years, creating a tremendous impact. To create a believable woman he wore a false foot

beneath his foot and tied it to his leg with cotton bandage enabling him to imitate the gait of a woman with bound feet (Brandon 32). Ten years later a new group of actors came to Beijing to take part in the celebrations for the Ch'ien-Lung Emperor's 80th birthday. These actors were members of companies from Anhwei Province and their style of performance belonged to the "Pi-huang" musical system (Brandon 32). The "Pi-huang" musical system was created by experienced actors of Anhwei Province who selected the best points of those schools added some of their own invention, mingled "His-P'i", "P'ang-Tzu" and "erh-Huang" together and called this potpourri "Pi-Huang" (Zung 64).

Since most of the "P'i-Huang" actors were Anhwei men, they called themselves the Anhwei troupe. The actor Gao Yueguan was mainly credited with introducing P'i-Huang music to Beijing in the year 1790. Their first performances evolved into what is known now as Beijing opera. "The "Four Great Anhui companies" established themselves as preeminent: Chuntai (Spring Stage), Sanqing (Three Celebrations), Sixi (Four Joys) and Hechun (Harmonious Spring)" (Brandon 33). One of these troupes did not disband until the Boxer uprising in 1903 (Mackerras 103). The "Floral Society" was so artistically welded together that became a powerful rival of the "Literary Society".

The traditional theatre in the 20th century, Beijing - style theatre continued to dominant the traditional stage. The current great four "tan" actors are: Mei Lan-fang , Ch'eng Yen-tsiu ,

Shing Hsiau-yuin, Sun Hui-shin. The greast “tan” actress are: Hsueh Yen-ch’in , Chang Nge-yuin, Sin Yen-ts’iu , Tu Lee-yuin. The great “Lao-shen” actors are: Ch’eng chang-keng, Wang Kuei-fung, Tan Hsin-pei , San chu-sien (Zung 67).

Though many high class people went on the stage as amateurs, the professional players as a class were despised, until recent years, the great actors, Ch’ent Chang-keng, Wang Kuei-fung, Tan Hsin-pei, and Sun Chu-sien played “lao-shen”, naturally persons playing this role occupied the foremost position(Zung 66). Mei Lan-fan, an important and innovative actor, revolutionized the “lao-shen” long-established, ranking system. In 1913 during his first visit to Shanghai he had marked success. When he return to Beijing, “Ching-i” began to be ranked above other famous actors (Zung 66). In 1930, Mei received global acclaim resulting from his tours to American and Russia.

D.THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHINESE CLASSIC DRAMA BETWEEN TAIWAN AND MAINLAND CHINA IN THE PRESENT DAYS

In 1949, when the Chinese government moved to Taiwan, some of Chinese classical drama actor's followed it. Because of the governmental support and cultivation of the Chinese drama, now we have National Taiwan Junior College of Performing Arts, National Kuo Kuang

Chinese Opera Company (The First National Chinese Opera Company in Taiwan) to train the performers. The National Taiwan University, Chinese Culture University, National Institute of the Arts, National Taiwan College of Art train performers and promote dramatic research. They help develop an appreciation of "Kunqu" and its essence. Some people try to mix east and west performances together. All the blending of the Chinese classical drama and the styles from other countries serves to make Chinese drama more universal. At this time some local plays such as "Hakka" play, "Taiwanese opera", "Palm Puppet" play are also encouraged.

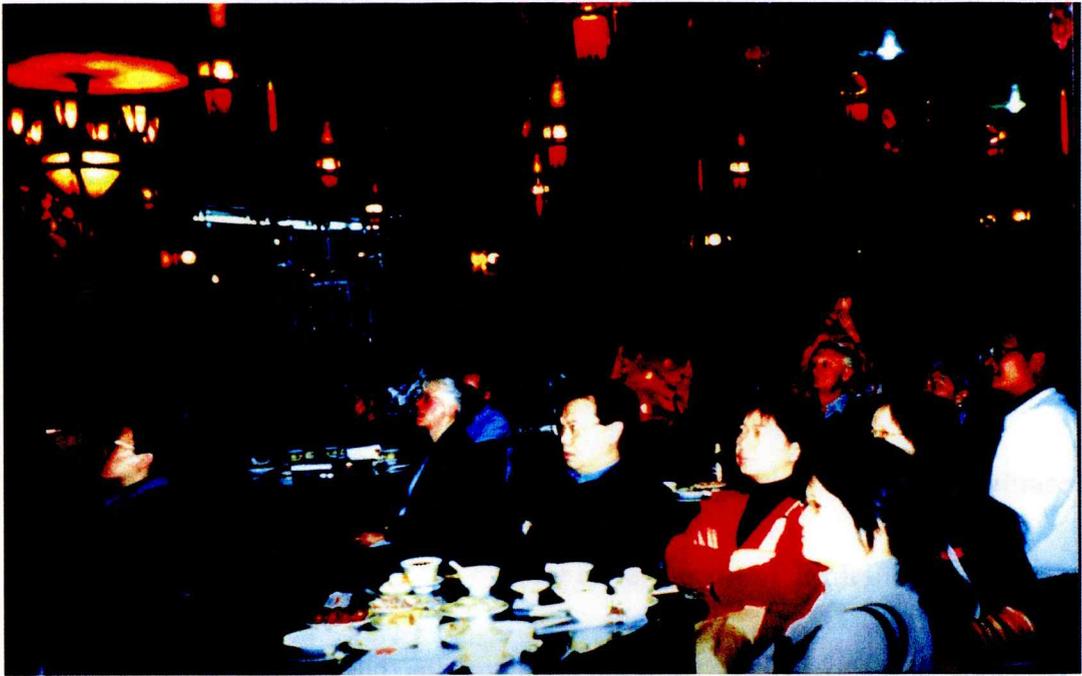
In Mainland China, during the Cultural Revolution, army drama, took precedence over classical Chinese drama. From 1966-1976 many excellent actors like Qiu Zheng Rong, Li Xiao Chun, etc., suffered and most of the actors died. Within the last decade, the Chinese government has begun to promote historic Chinese culture and drama. Now there are schools to train actors in classic styles. On the mainland, they have also created teahouses like the Lao She teahouse in Beijing where variety shows and local theatre is presented. The Mainland dramas just like bamboo shoots after a spring rain. At present Taiwan and Mainland not exchange in politics, but the culture have been exchanged. Taiwan and Mainland actors, however, love the Chinese classic drama. The old Chinese classical drama brings the people of China together.



1. Lao She Tea House, which first opened for business in 1988, is named after Mr. Lao She, a great literary figure of the people, and Tea House, one of his well-known plays.

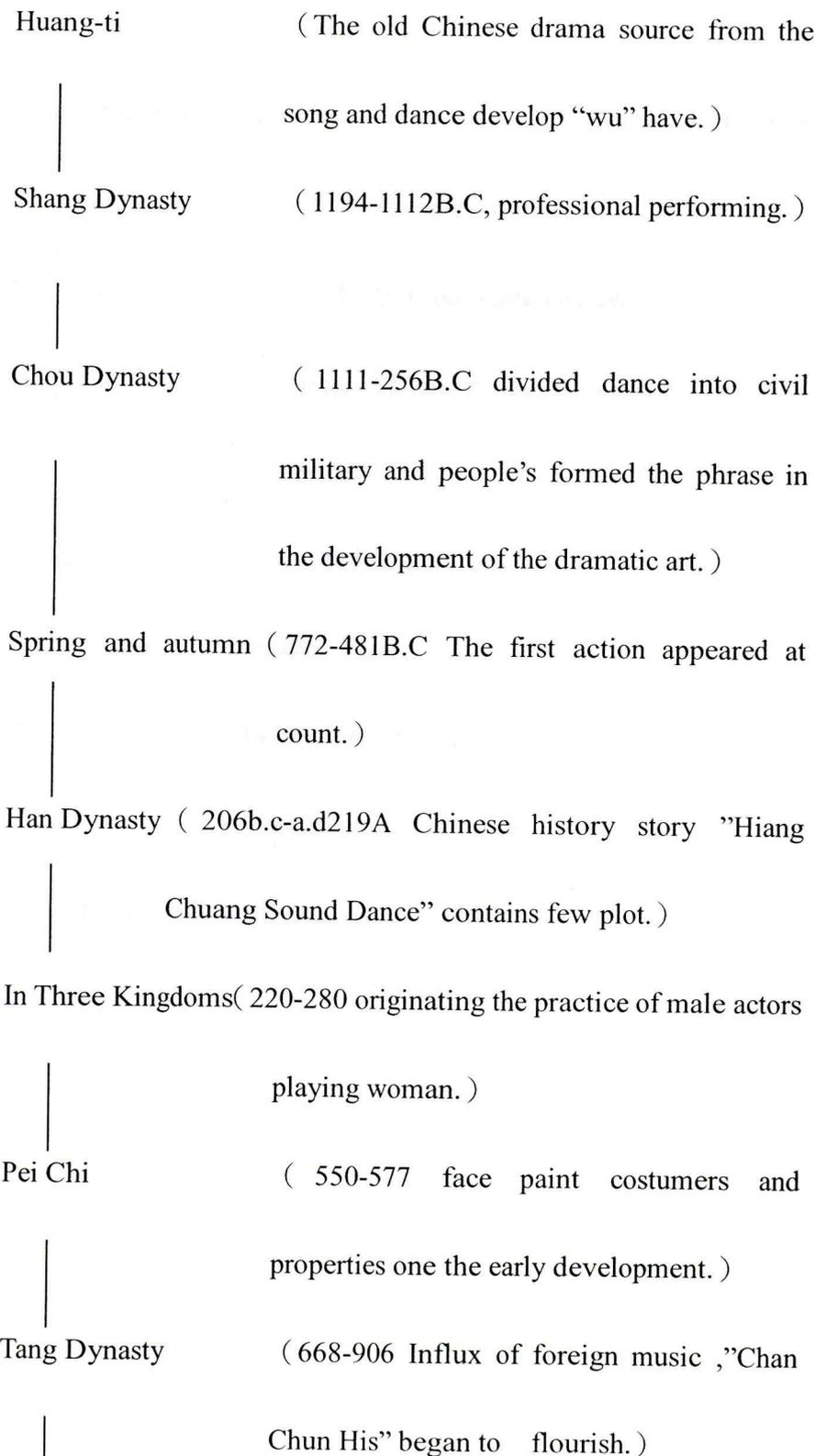
There is a rich local aura about this tea house which has been stylishly furnished with a tinge of antiquity and freshness, well-known entertainers of variety shows and the local theatre are featured here every evening. Patrons are also welcome to join in the act if they feel the urge for the stage.

Lao She Tea House offers a range of first teas, Choice pastries prepared according to ancient recipes from the imperial kitchen and seasonal local delicacies (From Beijing Lao She Tea House Introduce)



2-3. Beijing Loe She teahouse picture made by Hu Chia-chih 05/04/01

THE OLD CHINESE DRAMA DEVELOPMENT PICTURE



North Sung Dynasty (960-1127 "Zaju" formed have four to five actors

have a tent structures-goulan.)

South Sung Dynasty (1127-1279 "Nan His" began had taken

definite shape as dramatized.)

Mongols

(1278-1368 "Zaju" divided into two

groups :official ruling class and playwright's

guilds)

Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 The play form

contains. Zaju ,Chuanqi ,Kungu.)

Qing Dynasty (1644-1911 divided "Literary Society" and "flower

Society" Beijing drama was born)

Taiwan China (still development Beijing drama.)

(III) THE CHINESE CLASSICAL DRAMA OF PERFORMING

This section will be divided into five parts to discuss. The first, will explain the Chinese classic play. The second, will describe the Chinese classical stage. The third, will talk about the Chinese classical actors. The fourth, from the Chinese classical stage movement to understand its meaning. The fifth, will discuss the Chinese classical music. A successful performance must have the five parts, to explain the plays spirit and make the plays complete. So we should analyze the five parts to understand the importance of each.

A. The Chinese Classical Plays:

We can sub-divide three parts: 1. the play subject. 2. the most important writer and writing works in each dynasty and 3. the play structure.

