

The Development Road of Chinese National Opera

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Abstract—There are more than 300 kinds of operas ever since the Song and Yuan Dynasties in China. They are operatic. Since the 20th century, there are operas different from traditional dramas in China, including Chinese folk operas that differ from western operas. It has grown and matured, absorbing the characteristics of many folk arts such as Chinese folk song, Western opera, and traditional Chinese opera. It has continued to grow and develop. It has gradually taken the forefront of China's musical history and has shown its elegance with a unique Chinese beauty, using its artistic language to tell the world the story of China. However, Chinese folk operas are always performing on the world stage. The masters of operas around the world compete for the first performance, and audiences all over the world grab votes to listen to Chinese originality. At that time, it was the moment when our musicians were really happy. But this is a long way to go that requires the joint effort of many colleagues.

Keywords—Opera, Chinese National Opera, Drama

I. INTRODUCTION

In each era and for various ethnic groups in different regions, due to the influence of many factors such as geographical environment, cultural background, and historical changes, different ethnic groups have formed their unique artistic temperament and rich cultural connotations. The art of music describes and displays her gracefulness in the realm of its “empty spirit”, interpreting the process of human evolution with its unique expression, while opera is an extremely important part of musical art and can be closer to life and closer. An art form of the public.

II. THE STYLE OF CHINESE OPERAS AT DIFFERENT HISTORICAL PERIODS

The monumental work of Chinese opera “White Haired Girl” has a history of nearly 70 years. Why can it become an outstanding representative of the Chinese national opera in people's hearts? Not only because it is China's first national opera, but also because of its many innovations. It is mainly because she represents a country and a new spiritual outlook of the times. Musicians use their artistic language to express their aspirations from their works. The historical responsibility and the conscience of the musicians are fully revealed.[1]

Over the past few centuries, many composers have used their national themes and folk music heritage to produce and process outstanding works. Musicians use their deep love for their own nation and country to permeate their works. They use a very distinctive national and folk style of music to tell the history of their own nation, depict magnificent mountains and rivers, tell touching stories, and in the spiritual realm. The people communicate and communicate with each other and use the language of music to convey their excellent culture to the rest of the world, and they will continue forever. Through the way of music, the spiritual essence of different nations in different countries is expressed. This is the consensus of many musicians in ancient and modern times. How to take the road of a real opera with a Chinese national style is also being explored by many musicians in China. They take the initiative to assume this responsibility, and thus continue to promote the development of China's national opera.

After a long period of 20th century, the style of Chinese opera music has been evolving, but no matter how it changes, it is still inseparable from the artist's strong national sentiment and the heavy sense of social mission. Li Jinhui is a pioneer in Chinese opera creation. He created 12 children's dance dramas such as “Sparrow and Child” and “Little Painter”.[2] The “Sparrow and Child” premiered in 1921 used music and singing language to tell the story between the sparrow and the child. The folk tunes such as “Suwu Shepherd” and “Silver Skein” used directly in the song and dance made children and parents more receptive and enjoyable, and lively art forms teach children to develop good qualities of goodness and honesty. “Little Painter” is Li Jinhui's most successful children's song and dance drama, in which he boldly tried to create dramatic musical tunes to shape the character of different characters. He vividly satirized the rigid and old-fashioned methods of feudal education and publicized it and advocated the benefits of teaching students according to their aptitude. Li Jinhui's works are more nationalized and popularized in terms of art form, and they are positive in terms of ideological content. This has caused great repercussions in society at that time. Although these works are only a mode of small operas, they have taken a good first step in the development of Chinese opera.

In the 1930s, a group of operatic works that dared to try, learn from, and innovate emerged in the land of China. At that time, the composers took a step forward along the path of gradual progress of Chinese national opera with their own hearts. In May 1934, China's first new opera “The Yangtze River Storm” was created by Nie Er and Tian Han. It adopts a musical style that draws on the “school song” writing mode under the Chinese traditional five tone style system, and on this basis, it carries out the “Drama plus Singing” creative mode.[3] Although the “Yangtze River Storm” is only a one-act opera, in the dramatic structure of the drama, the arias of the people's songs are added to express the different emotional activities of the characters. As the old saying goes, “Love moves in the middle and walks inwards, but it is not enough to sing it; it is not enough to sing.” The popular and contemporary music makes it easier for the audience to integrate into it, and therefore the work is more