1. The Plays Subject

According to the Ming Dynasty scholar Chu Ch'uan, *Tai Ho Cheng Yin Pu* divided plays into twelve categories according to their subject: a. Human beings who become gods and immortals, b. Hermits, c. Emperors and officials, d. Loyal officials and martyrs, e. The filial the faithful, the incorruptible the chaste, f. The treacherous and the slanderous censured and rebuked, g. Orphans and exile, h. Knights-errant and warriors in action, i. Lovers, j. Sorrows of parting joys of meeting, k. Courtesans, l. Buddhist and other gods (Liu 13). But in the *Secrets of the Chinese Drama*, he classifies them as follows(using one play to explain his classification):

- a. Tragical: like *The Final Parting Between the king P'a wang and His Favourite*.
- b. Comical: like *A Comedy of Errors*.
- c. Tragi-comical: like *Snow in June*.
- d. Historical: like *The Patriotic Beauty, His Shih*.
- e. Satirical: like *The Valiant Fisherman and His Daughter*.
- f. Sociological: like *A Family of Four Virtues*.
- g. Romantic: like *The Romance of Chiang Ts'iu-lien*.
- h. Ethical: like *Mu-lan, the Disguised Warrior Maiden*.
- i. Anti-war: like *The Dream of a Soldier's Wife*.
- j. Seasonal or festival: like *Ma-ku Offering Birthday Greetings for Wedding Celebrations*.
- k. Spectacular: like *The Dream Betrothal*.
- l. Superstitious or Mythical: like *The Legend of the White Snake Lady*.
- m. Legendary: like *Love Wins Where Discipline Fails*.
- n. Personal: The personal plays of Mei Lan-fang
The Final Party Between the King P'a Wang and His Favorite
 The personal plays of Ch'eng Yen-tsiu
Liu Yin-Ch'un

The personal plays of Sun Hui-Shen

The Significant Sash

The personal plays of Ma Lien-liang

Tsu_Sha Tsing

o. Parallel or Analogous:

{ *History Repeats*
Love Wins Where Discipline Fails

P. Kunqu school

Justice takes a Holiday but Return [152-56].

From those classifications we can understand from the two books of *Tai Ho Cheng Yin Pu* and *Secret of the Chinese Drama*, the Chinese drama including all of the Chinese play categories, making the Chinese drama use many-facets to display in front of the audience leading human existence, joys and sorrows, human character expanding on highest achievement.

2.The Most Important Writers and Works in Each Dynasty

From the Chinese classical drama source, we know Chinese drama uses dance, song, poetry to celebrate the festive or religious but have no texts and no idea how they were performed. The T'ang dynasty mentions variety-type acts with make up and impersonations as documented history. But no extant scripts mention any movement similar to modern "China Opera". We believe literary drama began in Sung (960-1279 a.d). Sung plays "included

dancing, acrobatics, the cone flay comic fatten and a musical conclusion” (Bnandon 27). It was divided into two style “Zaju” and “Nai His”(also called “His Wei”), The “Zaju” play *Golden statutes for encouraging goodness (Quanshan jinke)* and “Nai His” with two most famous plays about the great majority and appear to have been love stories were *Chaste Woman Zhao* and *Wang Kuai Renounces Guiying*, dealing with unfaithful scholar-lovers who come to a bad end. In this time most play scripts were anonymous, many having been written by “Writing Societies” (Brandon 27), a kind of private and small organization engaged in unpopular education and entertainment of the people.

The Yuan Dynasty was the first great age of Chinese theatre sub-divided 2 styles.

“North” and “South”.

“North-Zaju”: was before conquering southern Sung, Mongol popular drama style, and the

famous writers and works:

Guan Han-ching(1297-1307 a.d): His plays have more sixty, extant 13 works,

the famous are *The Injustice Done to Tou*

Ngo (Tou E Yuan), *The Moon Prayer*

Pavilion (Baiyue Ting), *The Dream of*

Butterfly (Hu De Mon) (Guan 241).

Bai Pu (1226-after1306): His plays have sixteen, extant 3 works, the famous

are *Rain on the Paulownia Tree (Wu Tong Yu)*, *Top Wall and Right Away (Jun Tou Ma Sa)* (Bai 242).

Ma Zheyuan(1250-c.1325): His plays have fifteen, extant 7 works, the famous are *Autumn in Han Palace (The Sorrow of Han)*, *The Dream of Yellow Sorghum (Huo Ly Mon)* (Ma 242).

Wang Shih-fus: His plays have fourteen, extant 3 works, the famous are *The West Chamber (Si Shi Gi)*, *The Beautiful Spring Hall (Li Chang Tan)* (Wang 241-42).

Chi Chun-hsiang: His plays have six plays, extant just *The Orphan of Chao* (Chi 244).

Cheng The-huc's: He has eighteen plays, extant 5 works, the famous is *The Soul of Ch'ien-nu Leaves her Body (Chian Nu Li Huen)* (Cheng 246).

Chua Chia: He has eleven plays, extent 3 works; the famous is *The Dream of Yu Zhan (Yu Zhan Mon)* (Chua 246).

“South-His Wei”: Three complete Southern plays are extant. Two of these three extant plays; *Top Graduate Zhang Xie (Zhang Xie Zhuangyuan)* and *Little Butcher Sun (Xiao*

Sun Tu) were each composed by a writing society.

The Wrong Career of an Official's son (Huakmen Zidi Cuo Lizhen) written by

“the talented man (or men) of ancient Hang-zhou” (Hu 63).

In Ming era “Nai His” with some borrowing from North as comic characters and simplified plots, “Nai His” style prevails. In Ming dynasty’s the plays style devoted into

Chuangi、**Kunqu** and **zaji** have many famous writer and works as follow:

a.Chuanqi writers and works

Gao Ming: *The lute song (Pipa Ji)* (Gao 248).

Ko Dan-chu: *Thorn Hairpin (Jingchai Ji)*(ko 246).

Anonymous: *The white rabbit (Baitu Ji)*

Shih Wei: He has tree plays, the famous is *The Moon Prayer Pavilion (Baiyue Ting)* (Shih 245).

Qiu Jun (1421-1495 a.d): *Five Human Relationship (Wulun Quanbei)* (Hu 68).

Xu Lin (1462-1538 a.d): *Embroidered (Xiuru Ji)* (Hu 69).

b.Kunqu writers and works

Wei Liangfu: *Rules of Prosody (Qulu)* (Hu 71).

Liang Chenyu (1520-1594 a.d): *Washing Gauze (Huansha Ji)* (Liang 254).

Shen Jing (1553-1610 a.d): *An Upright Hero (Yicia)*、 *Complete Table of Southern Prosody*

(*Nan Jiugong Pu*), his primary concern was with rhyming, intonation, and the correspondence between libretto and music (Hu 72).

Ruan Dacheng (1587-1646 a.d): He has nine plays, now extant 4 works the famous are *The Swallow-carried Message (Yanzi Jian)*, *The Spring Lantern's Riddles (Chundeng Mi)* (Ruan 266).

Tang Xianzu (1550-1617 a.d): *The Purple Flute (Zixiao Ji)*, *The Purple Hairpin (Zichai Ji)*, *The Peony Pavilion (Mudan Ting)*, *The Dream of Nanke (Nanke Ji)*, *The Dream of Handan (Handan Ji)* (Tang 257).

Wu Bing (d.1646): *The Remedy for Jealousy (Liaodu Geng)* (Hu 76).

c. Zaju writers and works

Zhu Quan (1378-1448 a.d): He has 12 plays, now extant 2 works, the famous are *Zhuo Wenjun's Elopement with Wicangru*, another work *The Table of Correct Sounds (Tai Ho Cheng Yin Pu)* which not only list the title of 689 zaju plays written from the Yuan period to his own time, but also gives title of 335 zaju melodies arrange into 12 modes, each with poems illustrating the appropriate tonal patterns

(Brandon 30).

“For each of these tunes, a libretto is provided to exemplify the tonal demand on the Chinese character (words) accompanying the melodies at certain intervals” (“Hu”78). “It also stimulated such men as Shen Jing to compose similar works regulating the prosody for Kunqu”(Hu 78). This book is very important to Ming Dynasty drama development.

Zhu Youdun (1379-1439 a.d): *The Sorrow of the Perfumed Sachet (Liu Panchun Shouzhi Xiangnang Yuan)* (Hu 78).

Kang Hai (1475-1540 a.d) and Wang Juise (1468-1551 a.d): *The wolf of Mount Zhong (Zhongshan lang)* (Hu 80).

Yang Na: *The Pilgrimage to the West* (Hu 79).

Xu Wei (1521-1593 a.d): *The Four Shrieks of a Monkey (Sisheng Yuan)* (Xu 253).

Liu Dongsheng: *The Golden Boy and the Jade Girl* (Hu 79).

Qing dynasty did collectively witness substantial, even fundamental, changes in the Chinese drama. Final styles originated at regional meeting in Beijing to celebrate Emperor Ch’ing-lung are eightieth birthday. So Qing Dynasty’s writers and works were sub-divided on: elevated style of Kunqu and regional style of Beijing drama.

a. Kunqu also called ‘Literary Society’ writers and works

Hong Sheng (1645-1704 a.d): *The Palace of Etermal Youth (Changshin Dian)* (Hong 272).

Kong Shangren (1648-1718 a.d): *The Peach Blossom Fan (TaohuaShan)* (Kong 272-273).

Jiang Shiquan (1725-1785 a.d): *The Dream of Linchuan (Linchuan Mo)* (Jiang 279).

Li Yu (1611-1679) : *A Temporary Lodge for my Leisure Thoughts(Xianqing ouji)*

including of *The Mistakes of Kite(Feng Cheng Wu)*, *The Cautious*

Male(Shen Sun Chiao), *Angry with Prowdence (Nai Ho Tien)*

etc,(Li 271).

b. Regional style of Beijing drama also called ‘Flower Drama’

One of the rulers discriminated and destroyed, another caused a group of writer’s collective creative works so few works have been conserved. Just between the teachers and students orally spreading some works, the popular works have sixty-five, like *The Golden Mountain Monastery*, *A Nun Seeks Love*, *The Meeting at the Fallen Bridge*, *The Naughty Maid*, *The Dream Betrothal* (Zung 156).

3. The Play’s Structure

The Chinese classical performance starts from Sung dynasty, development to Yuan dynasty with complete of intact play, so we can discuss the Yuan’s works. It was in this dynasty that the drama began to be popularly divided into two classes, the Northern and Southern. Yuan dramatists belong to Northern style turned for old stories or early simple plays, according to the book *Six Yuan Plays*.

Yan Plays are usually of four turns each with very few exceptions. Some have a hsieh tzu (wedge) at the beginning or in between acts. This neither a prologue nor an interlude, but an integral part of the play. It has a unity of its own though it is not independent, the dramatic idea contained in it being insufficient to make it an act. It is to steady the construction of the play as a wedge does any structure (13).

So we know Northern style has four turns and a “wedge”, but the “wedge” is not a prelude, it is very specious, unnecessary, but it can make the play’s structure more perfect.

The Yang play has a leading man or woman singing thought out the play, and the participation of other players was confined to spoken dialogue. Between the lyrics occurred the dialogue, which carried forward the story [Liu 14]. Therefore, the Northern style is just a leading man and a woman singing. “The dialogue was long and full and if we omit the lyrics from the plays they still remain splendid play” (Liu 14). The actor stands aside the stage using soliloquy style to address the audience as a matter of courses. He or she invariably introduced himself to the audience. It was repeated at every subsequent appearance so there could be no mistaking his or her identity (Liu 16). We believe that the dialogue of Yuan play was interesting and accomplished, the actor always repeating the play’s contents to make late guest arrivals understand, and from the soliloquy we can understand the actor’s identity.

“Certain character had a dark complexion, and stage directions usually indicated that some dark pigment was to be use. Apart from this, however, it seems that little paint was used on the face” (Liu 18). Make up was used for some specious roles in Yuan play.

Yuan musical accompaniment was mainly by stringed instruments, especially the four-string plucked (pipa), side-blown-flute (dizi) and a clapper player, as well as a drum (Brandon 28). So stringed instruments become attend in the play row.

Ming’s play is an essential southern type for. It was not limited to four turns, a play might contain from ten to fifty scenes, and for example *The Tale of the Lute* had forty-tree turns. The southern shorter than the Northern type scene. “But whole southern play was at least six or seven times as long as “Tsa-chu”. The parts were not sung in solo but in chorus or in turn by all majority of the characters, leading and minor” (Zung 61). From this we know the difference was northern style just a main actor or actress song, while the south play can be sung by every actor. According to *Ming Dynasty Drama*:

A southern play has a title poem, usually a quatrain, which summarizes the story and servers as the complete title of the play, this poem appears in the beginning of the play. In “Chuanqi” it is attached to the end of the first scene of a “kunqu” play is routinely a prologue consisting of two poems. The first is an argument of the plot. In between are sometimes inserted a question for the title of the play and

the answer given by an offstage voice. To recapitulate, the standard first scene of a “kunqu” play proceeded as follow: first poem, optional question and answer about the title, second poem, and title quatrain. The dramatic action itself begins to unfold in the second scene (66).

So in Southern Play from the “title poem”, we can understand the play is meaning.

“Each scene had three components: rhymed poetry for all librettos; prose to be spoken, declaimed or recited; and stage directions indicating entrance, exits, laughter, fighting, and other movement of the characters” (Hu 63). From the stage movement, we can understand the actor’s character. And using song dialogue and action to set up an actor’s image the southern play and “Zaji” were common.

“The Southern songs contained fewer words and were sung in prolonged tones, which ran continuously with the notes of the flute, for pause was not emphasized” (Zung 62). Thus we know the Southern type of music was superior but difficult to understand, its plays mostly romantic love stories, the work of literary men, and the more exquisite and refined manner of performance is the reason it was lost to the audience.

The Qing Dynasty used many people and money to adapt and collect the Chinese classical drama and Beijing Drama most of from oral performance on the stage, so the structure should be received and carried as on before including Southern and local style divided into

Siterary Society (Kunqu) and Floial Society (local style). From *Secrets of the Chinese Drama*

the Florial Society grow in strength for these reason:

First because the love stories of the Kunqu type seemed to have been written after the same pattern and therefore were not so interesting at the various ethical “P’I-huang” plays; Second, the literary songs were not as easy to understand as the other simple kind. (65)

B. The Chinese Classical Stage

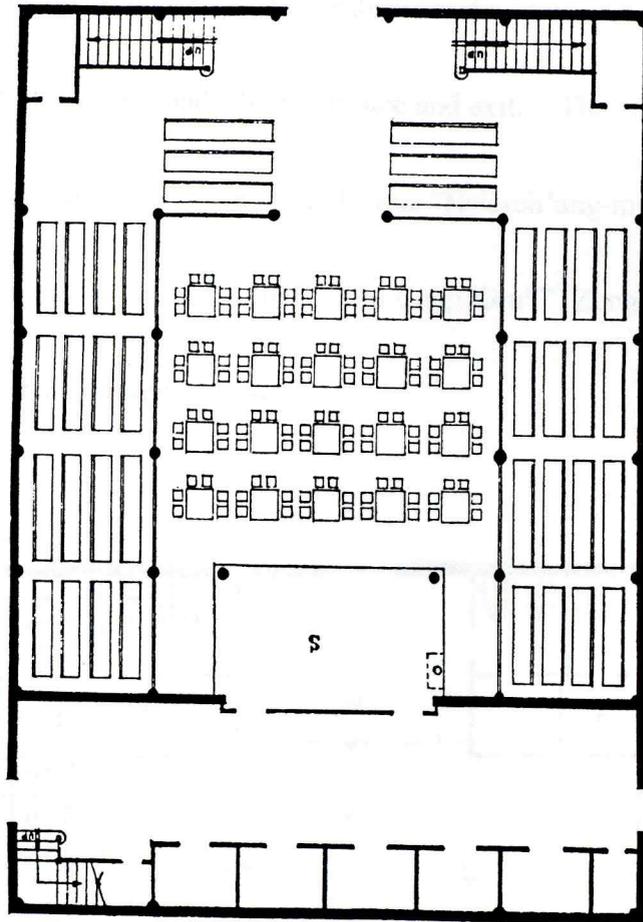
In the early days there was no permanent establishments like the theatre of today. “A temporary two-storied structure was erected, the ground floor being used for the dressing room and the first floor for the stage. The spectators seated themselves at their ease in the open air on stools or benches brought from their own homes and arranged along the sides and in front of the stage” (Zung 3). So, in the Chinese classical stage was very simple with no fix seats.

From the book *Asian Theatre* said :

In Sung Dynasty, this more urbanized environment china’s first full-developed theatres arose, called goulan (hook valustrade’s), they were contained within amusement centers termed wazi (tiles) or washe (tile booths). The largest amusement center in early 12th-century Kaifeng held 50theatres or even more and the grandest theatre could accommodate several thousand people. They were

covered, not open-air structures and so not subject to the vagaries of the weather.

All classes of people frequented them (27).

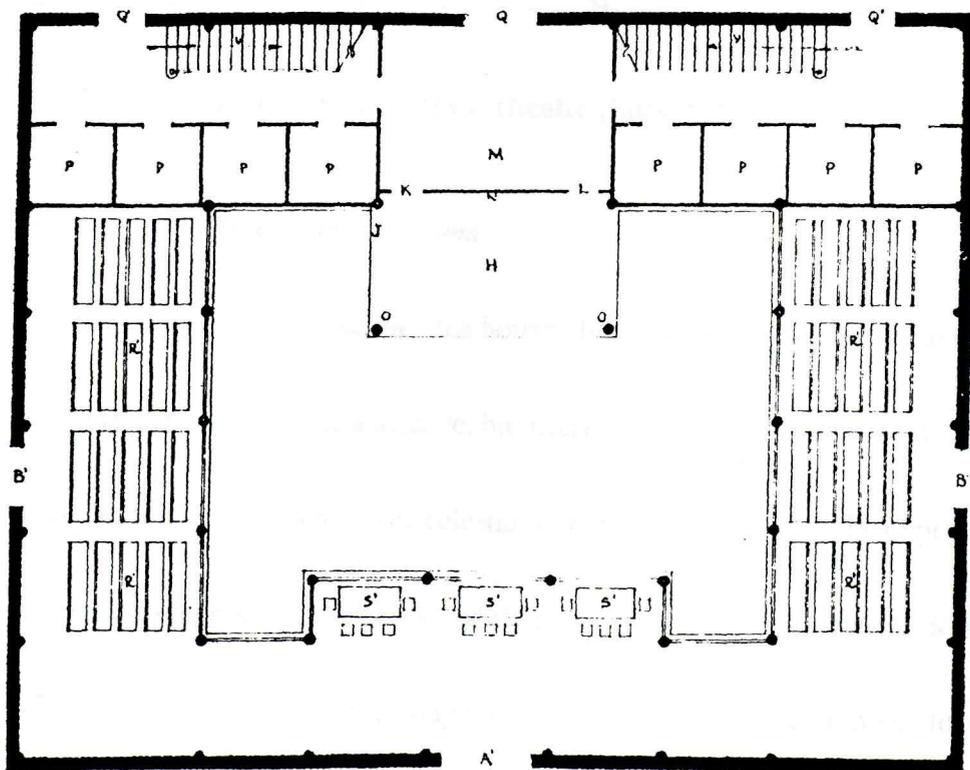


4. Tea House Theatre (Zung 7)

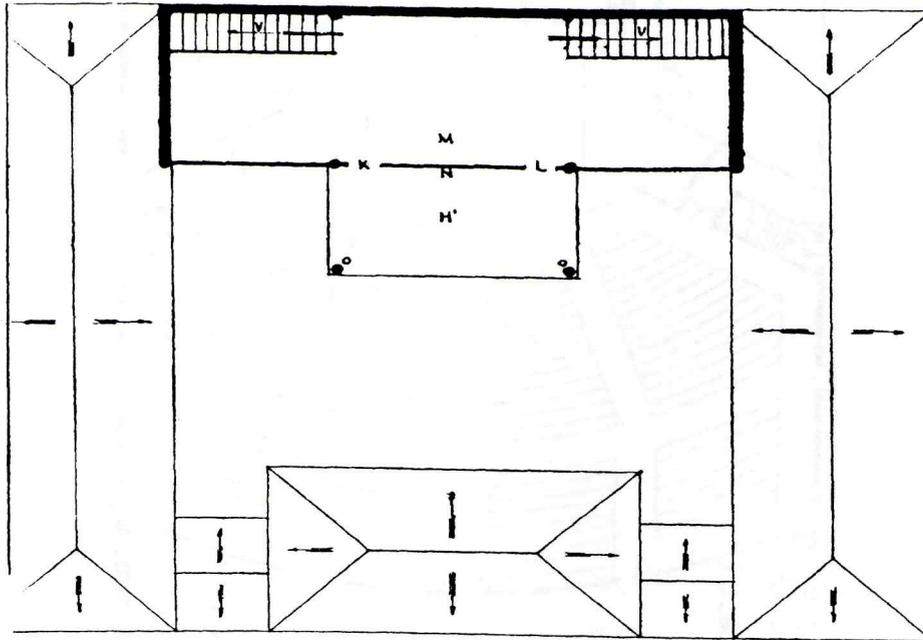
The Chinese classical drama stage starting in Sung Goulan had a complete structure.

Some called the theatres "tea house". "People went there to sip tea while the performance was going on" ("Zung" 3-4). "Originally, only tea was sold as the admission fee for the show" ("Zung" 4). So in that time sipping tea was more important than the performance. Later

performances began to develop in these “tea houses” and for each of the specially ordered plays an extra fee was charged (Zung 4). “When a show was on, the stage was almost empty. At the back of the stage there usually hung a beautiful, embroidered curtain in which there were two openings, through which the actors made their entrance and exit. The entrance on the left was called “Shang-ch’ang-men” and the exit on the right was “Hsia-ch’ang-men”” (Zung 4). “The place where the orchestra used to sit was called “Chiu Lung Kou”” (Zung 4). So in the “tea house” was the embryo of the modern theatre.



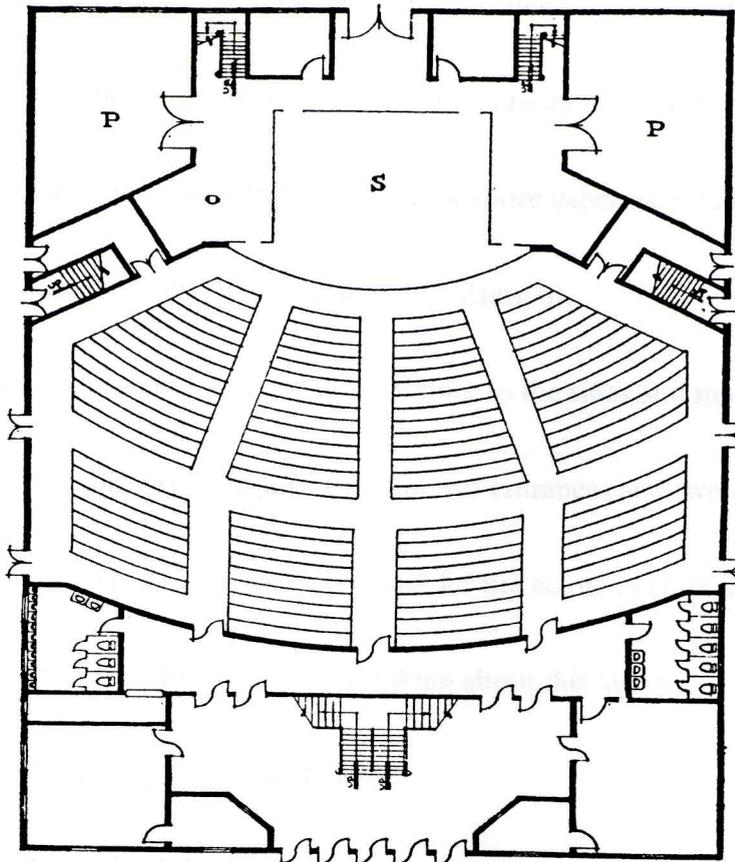
5. The Ground Floor Plan of a Palace Theatre (Zung 9)



6. The First Floor Plan of a Palace Theatre (Zung 10)

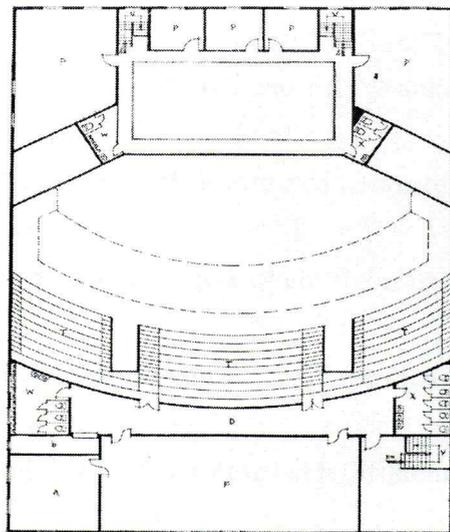
According to *Secrets of the Chinese Drama*:

The palace theatre was like the “tea house” but was more elaborately carved. It had only one floor for the audience, but there were two stages instead of one, the lower and the upper. Whenever celestial beings were portrayed, the upper stage was used to represent their abode, while at the same time those who took human roles were acting on the lower stage. In one palace theatre was a three-storied stage, the bottom being used to represent the realm of devils or spirits of the dead (5-6).



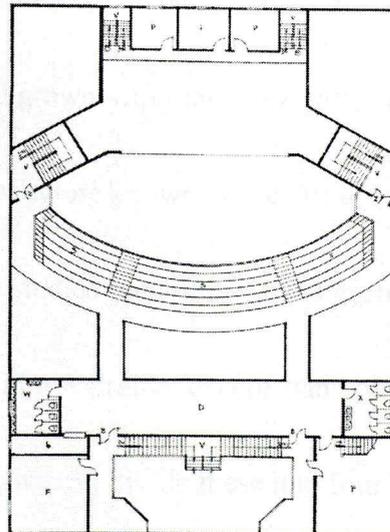
7. The Ground Floor Plan of a Modern theatre (Zung 11)

THE CHINESE THEATRE



8. The Mezzanine Floor of a Modern Theatre (Zung 12)

SECRETS OF THE CHINESE DRAM



9. The First Floor Plan of a Modern Theatre (Zung 13)

“With the influx of western architecture, the modern Chinese theatre has done away with the pillars on the stage, the lacquered board, etc. Customers, too, have changed, the most important of which being woman’s preference for the more expensive stall seats rather than the boxes where ladies were formerly compelled to sit” (Zung 6).