accessible to people. A good musical composition not only reflects the personal feelings of the composer, but also he leads the spiritual pursuit of the entire society and the characteristics of an era. Therefore, such works are more vital. Some well-known arias such as "Sharker Songs" and "Selling Newspaper Songs" are still well-known. Works of this period include Chen Gexin's "Xishi", which was created in the form of popular music and professional dance in the Chinese and Western bands. It is the first musical in China. Xian Xinghai's recitation of "Military and People's March" tries to create a Chinese-style opera with the experience of Western opera. At the time when the country was in trouble, anti-Japanese patriotism was the subject matter work and expressed the Chinese people's determination to resist war and defend the country and their revolutionary spirit. The value and charm of art is often expressed in the touch of artistic works on the society at that time, while opera can more realistically and more appropriately present some awe-inspiring stories and spirits to the viewers and bring strength to the people. The composers continued to broaden their minds and dared to explore the creation of Chinese national operas, and accumulated a wealth of valuable experience.

In any case, it is imperative that an artistic form be truly implanted and thriving. Yingge is a collective song and dance art of the people that has a long history in China and is popular among farmers. In 1943, Yanan launched a new Yangge movement that captured the hearts of the people. On this basis, the first opera "Brother and Sisters' Exploitation" (Anbo composer) and the couple's literary tunes (Mark composer) were selected.[4] People's favorite and easy-to-understand manners are used to reflect the new life of the new society, and on the basis of inheriting and developing the folk traditional dance Yangge, it opened the door for ethnic operas that truly belong to China. The thinking and exploration of art is also a long-term accumulation process, just like other scientific developments. Under the continuous efforts of the predecessors, in 1945, a landmark piece of the opera in the history of Chinese opera, "The White Haired Girl" was born in Yan'an and was collectively created by the Lu Xun Academy of Arts. According to the folk legend of Bai Mao Xian Gu in Hebei's border area of Shanxi and Tibet, the theme of "The old society forced people to be 'ghosts' and the new society turns 'ghosts' into people's" was deeply expressed. At the same time, the arrival of a new era of new society has brought about a more coexistence of a broader and calm artistic creation environment. "White Haired Girl" deserves to be China's first national opera. Regardless of the selection of the works to the structure of the plot, from the use of materials to the creation of music, from the dance figure to the white rhythm, attention is paid to the combination of traditional opera and Western opera. Dramatically strong dramatic, they also do not lose the national flavor. At this point, Chinese opera finally found its own unique development path and formed its own distinctive aesthetic style. In terms of concepts and techniques, the author insists on the starting point of the concept of plots for all artistic ideas, with a variety of expressions and techniques, as well as techniques of western operas, intimidation, or singing. Under this artistic thinking, composers created a large number of excellent Chinese national opera works. For example, "Xiao Erhei Gets Marriage", "Snow in Midsummer", "Hongxia", "Honghu Red Guards", "Red Eagle", "Red Coral", "Sister Jiang", "Party Daughter", "Wildfire Spring Ancient City", "Never-Death Waves", "Blessings", etc. The success of these two works, "Honghu Red Guard" (1959) and "Sister Jiang" (1964), was later hailed as "the two peaks of contemporary opera art".[5]

After the reform and opening up, the development of the opera is also affected by this powerful wave. The multi-polar development of the opera's own living environment, the globalization of ideas, mutual exchanges, and artistic tastes all have a higher demand for the Chinese national opera from creation to marketing, from singing to performance, from the stage to the backstage. From the 1980s onwards, works such as "Mourning the Dead", "The Heart of Grass", "The Wilderness", "Cang Yuan" came out.

The opera "Mourning the Mourning" was written to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Lu Xun's birthday. It was adapted by Wang Quan and Han Wei based on Lu Xun's novel of the same name and composed by Shi Guangnan. In terms of music, the composer is different from some previous Chinese national opera creations - taking a specific folk tone as a prototype, but drawing lessons from absorbing art songs before and after May 4th as their main style. This is very much in line with the creative background of the opera story. Excellent opera works must be able to make the audience more intuitive and sensible through music and story to understand an era and a history. The lyrics and romance of lyricism and drama in the opera are all impressive, such as "Wisteria Flower", "A Touch of Sun", "Wind Shame" and other works. Delicate music is used to portray the constant changes in the character's psychology, when the singer whispered out, it caused the audience to resonate with one another. However, it still has its limitations. The lack of national tones influences the national style of the works. It is not easy to pass on this word of mouth, making the opera difficult to popularize.