“Additional two entrance and exit door, further to the sides and more to the front, are being used for entrance and exit” (“Zung” 6). So two entrances and two exits, even from the sides and front enter or exit, were more convenient for the actors to enter and leave and more fit the preference. In that time, they had been thinking about this question and now the Chinese theatre of today has been very much modernized.

C. The Chinese Classical Actors

The Chinese classical drama developed about a.d.500 with the beginning of historical plays. Within two hundred and fifty years, the drama had grown important enough for an emperor to have a court theatre and to create an academy of actors known as the “Pear Tree Garden”, boys and girls underwent rigorous training. They studied pantomime hand gestures, and gymnastics, as well as voice. “All the characters in the Chinese drama, except “tan” play male roles” (Zung 37). Integrating each different play’s actors, we can divide these into four types discuss: **Sheng** 、 **“tan”**、 **“jing”**、 **“chou”**.

Sheng

The male roles in old Chinese drama are collectively known as sheng, is a leading character with a number of sub-division

a. wen-sheng:

From the lecture “The Character Typers of the Chinese Drama”:

All who specialise in diction and singing are termed “civil”, the most important consideration is that all high and low notes be sung in the best of style, while a thorough mastery of vocal technique is necessary, because in the drama, the types of singing are exceedingly numerous (ku 1).



10.Ch'un Ying Hui Lu Su (Zhao 49)

(1) **hsu-sheng**: middle-aged statesmen and scholars.



11. Ch'un Ying Hui Huang Kai (Zhao 20)

(2) **lao-sheng**: According to lecture "The Character Types of the Chinese Drama" often

the role of a scholar, or retired general, must be proficient in conventional

stage-technique, he must be fastidiously correct, possess grace, dignity and

distinction, not overdo his part (Ku 1).



12. Kan Lu Szu's Liu Pei (Zhao 8)

b. wun-sheng:

From the lecture “The Character Types of the Chinese Drama”:

Those skilled in gymnastics and military action, have specializes in bodily posturing and in conventional, stage-fighting; military combat and acrobatics the movements of his hands and feet must be clean-cut and his manner of expression good (Ku 1).



13.Chen Kan Po Chau-yun (Zhao 59)

(1) **wu-lao-sheng**: aged warrior, dignified yet active.



14. Mai Lea Zhin Cheng Chun (Zhao 8)

(2) **chang-kao**: generals and other high-ranking officers using the conventional stage armor and four flags; dignified and athletic.



15. Tuo Haukn Gho Chon (Zhao 8)

(3) **tuan-ta**: very skilled in combat and acrobatics; lower class than above, usually



16.Ssu Pen Shen Lee Yuan Pa (Zhao 9)

c. **hsiao-sheng**: Unbearded young men, often student or prince, romantically inclined; uses falsetto voice.



17.Yuan Tun Chen Wang Jin Lon (Zhao 9)

- (1) **shan-tzu-sheng**: young man about town, good family, noted for play of his fan.



18. Lun Mon Mei (Wang 7)

- (2) **chih-wei-sheng**: young warrior or prince(armor role)



19. Ch'un Ying Hui Chou Yu (Zhao 60)

(3) **ch'iung-sheng**: poor scholar or young man in distress



20. Tse Mi An's

Tan

The lecture "The Character Types of the Chinese Drama" says: the general term in old drama for all feminine roles is tan, meaning female impersonator (Ku 1). After Mei Lan-fang "tan" instead of "lao-sheng" became the important position in Chinese classical drama.

sub-divisions:

a. ching-I: modest, good and virtuous woman as faithful wife, loyal daughter, distressed

lovers, good voices but not athletic



21. Che Chu Ji Cui Yin-yin (Zhao 67)

b. hua-tan: coy, charming and seductive; acting graceful over vocal with vigorous action



22.Hua Tien Tso's Ch'un-lan (Zhao 74)

c. **wu-tan**: martial lady or Amazon; they are divided into "tao-ma-tan" who wear tight-fitting clothes, twirl weapons and perform acrobatic feats and "wu-tan" skilled in military arts but still beautiful and female.



23.K'ang Chin Ping Liang Hong-yu (Zhao 70)

d. **kuei-men-tan**: demure respectable unmarried young ladies.



e. **tsai-tan**: evil woman, can be comic, lovely, but bad, make people fooled woman.



25. Da Yaing Jie Lie Tea House Owner

f. **lao-tan**: old woman, most realistic, singing skilled important



26. Kan Lu Szu's Wu-ko-ti (Zhao 78)

Jing: Painted face character, roles are larger than life: bravest warrior, swashbuckling bandit, crafty and evil minister, loyal and upright minister of court or law, gods, supernatural demons etc, voice must be big, full, robust and resonant to match face and fully padded body and high shoes sub-divisions

a. **cheng-jing:** great persons of good character as legendary emperors and heroes



27. Tse Mi An's P'ao Tsen (Zhao 80)

b.fu-jing: evil or bad villains, the epitome of wickedness



28. Shan Xun Chen Ts'ao Ts'ao (Zhao 83)

c. wu-jing: superhuman military heroes with superhuman gymnastics performance.



29 Mai Ch'eng Cheng Fei (Zhao 85)

Ch'ou: Jesters, comic types, may be serious or evil, not necessarily a fool; uses colloquial speech, may improvise spontaneous quip or local joke, must have the skill of mime and acrobatics



30. Su San, the Loyal Sing-song Girl Part 1 the Extradition
Thong-kon-tou (Zhao 17)

a. wen-chou: usually woodcutter, jailor, watchman, servant



31. Ch'un Ying Hui Ching Kan (Zhao 16)

b. wu-chou: minor military



32.Chan Huang P'ao Chao K'uang-yin (Zhao 17)

D、 The Chinese Classical stage Movement

According to "*Secrets of the Chinese Drama*" :

It is the main purpose of the Chinese drama that the actor should produce an artistic effect rather than be true to life. For it is the ideal, not the real, that is intended to be emphasized. The aim is to present the show as artistically as possible without heeding whether or not the details are true to life. Not only in intonation, such as musical cadence in speech, and rhythmical recitation in poetry, but also in bodily movements such as conventional gait and sleeve movement, there are striking differences from the sounds and actions of daily life. Various

kinds of strict canons or rules must be carefully observed by the actors. Any expression of feeling—a smile, a frown, a sigh, an indication of surprise—must be conventionally given in accordance with special music. If an actor can make his audience feel and appreciate what he means to present in the play, it is sufficient. Therefore, the stage for purely Chinese plays is practically bare, having only a table and some chairs (66).

An actor's performance on the stage, just like his (or her) achievement explains. If accepted by audiences, it equals success, otherwise, actors must be more effective. The movement of stage can be divided into **a. action, b. make-up, c. custom, d. stage property.**

a. Action

Actors' stage action is symbolic, so they always use their sleeves, hand, finger, arm, foot, leg, waist, pheasant feather and symbolic actions to express their meaning in every parts of the stage movement, including many different kinds of actions and meaning. Some have the same meaning but different actions just appear, their identity different. According to the book *Secret of the Chinese Drama Part II Technique* to the stage action has detailed introduction in here just using two example to express every different action's meaning. If one wants to know more about the stage actions, one can refer to the book *Secrets of the Chinese Drama*. First we talk about sleeves.

Long sleeves were introduced in order to give more grace to the body movement.

Usually white in color. This extension of the sleeve, when flourished, looked like flowing water. From the saying "the longer the sleeves, the better the dance".

We can easily see why sleeve movements are the most important of all dramatic actions (77).

There are many different kinds of stage movement, we just introduce two kinds of stage movement to make people better understand sleeves, hand, finger, arm,...etc.,. From the book *Secrets of the Chinese Drama* :

(1) The Running Sleeves

Throw the sleeves upward and let them hang slanting on the outer side of the wrists. Then immediately stretch out both arms level with the shoulders. The actor is not permitted to run straight forward, but rather sidewise, so in running to the right front, he first turns a little towards the left, though his torso and face should be kept towards the right. The right hand is raised a little higher than the head as if leading towards the front. Then, with small, mincing steps, he runs gracefully in curves and finally exits. If the destination is in the opposite direction, the actor performs the same movement but in the opposite direction (91).



33. Chia Chi K'ao Hung Hung-niang (Zhao 73)

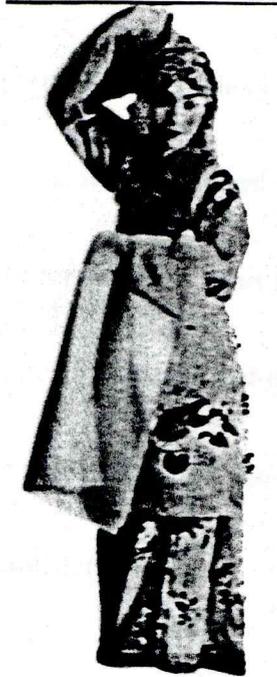
(2) The Attention Sleeves

Raise the right hand to the side of the head and by a circular wrist movement fold the right sleeve upward and outward. Let it fall back, hanging naturally from the wrist, and at the same time say "Behold!"

Meaning: ①. To look ahead.

②. To tell the person addressed to look ahead.

③. To give a signal call to the orchestra (91)



34. Riddles of the Lantern Festival (Wang 55)

Actor's hand is next importance movement on stage, just use two hand movements to explain the meaning for example,

(1) The Open Hand

In stage language the "open" hand means that the palm is held outward with the fingertips up. In case of a "tan" the arm should be held gracefully. Each character type, however, has its peculiar way of "open" hands. For example:

(a). "Jing (the painted-face characters): Extend then finger with strength

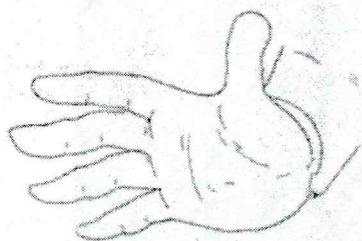
keeping them all apart so that the tips of the fingers form a semi-circle.

(b). "Lso-sheng" (the aged male characters): Extend the four fingers with the

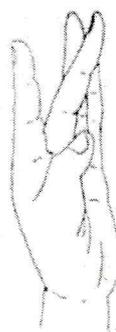
thumb bent forward at right angles to then.

(c). "Hsiao-sheng" (the young male characters): Extend and hold together the first three fingers, with the thumb bent close to the palm and the little finger, slightly forward and apart from the others.

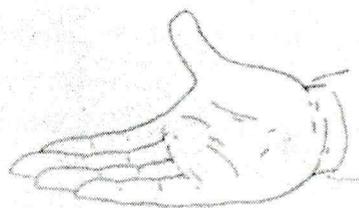
(d). "tan" (the female characters): Put the thumb on the just joint of the middle finger which is held a little forward and leave the other three fingers naturally extended. (97)



35-1.Jing



35-3.Sheng



35-2.Lso-sheng



35-4.Tan

(2) “The helpless hands”: First lift both hands prone and by a quick circular wrist movement turn palms up leaving the hands hanging limp from the wrists like to show helplessness or something is lacking (99).



36.Xian Gu Miao Chuan Gi

(1) The Fencing Hand

This is the only time when a “tan” extends the first two fingers, instead of only the index finger. The thumb touches the third finger tip and the little finger is curved naturally (103)



37.Pa Wang Pieh Chi Yu Chi (Zhao 34)

(2) To Point With Both Hands

When both hands are employed to point at the same time, the “leading” hand is about one foot from the “following” hand, in a slanting line to the body, with the foot on the opposite side a little to the rear. If the right hand is leading, the left foot steps back simultaneously as the hand points to the definite object or direction. The eyes should follow the movement of the hands and the body should be held in harmony with them.

Sometimes, however, the hands may point alternately, and in that case, they move in the direction to be indicated, in successive advancing circles (107).



38. Madam Mi at the Chang Ban Hillside (Zhao 64)

(1). The Resting Arms

Only those characters playing the role of a ghost are permitted to let their arms hang at their sides. Even those who play servants and stand in waiting at the sides of the stage should slightly bend one arm and place the hand on the hanging arm a little below the elbow. A person, however, feeling very awkward may let his hands hang down stiffly, but they must not rest against the body (115).



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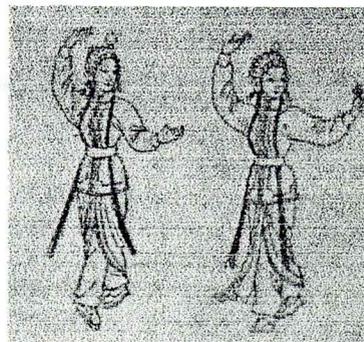
39.Liu Pri (Chung 55)

(2) “Yuin Shou”, A Dancing Posture

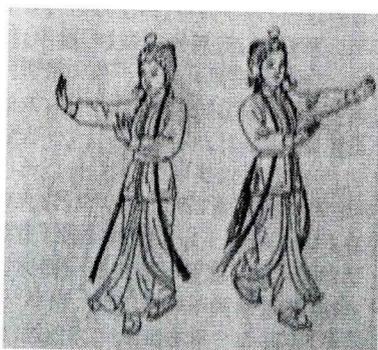
This is one of the postures from the T’ang dance. It is usually connected with and followed by a “La Shan P’an” (115-16)



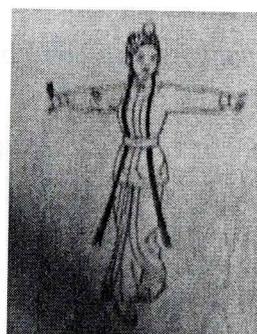
40-1.



40-2



40-3.



40-4.

40. Yuiu shou

In Chinese Kongfu Tai-chi-boxing, “Yuiu Shou” is a very important part and Chinese drama use it in stage express the arm graceful, make the audience have a good vision feeling.

In Chinese play, steps on the stage usually contain some special meaning and this is the Chinese play difference to any other country’s plays. The lecture “Pantomime and Action”:
“Chinese actors in the stage must keep perfect step in harmony with the music, so “tan” has a short, graceful, mincing steps and “shen” uses round, square, strides steps.” (Ku 1) All of the leg and foot movement are inseparable, many kinds of leg movement must have been learned from very young, otherwise he will unable to balance his body, so the Chinese actors almost always come from poor families sold by parents, and going through a long training before becoming an actors. According to *Secrets of the Chinese Drama* two examples to explain foot and legs meaning are:

(1) The Slipping Step

To represent a wet and muddy street, the actor, usually in running, performs “the

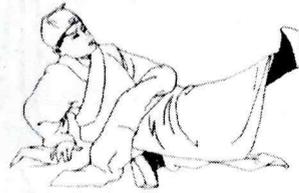
slip” by extending one foot forward and bending the other, with the body falling backward and resting on the bent leg (119).



41-1



图 2
41-2



41-3

41. Slipping Step

(2) The Knee-steps

Actors playing female roles mostly do this.

- (a). Raise both sleeves as in “upheld” sleeves; walk either forward or sidewise on the knees.
- (b). Raise one sleeve, and with the other hand resting on another person, walk on the knees (119).

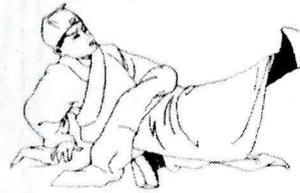
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42.Knee-steps

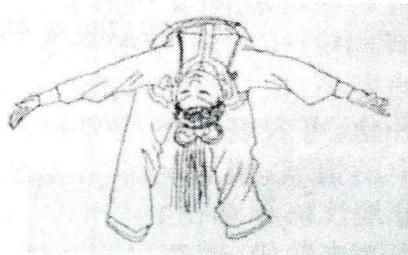
“Willowy Waist” was every woman’s expect, even mordent woman, but want waist exceedingly pliant and graceful must to early start sports. “As the waist nearly always moves in harmony with the limbs, both of them demand an early start in learning” (“Zung” 127). Leg and foot movements are inseparable, now from the *Secrets of the Chinese Drama* we can use two examples to explain the movement.

- (1) “A Low Bend” Stand facing the audience, bend backward with a very flexible waist so as to make the body look like an elegant arch.(127)



43. Yeub Chia Geun (Zhao 93)

(2) “A Kite’s Turn” Bend backward and to the right (or left) with the arms akimbo. Turn with the body, thus bent, from right to left or vice versa. This movement demands strong legs and a graceful waist. It is best portrayed in “The Intoxicated Beauty, Yang Kuei-fei”. The actor bends back to the right low enough to grasp the wine cup on the servant’s tray with his teeth, turns his body, thus bent, to the left as if he were drinking the wine from the cup and then drops the cup on the tray held by the servant on the left.(127)



44. A kite's Turn(kite's102-103)

(1) The Flexed Knee

Stand erect on the right foot, lift the left thigh to a horizontal position, and hold the lower leg so as to form an obtuse angle. This movement is usually performed by the military character type.

Meaning: To show alertness (123).



45. The Marriage of Zhong Kuei's Sister
(Zhao 90)

(2) The Lifted Leg

Lift the thigh as high as possible, but keep the toe extended downward.

Meaning: To show readiness to kick (123).



46. Midnight Escape⁷⁰ (Wang 51)

Originally the pheasant feather on the headdress was a robber chieftain, generals, young or female generals wearer, the pheasant feathers longest about seven or eight feet. In the play “Jing” holds the feather higher than the others. (Zung129) Using two examples to show pheasant feathers from *Secrets of the Chinese Drama*:

(1) “Winding the Feathers” Drop the head forward and turn it in a circular movement with a relaxed neck so that the feathers move in large circles. The prettiest way of performing this movement is to make the circuit of the feathers perfectly round.

Meaning: To show anger or determination. (p.129)



(2) “Holding the Feather, No II” Follow the same directions as in 4, but use both hands. Turn the body toward the right and laugh aloud, then toward *the* left and laugh, and again toward the right and laugh.

Meaning: To show mirth with pride, e.g, a victorious general usually performs this movement before exit.(131)



48.Magic Monkey Harasses Heaven (Zhao 58)

For the Chinese staging is very simple, so some actions are symbolic instead of real life.

According to the lecture “Pantomime and Action”, an actor, to enter through a door way, merely

indicates that he has done so by lifting one foot as if stepping over the door-bar; while female characters raise the hand to show that they are leaning against the wall for support, this being a means of revealing the delicate grace that is associated with the weaker sex. So to the first touch the Chinese classical drama people, the statement is a very difficult scholarship, if one wants to know about the stage movement details, must see the book *Secrets the Chinese Drama Part II Technique*.

b. Make-up

From the lecture “The character Types of the Chinese Drama” description, during the Pei Chi (550-577), the king of Lan-ling who was a brave warrior with an exquisitely beautiful face, thought of the idea of making a ugly mask to help him against his enemy. It is possible that conventional facial painting for the stage originated from this source (Ku 1).

In the Chinese drama, make-up actors have “Ch’ou” and “Jing”. The actors of “Ch’ou” belong to comedy, painting a small white butterfly across their noses to show that they are comedians.

“Jing”, the painted-face character, uses many different color to symbolize their complex character:

Red: indicates that the person is courageous, faithful and virtuous.



49.Kuan Kung (Zhao 9)

Black: indicates a fierce and coarse, simplicity and straight -forwardness.



50.P'ao Twei (Zhao 14)

Purple: same as red only less in degree; old age



51.Chan Huang p'ao Cheng-yin (Zhao 29)

Blue: denotes cruelty obstinacy and ferocity



52. A Birthday Present From Liu Tang (Zhao 32)

Yellow: hidden craftiness or cleverness



53..Ceng Tou Shi Zhao Gai (Zhao 40)

Gold and silver: dignity (mostly gods and fairies)



54. A Imitate Buddha in the Lei-Yin Temple (Zhao 32)

Green: wickedness (ghosts and devils)



55. Harasses Heaven Qing Long (Zhao 21)

Pink and Gray: old age

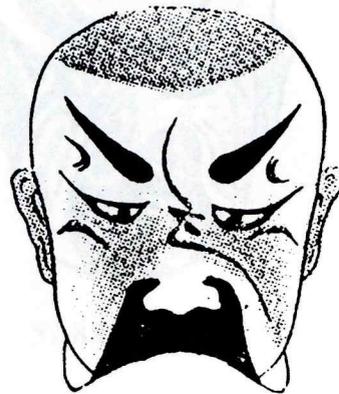


56. Ta Chuozin Meng Liang (Zhao 22)
According to the book *secrets of the Chinese drama* to merge the character types of nine

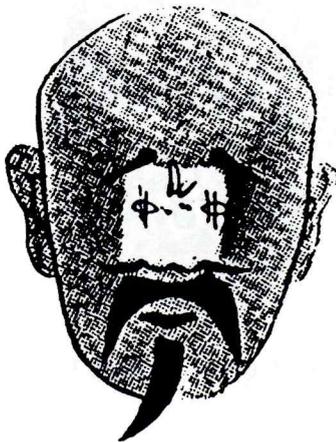
kinds of painted faces:



57-1. Ts'ao Ts'ao



57-2. Yen che feng

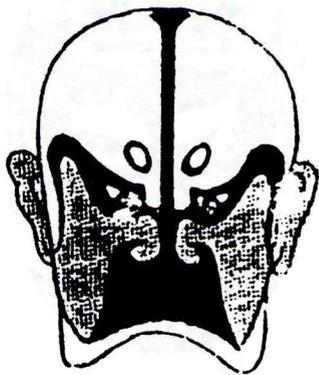


57-3. Chung Ky



57-4. Xu che chen thed





57-7. Yao Chi



57-8. Cheng-Yin



57-9. Chao K'uang-Yin



57-10. The God of Clouds



57-11. The god of fire



57-12. Leopard Devil



57-13. An Elephant's Face



57-14. P'ao-tsen



57-15. Tou Erh-tung

1. "Ta-hua-lien" or the Entirely White Powdered Face like Ts'ao one of the most infamous traitors in Chinese history.
2. "Erh-hua-lien" or the Half White Powdered face

3. "Hsiao-hua-lien" or the slightly white powdered.
4. The Predominant-color Face. The whole face except the eyebrows has only one color.
5. The Trisected-tile Face. The eyebrows are broadened and lines are added above and below the eyes so as to divide the forehead and the cheeks into three parts.
6. The Shattered Face. The face is painted with such irregular designs and in so many different colours that it looks as if it had been broken.
7. The Aged Face. The eyebrows are prolonged down to the lower edge of the ears for it was believed that the aged have extremely long eyebrows.
8. The Distorted Face. The features of the face are abnormal, e.g. an improperly located eye or nose.
9. The White Nose Face. Only the nose is painted white, but on the present stage the painted part is much bigger than it was before. It is usually worn by military comedians, whose character, though not dignified, is quite upright.

Special meanings are shown as follows:

10. Cloud designs for the God of Clouds.
11. Flame designs for the God of Fire.

12. Leopard spots for a Leopard Devil.
13. An elephant's face for the monster whose original form was an elephant.
14. A Noon on the forehead of P'ao-tsen, the wonderful judge, who could go to the Land of Spirits to find out the real facts from the dead.
15. The double battle-axe design on the forehead of Tou Erhtung, the expert in fighting with that weapon (40-43).

From descriptions, we know actors of "Jing" have many different characters and must use different colors and painting to showing the actor's nature. So when we enjoy a Chinese classical play, when actors of Jing enter, we know he is a good man or bad man immediately.

C. Custom

In the old Chinese drama, the custom was very simple. Until the late Qing Dynasty (a.d.1644-1911) many rich and extravagant salt merchants offered specially wove silk to the Emperor to be made into elaborate costumes (Zung 17). And those bright colored silk made the actors' costumes beautiful which was a big change. "There are strict conventions that the color and style of custom must correspond with the status of the person" (Zung 17), fit the actor's character, usually different color discloses the actor's identity, for example: "the Emperor (yellow), the young (white), the old (brown), the straightforward and brusque (black)." (Zung 19)

Some important kinds of costumes from *Secrets of the Chinese Drama* follow:

1. **Mang**, the official robe . This robe has a round collar, and long "rippling-water sleeves" . It is embroidered with dragon designs and at the lower edge with water-waves. It is usually made of satin and is worn on State occasions or at other formal celebrations. Robes for the female characters are shorter (19).



58. Yu Lung His Feng Hsu Sheng Emperor (Zhao 50)

2. **Yi-tai**, the precious-stone belt. This belt is made of some hard material inlaid with pieces of semi-precious or imitation stones. It is always worn with the "mang" a little below the waist (19).



59. Kan Lu Szu's Liu Pei (Zhao 53)

3. **Tien-tzu**, the everyday appeal. It also has long "rippling-water sleeves" and is buttoned only at the collar and the waist. It may be made of stiff satin or soft crepe, either embroidered or plain, in black or in bright colors. The plain black kind is worn oftener than the "Tieh-tzu" in other colors. The white sash may or may not be used. "Tieh-tzu" worn by the male character is much longer. The front piece overlaps towards the right side; therefore it is buttoned under the arm (19).



60. The Dream Betrothal Lun Mon Mei (Zhao 61)

4. **P'ei**, the overcoat. Unlike "t'ieh-tzu" it is buttoned only at the waist for the collar is very low and the whole dress reaches to the knees. It may cover the "t'ieh-tzu." It may be plain or embroidered with birds, flowers, dragon, phoenix or any other design. It is to be worn as a party dress on less formal occasions than when the "mang" is used (21).