The opera "The Wilderness" was the first Chinese opera to be put on a foreign stage. It was created by Wan Fang based on the drama of the same name of Mr. Cao Yu and composed by Jin Xiang. Jin Xiang: "In the Wilderness, I insisted on standing in the national tradition and wrote a "barley yellow" with innocent and innocent winds; using drama, squeezing and slow singing to portray the heart of the mother Irritability, anxiety, pain, jealousy; At the same time, he did not hesitate to write the romantic arias of the male and female protagonists in the drama of the 19th century in Europe. Similarly, on the one hand, I use modern techniques such as differential sound blocks and accidental music arrangements to describe the wilderness and haze of the wilderness, and the darkness and persecution of hell. At the same time, romantic rituals are used to portray the hard-won love of love and warmth.[6] The collision between modern music's creative techniques and traditional folk music in China gives the audience a very strong sense of hearing. The elements of harmony and dissonance in music appear at the same time, and the inner feelings of different characters are simultaneously displayed in one picture. The artistic expression of the operas is even more full.

Along the way, on top of many "firsts", we have seen the evolution of the national music style of Chinese opera in the 20th century. We have also seen the constant contributions of the predecessors in the music industry and the brave attempts made again and again. Since the new century, many outstanding operatic works such as "The Mulan Psalms" have entered the world

stage. It was the people who persisted in the nationalization of China's opera. This brought the art form from the West not only to absorb the characteristics of Western opera, but also to integrate it with our local culture. In the world of opera art, Chinese values and aesthetics are conveyed, and this culture, which has a history of thousands of years, is continuously passed on. This will also spread our great country style under the new historical period throughout every corner of the world. Art is borderless, and it is the most infectious. It stands on the international stage and uses the "Chinese language to tell China's story." [7] In the most classical form of music—opera, the voice from China is delivered.

III. THE LONG WAY AHEAD OF CHINESE OPERAS

It is too early for China to become a world opera center and we cannot be blindly optimistic. Opera is an exotic product. Although the development of the Chinese opera has many achievements, it is still at a learning stage. Whether it is the introduction of classics or original works, it is necessary to make up a lot of lessons. Under the high-speed economic development, the problems that have arisen now are not lack of "money", but more are the lack of "people." Although there are a large number of graduates each year in major music schools, there are really too few opera talents to use. For vocal students to come to the opera actor, this distance not only needs a good "coach" to be strictly tuned, but also requires "exercise" in a play.

Now that Chinese actors sing western classical operas, most people are only in the state of "singing". As to how to shape characters, how to express their character, and how to portray psychology... There is still a big gap. The opera performance is more than just a treble. If the character is not there, the treble will not be as beautiful as the play.

In addition, "Chinese opera should focus on originality" is also very important.[8] On the one hand, Chinese opera people based themselves on the past, deeply digging and making use of special resources such as history and humanities in these years, gave birth to a group of original operas that are unique in terms of region, nationality, and reality. In previous years, there was a state of "blowouts" and there were 25 creations a year. However, on the other hand, the opera's creation must lead the writing with all-round, three-dimensional operatic thinking. Music should be as it is and text should be as it is. The basis of originality was once: screenwriters and composers; originality requires more work, hard work, and use of emotions, otherwise nothing will happen. There are more than one type of world opera, and it is not necessary to use Italian, German, or French standards. We can have our own opera. The "Canals of the Canal" is a good example. The Indo-Chinese composer has a good melody and a certain degree of dramatic tension. He is dubbed "national opera" and is very sensible and appropriate. Those foreigners are fully able to understand and approve.

IV. CONCLUSION

In today's media, each new opera has just begun its debut, and even before it even premiered, it began to advertise: "A new classic is coming!" There are many irresponsible reviews. The "classic" concept is too rampant. All the classics, no need for time and space accumulation, market inspections, and the "Sari Gold Rushing" cycle were polished. If there are more than a dozen Chinese folk songs on stage in the future, one day in the future, it will be sold at the box office on the world stage; or, the world's big opera players will vie for Chinese opera first, and audiences around the world will grab votes to listen to Chinese opera. At that time, it was the moment when our musicians were truly pleased. However, it is a long road that requires the joint efforts.

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