61. Wo Long diao xiao xiao qiao (Zhao 76)

5. **Ch'un**, the skirt. Female characters wear skirts only. They may have plain or embroidered front and back panels, the side- pieces being usually plaited. The formal official skirt is made of red satin, always with embroidered panels. When a skirt (or an additional skirt) is fastened about the bust, it represents a poor, wretched or distressed woman or maiden. Sometimes it symbolizes travelling on a long journey for it shows that the character is not properly clad (21).



62. Huansha Ji Xishi (Zhao 69)

1. **K'u-ao**, the blouse and trousers, or **CH'UN-AO**, the blouse and skirt. A

"hua-tan" usually wears a short blouse with short sleeves and trousers, or sometimes a skirt instead of the trousers. All of the costumes are in brilliant colors and embroidered in beautiful designs. An embroidered sash is always worn by a "hua-tan." (21).



63. Yu Tang Chuan (Zhao 99)

7. **K'an-chien**, the sleeveless jacket. This is commonly worn by soubrettes.

There are two kinds, one reaching to the knees and the other, to the waist. It may be plain or embroidered with beautiful designs in bright colors (21).



64. The Intriguers Intrigued Thu-chi (Zhao 68)

8. **Tou-P'ung**, the cape. The cape is worn by both male and female characters while travelling, or just after leaving the bed to show that the character has not finished dressing. Sometimes it is worn to represent illness or being outdoors late at night. It is very long, reaching almost to the feet, and may be plain or embroidered. Sometimes it has a heavy fringe along the lower border (21).



65. Chao Chun Ch'u Sai Wang Chao-Chun (Zhao 66)

9. **K'ai-k'ao**, the armour. Characters of military type wear this costume on state occasions or on the battlefield. It is usually made of satin, embroidered and with tight sleeves. The lower part of the dress consists of four panels with an embroidered dragon or tiger head on the front panel at the waist. A mirror called "the heart-protecting glass" is often worn on the breast (21-2).



66. Cho Chia Zun Cho Shan Nei (Zhao 72)

10. **K'ao-c'hi**, the military flags. Four flags, embroidered with dragon, phoenix or flower design, triangular in shape and of the same colour as the armour, are worn on the back of the generals. They got their origin from the idea that generals needed to give orders on the battlefield. The flag was to be used to prove the authenticity of the order (22).



67. Tien Shui Kuan Chiang Wei (Zhao 56)

11. **Seng-i**, the monk's (or nun's) attire. A monk (or a nun) wears a cap, and a gray or yellow coat, sometimes with a long, sleeveless, jacket over it. There is, however, another class of nun, who wear their hair just like ordinary women. On the stage they are allowed to wear the bright-colored "t'ieh-tzu" but over it there must be a long sleeveless jacket embroidered in rhomboid designs. The headdress with tassels and two embroidered streamers is peculiarly long at the back. A duster is always held by these religious characters (22).



68. Monk Tang Shen Zang (Chung 118)

12. **Fu-Kuei-I**, the beggar's costume. To represent a beggar or a wretched person, the actor wears a "t'ieh-tzu" patched with irregular-shaped pieces of silk or

cloth in different colors. If he wears a cap, or hat, it is similarly patched. It is called "the dress of the rich and the noble," meaning that the wearer someday may become better off financially and socially (22).



69. Huang shan Lui Chang Hui-Tsu (Wang 25)

13. **Ch'i-Ch'uang**, the Mandarin style of dress. From head- gear to shoes

This Style worn by the Manchus is different from the above- mentioned costumes.

For instance, the shoe has a by 3-inch wooden block nailed to the center of the sole. Therefore, unless accustomed to this kind of shoe, the wearer finds walking rather difficult. The coat is very long, plain or emhroidered, but never with (22)



70. Yang Yen-Hui Visits His Mother Tean Chin Princess (Zhao 103)

According to the above, just introduce the customer, another lecture “Costumes of the Chinese Stage” increase the headgear, footwear, and Hsueh Hsieh

14. **The K’uei, or Helmet, or Hat**, the k’uei is the most important hat of officialdom, the emperor and high military officials only being allowed to wear it. The hat of the emperor differs from all others in that it is of royalty. Tassels hang from the sides. While the hat worn by military officials is somewhat like that of

the emperor's, yet, the form varies according to the rank of the person in question.

For instance, a robber chief may wear a hat that is shaped only a trifle differently from that of the emperor (Ku 3).



71. Mi Chun Hum Yien Fea (Zhao 35)

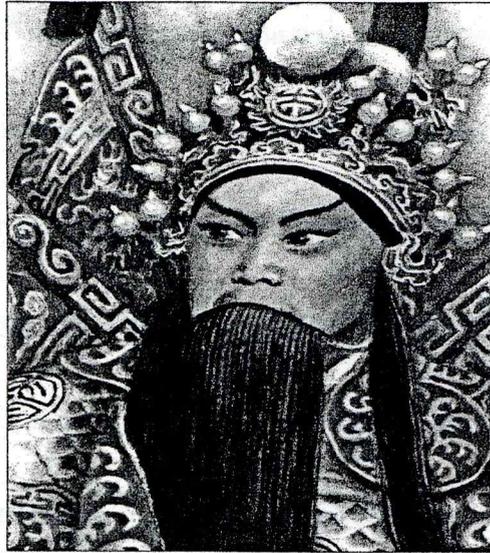
15. **The Sha Mao or Gauze Hat**, the sha mao or gauze hat, also for officials, is worn exclusively by civil dignitaries when waiting on the emperor, attending public trials, or at important festivities and banquet. Its form is very much like that used in real life; low in front, high at the back, and black in color. There extend horizontally from the sides a pair of wing-shaped decorations. Officials of highest rank may wear a long, narrow decoration that is slightly curved in the middle; the next in rank may wear oval shaped ones; a rank lower wearing round ones, while the official of lowest rank wears round decorations, which are pointed

on the outer sides (Ku 3).



72. Niou Gao Sent Letters (Zhao 29)

16. **The Lo Mao or Military Hat**, the lo mao is also worn by military persons and finds its origin in the pages of history although the stage hat has undergone marked changes. In form, it is large at the top and small near the head, while its six sides are richly embroidered and decorated with pearls and jade, its top being adorned with fluffy silken balls of various colors. This lavish display has for its sole purpose the pleasing of the eye (Ku 3).



73. She Chei T'ing Wang Pen (Zhao 36)

17. **The Feng Kuan or Phoenix Hat**, although the feng kuan or phoenix hat is worn exclusively by women on formal occasions, yet, empresses, princesses, and women of high official families only are privileged to wear such headgear. They consist of a framework, thickly studded with pearls and jade, from the sides of which depend tassels, while other tassels cover the forehead (Ku 3).



74. Kuei-fei Tsui Clin Yang Kuei-fei (Zhao 34)

18. **The Chin Wei or Pheasant Plumes**, the cbib wei are the two long pheasant plumes that are attached to the actor's headgear, the longest specimens being as much as six or seven feet in length. Such feathers indicate that the wearer is a barbarian; hence, those impersonating military leaders or Mongolia or other barbarian regions, or robber chiefs, use such plumes. As time passed because of their beauty, stage characters, in the roles of Chinese generals, also wore the cbib wei; but this is a violation of orthodox theatricals convention. Generally speaking, the plumes are worn by officials or warriors, who are not fighting for China. While youthful Chinese stage generals are fond of wearing the pheasant plumes, because of their pleasing appearance, there is no justification for such a practice (Ku 3).



75.Dia Chiao (Zhao 75)

19. **Hsuen Hsieh or Shoes and Boots**, everyone, in ancient China, from the emperor to the scholar and merchant, wore shoes, actors wear the same, the only exception being those playing the parts of laborers and farmers. While the stage footwear is generally like that worn in everyday life, the soles of the former are a trifle thicker in order to give the actor additional height. Women while warriors' boots are embroidered and thin soled. The embroidery is merely to please the eye (Ku 4).



76. Yan Yang Lou Gao Deng (Zhao57)

20. **The Hu Hsu Ou Beards and Mustaches**, since the ancients of China prized most of all a long beard, it came about that actors wore long artificial beards.

Although, at first, beards were not so long as those at present, still, afterwards the stage beard gradually increased in length. Varying through shades of white and

black, the beard may indicate the age of the wearer. Red or blue beards are worn by people of questionable character, masters of black magic, or supernatural beings; and are made of horse hair (Ku 4').



77. Lu Zhi-Shin in the Yie-Zhi forest (Chung 148)

d. Stage Properties

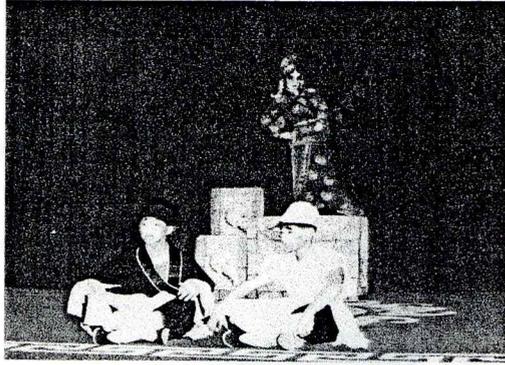
In the old drama stage properties sometimes, a common object may be symbolized.

From the *Secrets of the Chinese Drama* the following example makes this clear:

1. Shan, a hill or mountain.

a. A chair lying on its side and placed behind a board painted with a mountain design stands for a hill or mountain.

b. A chair may stand for a hill or mountain. The actor mounts the chair and steps down on the other side to show that he has crossed over a mountain (23).



78. Shan (Zhao 21)

2. Ma-pien , the horsewhip.

A horse-whip stands for a horse and the actor holding it is supposed to be on horseback or leading, a horse. When a whip is thrown on the stage, it means that the horse is let loose to graze or is fastened to a post or tree. The color of the whip indicates the color of the horse (24).



79. Qing Liang-Yu (Wang 38)

3. Sin-tzu-ch'i.

The personal banner. Sometimes a banner bearing the surname of the general is hoisted in the manner mentioned above (24).



80. Military of General Yue (Zhao 92)

4. Tsiang.

The oar. The actor holding an oar in his hand represents a character on board ship (24).



81. Chin Shan Ssu (Wang 38)

5. Chang-tzu, the bed, the tower, etc.

5. Chang-tzu, the bed, the tower, etc.

An embroidered curtain, usually made of satin, represents a bed or a tower.

Sometimes it is also used when high officials, civil or military, sit in session (27).



82.Chang-Tzu (Chung 154)

6. Pu-ch'eng, the city wall.

A large rectangular piece of blue cloth, painted to represent the mortared bricks of a wall, stretched on bamboo poles and hoisted vertically, represents a city wall.

There is an opening at the lower center of the cloth so that the sides may be drawn back to represent the opening or closing of the city gates. Whenever a wall is called for, the property men bring on stage this cloth wall. As the "gates" are not high enough for the actors to enter or leave the city easily, the wall is raised to facilitate their passage (25).



83. The Strategy of an Unguarded City (Chung 150)

In another lecture “*Stage Properties and Symbolism*” increase five symbolism properties to describe the meaning.

7. The Duster or Ying Ch'en,

The symbol of greatest refinement and the most highly treasured object throughout the long centuries of Chinese history is the duster of horsehair. The literati, while conversing, delight in fingering it; thus, in Chinese drama, the most exalted persons only may hold a duster, as gods, demi-gods, bodhisattvas, Buddhist monks, Taoist priests, wanderers, recluses, celestial beings, and spirits of many orders. Sometimes, however, a maidservant may use a duster to clean the furniture. In general, then, a duster, which is very common in the Chinese drama, may represent any number of things (Ku 1).



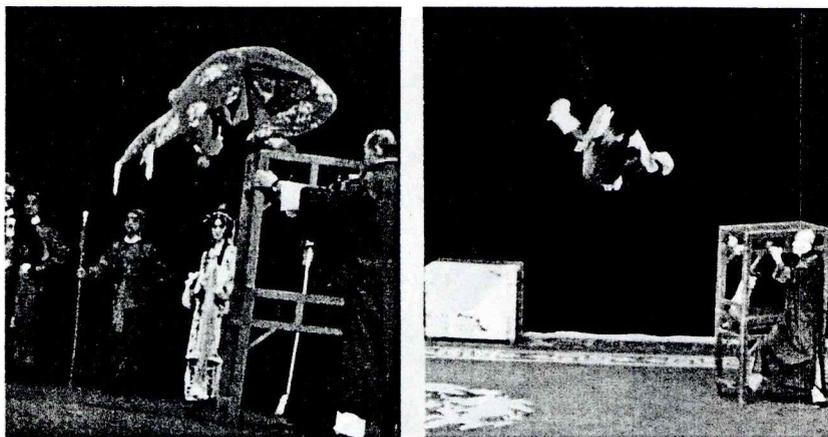
84.Kuei-fei Tsui Chiu

8. The Cho-tzu or Table,

The cho-tzu or table, represents, perhaps, more things than any other single object, some of them being as follows: a tea boy, a dining table, a judge's desk, an incense table, etc., while the acts of going from lower to higher levels, as the ascent of a mountain or the scaling of a wall, may also be effected by using a table.

When in actual use, the table may be placed in the ordinary position, on its side, etc., namely, in that position which is appropriate for the scene it is used in.

There is no fixed rule for such placing (Ku 2).



85.Cho-Tzu (Wang 85)

9. The San or Umbrella,

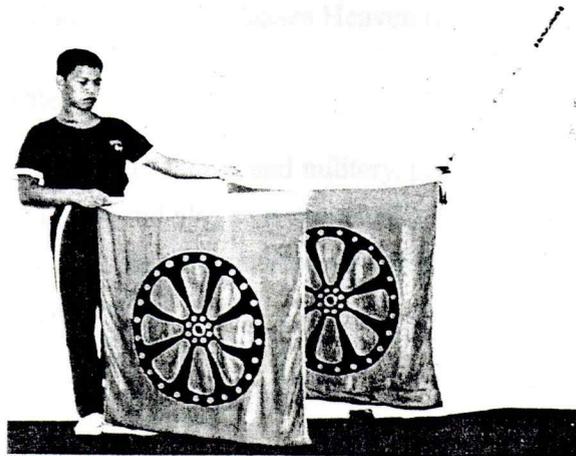
The san, or umbrella, an object used for protection from sun and rain is commonly used in the orient. A san is held from behind, over the head of the and empress whenever they go emperor abroad. When officials conduct their business in the open, they also use the umbrella, while the fairies include pretty umbrellas in their train in order to appeal to the audience's sense of beauty. San are made of silk, plain or embroidered, and the handles may be straight or curved, but are always long. The curved handles give the character more prestige than the straight ones (Ku 2).



86. Chin Shan Ssu (Wang 46)

10. Ch'eh-ch'i

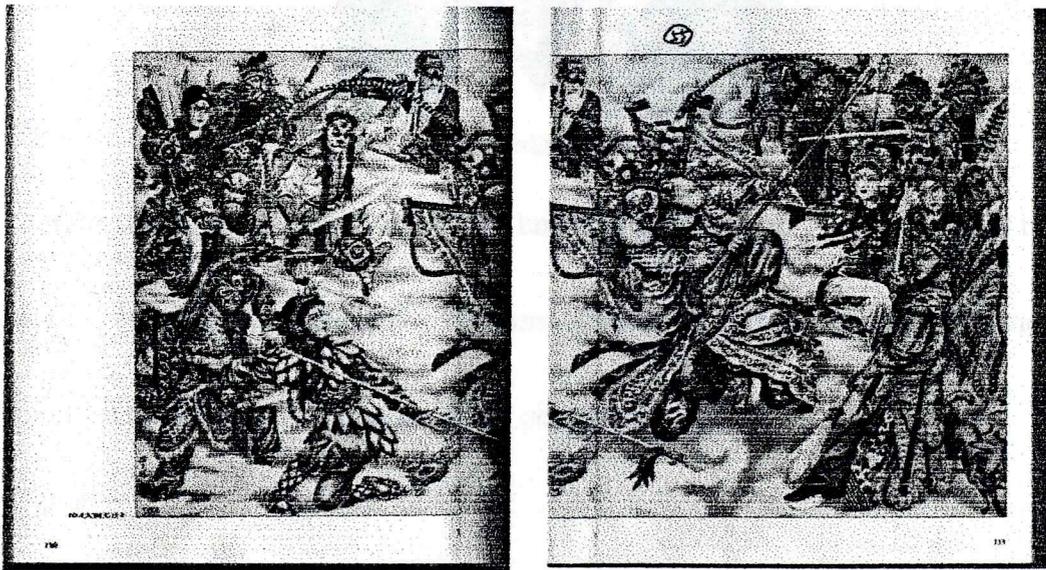
The wagon. Two flags, usually yellow, on each of which is drawn a wheel, represent a wagon. A servant carries the flags and the rider stands or walks between them. The flags are always brought on the stage by a servant whenever a wagon is needed and taken off as soon as the rider steps out (Ku 2).



87. Ch'eh-ch'i (Chung 152)

11. All military weapons used on the stage, such as lances, swords, guns, poles, etc.,

Are made of wood, and are close likenesses of the real articles although they may differ in measurement. Since the stage traditions do not permit the use of real weapons, wooden ones are used in the plays (Ku 2)



88. Magic Monkey Harasses Heaven (Zhao 110)

1. The Ivory Hu or Tablet

The ivory hu was used by officials, civil and military, previous to the Mi Dynasty, as a mark of respect to the resigning house and also as a means of making memoranda, which latter might be reported to the emperor. In the drama, when an official has audience with the emperor, he must hold a foot or more long and

two inches wide, being narrow at the top and wide at the bottom (Ku 2)



89.Da Ding Palace (Chung 116)

From all of the stage movement, we know the Chinese opera is very difficult to understand. It contains Chinese five thousand culture, all of those to blend in Chinese development of opera make the Chinese opera to reach the perfect boundary

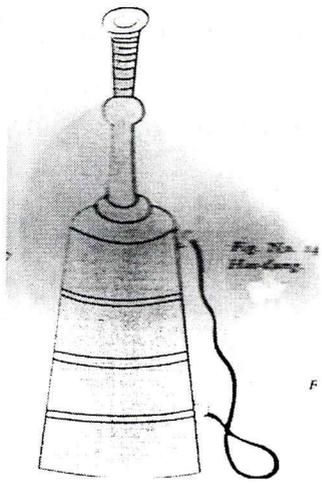
E. Music

A group of people to form an orchestra, everyone to play different musical instruments, we called orchestra. "The orchestra for Chinese Drama is named "Ch'ang-mien" literally "the face of the show". (Zung" 31) The Chinese opera important musical instruments According "Secrets of the Chinese Drama" as follow:

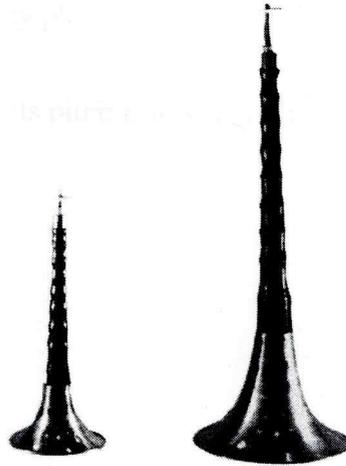
1-2. Hao-t'ung an So-na (the horns.)

They are of the trumpet type and produce loud sounds. They are never played

when a "tan" is singing (31).



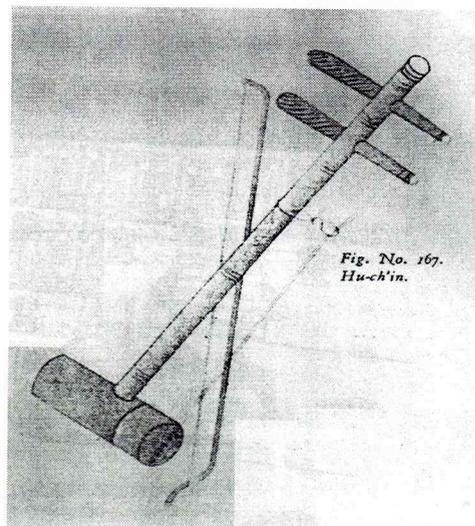
90. Hao-T'ung (Zung 31)



91. So-na (Ye 104)

3. Hu-ch'in

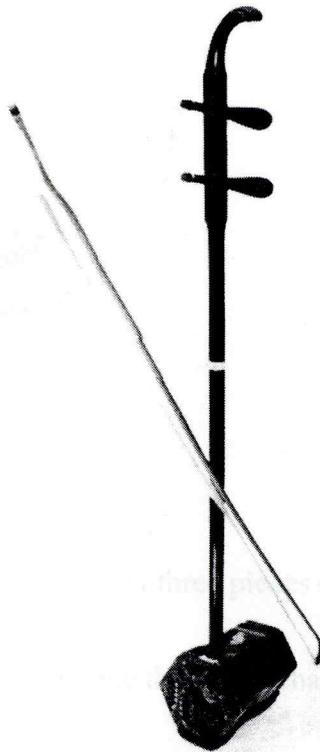
The Chinese violin. This two stringed instrument, played with a bow, is made bamboo. It was introduced into China from the northern barbarian tribe Hu; hence, its name, hu-ch'in meaning the violin of Hu. It is the leading instrument of the "p'i-huang" style. Its tunes are ver high-pitched (31).



92. Hu-ch'in (Zung 31)

4. Erh-hu

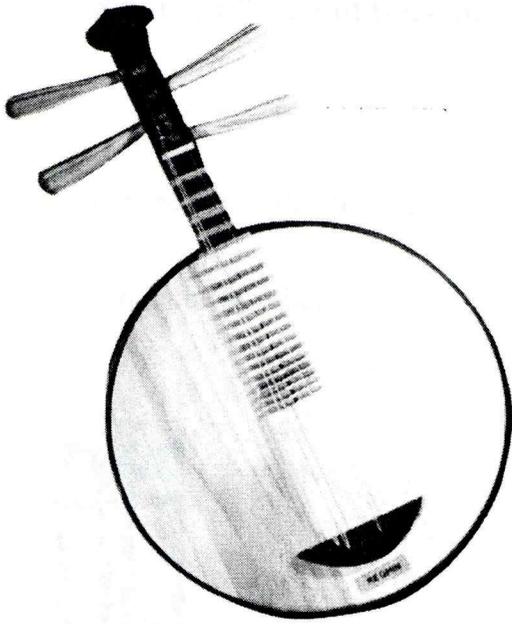
The "minor" Chinese violin. It is usually played to assist the "hu-ch'in" and its structure is similar to that of the latter, only its pitch is lower and its sound much softer (31).



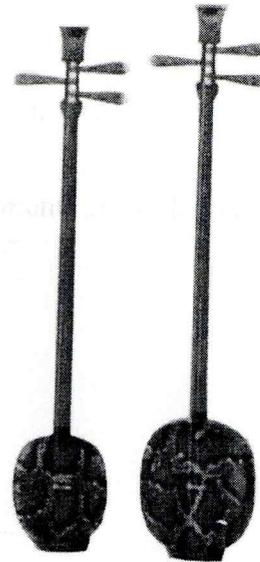
93. Erh-hu (Ye 112)

5-6. Yueh-ch'in and San-hsien

Yueh-ch'in the moon guitar, with four strings, and San-hsien the three-stringed guitar. Both are used to assist the "hu-ch'in," therefore their tones are much softer than those of the "hu-ch'in." (32)



94. Yueh-ch'in (Ye 89)



95. San-shien (Ye 86)

7. Pan

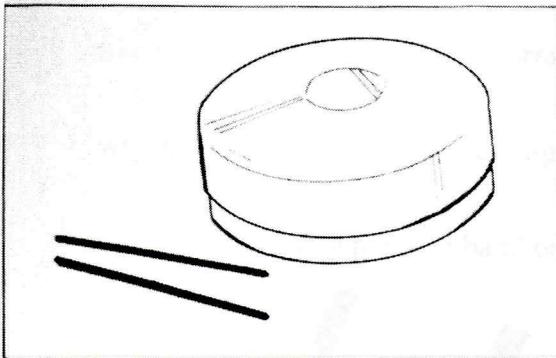
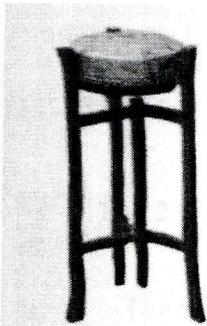
The time beater. It is made of three pieces of hard wood, two of which are tied together, side by side, with the third piece hanging on a cord. The third piece is used to strike the other two. A clear sound is produced. The actor listens' to it to keep time (32).



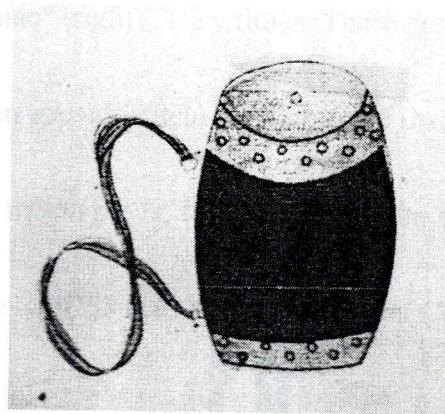
96. Pan (Ye 52)

8-9. Tan-p'i-ku and Huai-ku

The one sided drum and Huai-ku the breast drum. These two instruments assist the "pan" to indicate time in case the other instruments are so loud that the "pan" cannot be heard clearly (32).



97. Tan-p'i-ku (Ye 58)



98. Huai-ku (Ye 60)

10. T'ng-ku

The large drum. It is seldom used in ordinary plays. When the more prominent actors sing the "fan-erh-huang" tune in the street scene in "Snow in June," this instrument is always used to assist the "pan." It is so delightful to the ear that it is now in vogue whenever that tune is sung. Moreover, in some of the

dance scenes of Mei Lan-fang and Ch'eng Yen-ts'iu, it is used to accompany the "hu-ch'in (32).



99. T'ng-ku (Ye 57)

11-12. Ti and Siao

The two kinds of flutes, "ti" (left) and "siao" (right). They flutes. There are look like the western flute, only the former when played is held parallel to the lips, with the second hole pasted-serving as the mouth piece. In K'un'ch plays on the instrument-where a piece of bamboo tissue is "ti" is the leading instrument (32).



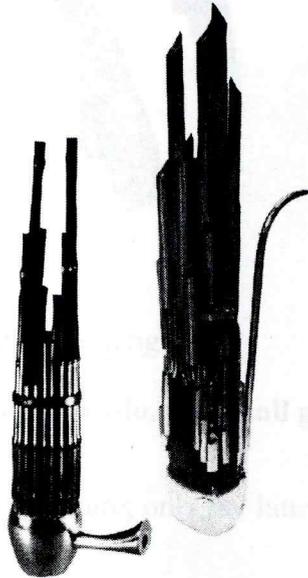
100. Ti (Ye 98)



101. Siao (Ye 96)

13. Sheng

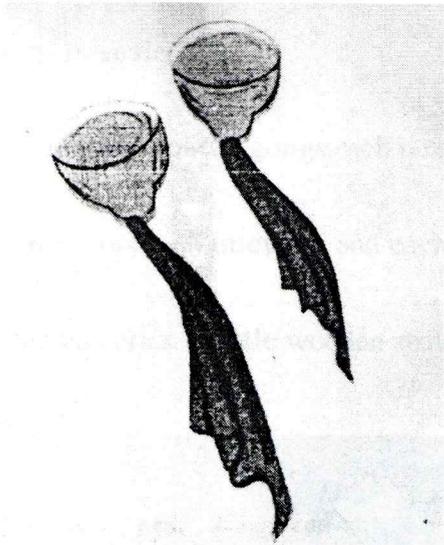
The reed-organ. This instrument is made of a set of tube-like bamboos fastened together. Its notes are very soft and pleasing (32).



102. Sheng (Ye 100)

14. Sin

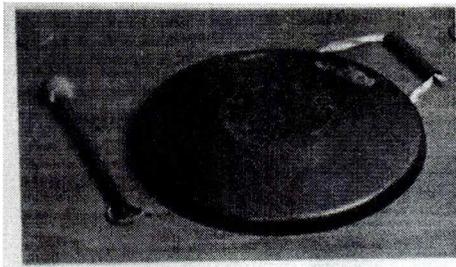
The cup-shaped bells. These bells help the "pan" to beat time. They are nearly always used with the large drum when the tragic songs in "fan-erh- of round cups, in the bottom of which a cord is fastened huang" are sung. They are made of brass in the shape so that the outer end of it may be used as a handle, produced. When one bell hits the other, a delightful sound is when one bell hits the other; a delightful sound is produced (33).



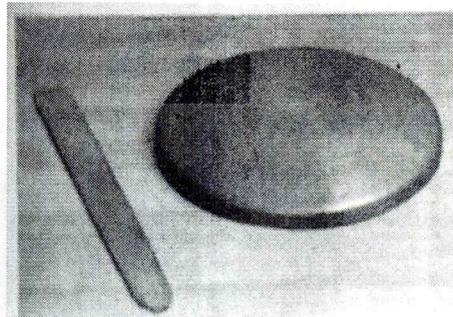
103. Sin (Zung 33)

15-16. Lo, the gong and Hsiao-lo, the small gong

They are of the same structure; only the latter is much smaller. "Lo" produces very loud sounds and is generally used in playing the overture. Sometimes one or two strokes may be sounded between the musical passages or before some significant action takes place. The small gong is always used just before the "tan" steps on the stage (33).



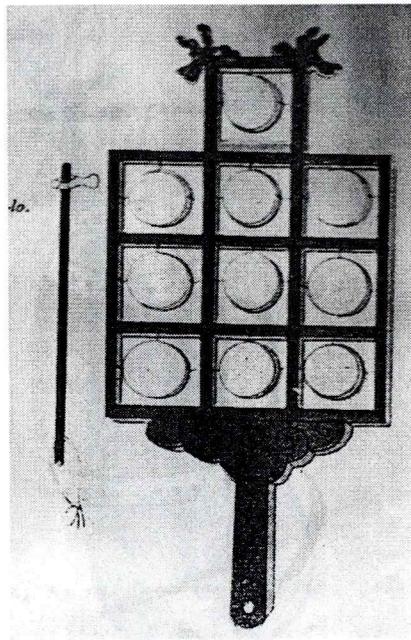
104. Lo (Ye 47)



105. Hsiao-lo (Ye 47)

17. Yuin-lo gongs in scale

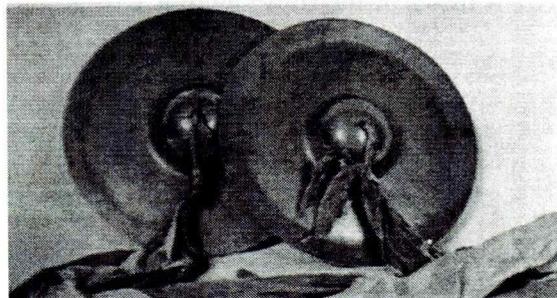
This instrument consists of ten gongs, each being about two and a half inches in diameter, hung in a wooden framework and each representing a different musical tone in the graduated series. A little wooden striker is used to hit the gongs (33).



106. Yuin-lo (Ye 46)

18-19. Nao and Pa the cymbals

They are very loud instruments made of brass, and generally used with the gong (33).

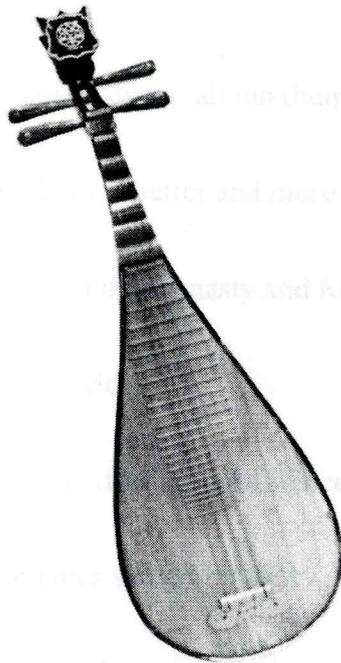


107. Pa (Ye 50)

20. P'i-p'a, the lute

In olden times, "p'i- p'a" was the leading instrument in the orchestra of the Northern School of drama. It is made of wood and has four strings, a long neck and a bent head. Its sound box is semi-globular like that of the western ukelele

(33).



108. P'i-p'a (Ye 80)

If want to know more about the Chinese classical musical instruments must to see

“Chapter Three-Orchestra-Stage” and “Chapter Fourteen-Musical Instruments”

(IV) THE FUTURE AND PROSPECT IN THE CHINESE

CLASSIC DRAMA

The original practice of classic drama with the continuously traditional performance form Sung Dynasty is the entertainment so that the audiences love, and then it develops well; if not, it decays.

In the past, Sung Zaju and Ming Chuanqi all ran their course. As school of drama decays, the other grows up. Each school is better and more progressive than the last one on the performing methods and skills. Until Ching Dynasty and Ming-Kuo, the Beijing opera had already reached the perfect and mature field.

In some ways, the Chinese classic drama performance is different from the western dramas. Some performing characteristics shared by every school of the Chinese classic dramas can't be appreciated by the other national dramas and this is the specialty of the Chinese classic drama. We sum them up as follows:

A. The stage design and performing are symbolized

The Chinese classic drama almost originates from the mat theatre plays viewed by the country folks and developed slowly to the city theatres viewed by the intellectuals. During the developing process, except for promoting the art standards that the action skill became finer and the voice skill became more complicated. The props on the stage are different from the

conveniences of the life. For example, the stage installation and the performing action are still simple, a whip stands for a horse, two flags represent a wagon, and the painted cloth represents the mortared of a wall. All of the stage designs and performances are symbolic, so the performing style in the Chinese classic drama always presents the principle of the beauty by the exaggerated, beautifully decorated props which have no time limitations and substitutes the symbolic for the realistic to increase the imaginative space of the audiences.

B. The actor and the role are typical

When they enter the troupe at about seven or eight years old, the actors of the Chinese classic drama begin to accept the strict training after classifying the roles--heng, tan, jing, and chou.

From training to performing, they have already passed through every kind of training for a long time, including the voice training, stage step training, physical training, and so on. Each actor, no matter what the voice, steps, hand raising, and foot stretching, is filled with the personal characteristic, which he plays. For example, when ching-in is on the stage, she always introduces herself with the music of yuan-pan or slow-pan, Fya-tan expresses pursuit of true love with daring love and courageous hatred and tao-ma-tan runs around the stage with the varied postures. So the different roles express their typical by the different actions, and the actor's actions be exaggerated and differ from the real life expanding the face expressions, typically

overstating the role, and thoroughly beautifying the voice and gesture. For example, the Beijing drama collects the male beauty into “sheng”, the female beauty into “tan”, the funny image into “ch’ou”, and the dreadful image into “jing”. Therefore, when the role shows on the stage, the audiences clearly understand the role’s identification. The human nature doesn’t change in the Chinese classic plays, although time changes. After being appreciated, the human nature known well by the audiences reaches the catharsis and resonance of the passion.

C. The role’s character is clarified

The make-up and brightly colored costumes for the actor of the Beijing drama are called “hang tou” that is one important element on the Chinese classic drama. We can tell the role’s characteristics immediately from the color of the make-up and costumes. For example, on the make-up side, Iuan-yu’s red face stands for the faithfulness ; P’ao-tsen’s black face stands for righteousness ; Ts’ao Ts’ao’s big white face stands for craftiness. As soon as the audience views the different make-up on the performance, they can understand the role’s personality at once.

On the costume side, Chu Ko Liang’s pa-kua clothes show that he’s a man playing the magic arts and understanding tai-chi. A person in fu-kuei-i represents that he was a poor scholar this day but he will have great achievements in the future.

D. The singing and dancing are harmonized

The Chinese classic drama is based on the singing and dancing. And it becomes the

singing style of the Chinese classic drama as adding the music accompanying today. The stage steps of the performing actor go match with the music completely. Whatever the hand raising and foot stretching or the tiny gestures expressing the inner feeling, there is an instrument accompanying to strengthen the expression of the actor's inner action. The Beijing dream often beautifies the lines into verse, the action into dancing, and the speech into oral speaking. The feeling of sighs, recounting, complaining and repenting become the music of Tao-pan, Kuai-pan, Yuan-pan, Slow pan and this way makes the Chinese classic drama combining the music, singing, and dancing create the beauty of the harmony.

E. Voice skill is ultimate

The voice skill in the Chinese classic drama starts with practice from the childhood of the actor. The practicing result reaches the ultimate of the music after a long training. The actor can fully use the voice to express the brewing feelings of the role and perform the joy, anger, sorrow, and pleasure thoroughly in the play.

The rise and decline in any drama, in one hand, can be judged by its highness and lowness of the art; in the other hand, it can be judged whether the audiences can attract it. But, unfortunately, the better in its art value; the less it attracts the audiences. Until now, the Chinese classic drama has great achievements of the art. Its singing not only calls for the voice and tone but also for spirit and expressions; its dancing is not only graceful, but also pursues the

image. People who appreciate it can absorb its performance, but people who are not able to appreciate it just refuse to accept it. How do we solve the relationships between the audiences and its performance? According to the opinions of the experts, I collect them as follows:

A. Integrate the play:

Most of plays in the Chinese drama perform only the fragments. This gives the stories no beginnings and no endings, and it is unintelligible for the first viewers. So, making the play integrate is the priority.

B. Popularize the stories:

The contents of the stories, which are revised, must tend to the currency of the times and match with the familiar subjects of the people. Then the audiences can absorb the plot at once when they appreciate the performance.

C. Individualize the character:

The actor conceptualizes the character during the performance. Individualizing the character can make the character in the play live, be full of the blood, flesh, and feeling that can touch and attract the audiences, but he mustn't perform too exaggeratedly or show off too much. Nowadays, the actors in the Mainland China and in Taiwan have great improvements on expressing the feelings when they perform the plays and can make the audiences touch from the inner hearts.

D. Realistic performance:

Image always appears in the Chinese classic drama, but this is hard to hear or view the content of the performance, so the limited realistic performances enable the audiences to accept it. Although these faults have some improvements in the newly performances, some of the Chinese classic dramas begin to add the special effects of the sound and light from the western theaters. This change can let the younger audiences accept the plays more easily, yet it needs to make it better.

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