



The Development of Henan Opera in Kaifeng Qi County, China

Miao Wang

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for

degree of Master of Music in Music

March 2021

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พัฒนาการของเหอหนานโอเปร่าในเมือง ไคเฟิง ประเทศจีน

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for Master of Music (Music)

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The examining committee has unanimously approved this Thesis, submitted by Mr. Miao Wang , as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Music Music at Maharakham University

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### **ABSTRACT**

his research is "The Development of Henan Opera in Kaifeng County, China". The purpose is to: 1) investigate the current situation and development of Henan Opera; 2) To Analysis the characteristic of Henan Opera This is a qualitative study, including related literature research, surveys, observations and interviews. These data are collected through field investigations of 3 inheritors of Henan opera. This article uses the method of field investigation to analyze the data of the inheritors of Henan Opera.

The research results of this paper are as follows: 1)Through studying the development status of Henan Opera, provide your own opinions for the future development and protection of Henan Opera. 2) Through music examples, the musical characteristics of Henan Opera are sorted out and analyzed, including the characteristics of various forms of melody, music structure, and singing form.

Keyword : Henan Opera, Kaifeng county, music characteristics, Status and development

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Background

Henan Province is called Henan because most of it was located to the south of the Yellow River in history. Long years ago, the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River had criss-cross rivers, dense forests, and numerous wild elephants. This is the root of the pictographic character "Yu", so Henan is referred to as "Yu". Henan Province is located in the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River in the southern part of the North China Plain. Its agriculture is very developed and it also is the birthplace of Chinese culture. Chinese music also has a long history in Henan. As of the end of 2017, Henan Province had 171 public art performance groups, 206 cultural centers, 158 public libraries, and 335 museums. (<https://baike.so.com/>)

Kaifeng, as a city in Henan, has a history of more than 2700 years. It is the first batch of Chinese historical and cultural cities, one of the eight ancient capitals of China, and Kaifeng in the Northern Song Dynasty was the largest city in the world at that time. At the same time, Kaifeng, as the birthplace of Henan Opera, plays an important role in the study of Chinese excellent culture. But in recent years, because of the rapid development of the times, Henan Opera has been impacted by foreign culture and science and technology in the new media era. We must formulate a series of measures to find the breakthrough and direction of the development of Henan so that the unique music in the Henan region can be developed. (Chang Dekun, 2012)

This research analyzes the musical characteristics of Henan Opera, especially the changes in the musical form of Henan Opera, and innovates its expression to better inherit and develop Henan Opera.

### 2. Research Objectives

2.1 To Study the Current Situation and Development of Henan Opera

2.2 To Analysis the characteristic of Henan Opera

### **3. Research Questions**

3.1 How is the current development of Henan Opera?

3.2 What are the characteristic of Henan Opera?

### **4. Importance of Research**

4.1 We will understand the current situation and development of Henan Opera

4.2 We will know the characteristic of Henan opera

### **5. Definition of Terms**

5.1 Henan Opera refers to the folk opera of Henan Province, China. It originated in Kaifeng, Henan. It is a local opera unique to Henan. It is one of the five major opera types in my country.

5.2 Current status refer to Current conditions in various fields, including history, development

5.3 Characteristics

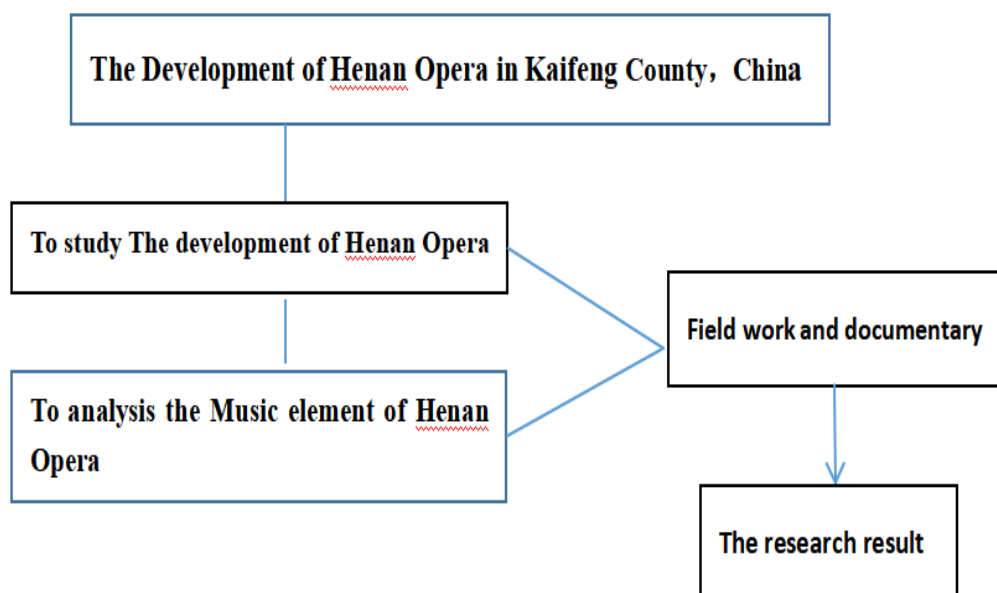
5.3.1 The Characteristic of Singing

5.3.2 The Characteristic of Music

5.3.3 The Characteristic of Performing

### **6. Conceptual Framework**

The research framework will focus on my two research goals. The first research goal is to study the current situation and development of Henan Opera. The second research goal is to analyze the characteristics of Henan Opera. Through field research, I will analyze the characteristics of the melody singing, music and performance of Henan Henan Opera with examples.



## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In this study, the researcher reviewed the various documents to obtain comprehensive information on the study. Which has divided the study topics according to the following topics:

#### **1. Overview of Kaifeng City, Henan Province, China**

##### **1.1 History**

Kaifeng is located in the eastern part of the plain of the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River, in the middle and eastern part of Henan Province. It was called Dongjing and Bianjing in ancient times and was the capital of eight dynasties. It has a history of more than 2,700 years so far. It is a charming city with a long history and rich heritage, especially during the Northern Song Dynasty. During that time, Kaifeng was the largest city in the world and its culture developed rapidly. It is also a famous hometown of opera and woodblock New Year painting art. (<https://baike.so.com>)

##### **1.2 Life culture**

The lifestyles of the Kaifeng people are diverse. During the Northern Song Dynasty, the economy developed rapidly. As the capital of Kaifeng at that time, with the development of the commodity economy, shops, tea houses, and restaurants were everywhere. People gradually began to pursue a life of spiritual satisfaction after material satisfaction to express their inner feelings, so theaters began to rise. Until now, as a tourist city in Kaifeng, apart from work, people often accompany their families to travel, have dinner together, and go to theaters to listen to operas.

##### **1.3 Food culture**

As the capital of the Song Dynasty, Kaifeng is also very rich in food. At that time, because the government abolished the curfew policy, people could also go shopping and eat at night, and all kinds of delicacies were everywhere. Businessmen from various places also come here to do business, including some foreign businessmen. While doing business here, they also brought the food from their hometown here. Until now, we can still taste the delicacies of various places in Kaifeng.

#### 1.4 Folk customs

Kaifeng's traditional folk culture has a long history and rich characteristics and is deeply loved by the general public. The Kaifeng Folk Culture Festival is an important festival to promote excellent traditional culture and focus on displaying local characteristic folk activities. It is held once a year. On this day, we can see dragon and lion dance performances, suona, acrobatics, and other colorful folk arts. At this time of year, Kaifeng attracts many domestic and foreign tourists to enjoy the performance.

#### 1.5 Tourism culture

As a city with a long history, Kaifeng is a famous historical and cultural city in China. It also has many ancient buildings. In Kaifeng, Qingming Cultural Festival and Chrysanthemum Cultural Festival are held every year. At this time, many foreign tourists will be attracted, and foreign tourists come here to visit. Here, people can learn about Chinese history and enjoy many folk performances.

#### 1.6 Music culture

In ancient times, the people of Henan created many songs and music to satisfy their spiritual pursuit. These songs generally have no fixed lyrics and are very simple. This kind of music was called "minor" at that time. The Northern Song Dynasty was the most glorious era in the history of Kaifeng, with a developed economy and culture. So restaurants and tea houses began to increase various singing and dancing performances. In the Ming Dynasty, some musicians summarized the various music of the time, merged them and re-created them, so Henan Opera was born. Up to now, Henan Opera has been integrated into people's lives. As an important part of Henan folk music, Henan Opera has been deeply rooted in the hearts of the people. It reflects the production and life, history, culture, customs, and religions of the local people, and fully demonstrates the aesthetic and artistic appeal of Henan people to music. It has unique artistic characteristics and the distinctive regional style is the crystallization of the wisdom of the Henan people for thousands of years. (zhang Yizhuo, 2019)

## 2. General knowledge of Opera

Drama is a comprehensive stage of art. It uses literature, performance, painting, sculpture, music, art, dance and other artistic means to shape the image of stage art, reveal social contradictions, and reflect real life. Chinese opera, Indian Sanskrit opera and ancient Greek opera are known as the three ancient theater cultures in the world. Nowadays, ancient Greek tragedies and comedies and Indian Sanskrit dramas are gradually declining, and only Chinese operas have the most vitality.

### 2.1 Chinese Opera

Chinese opera originated from the sacrificial song and dance in the primitive period and has undergone changes in various dynasties, and the gestation period is long and unique. Today, Chinese opera is still very prosperous, still active in the countryside of the Chinese people, and active on the big stage of world drama. Chinese opera art is extremely comprehensive. Divided into time art and space art, it focuses on four forms of singing, reading, doing, and playing, covering various artistic elements such as martial arts, acrobatics, crafts, dance, literature, and music. (Pang Limin,1983)

### 2.2 Western Opera

As the origin of Western drama, no one knows how it started in ancient Greek drama, but it is generally believed that the origin of drama has a lot to do with ceremonies. Due to the unpredictability of natural forces, the ancients often regarded them as fearful. Some people would hope to try to control them in various ways, gradually forming a ritual. However, related myths and stories have been handed down and provided abundant materials for the drama. In the original ceremonies, music, dance, makeup, masks and costumes are all indispensable, and these are important elements that form the drama. The purpose of the ceremony is to make people communicate with the gods, worship, pray, or enlighten and bless the believers. (<https://zhidao.baidu.com/>)

### 2.3 The similarities and differences between Chinese and Western Opera

Whether it is Chinese opera or Western drama, they all have the general characteristics of drama, but they are two different cultural phenomena, which represent their respective national characteristics and reflect their mental outlook, way of thinking and value of theoretical thinking level. Due to the differences in the geographical environment and the social and cultural



background, philosophical basis and aesthetic orientation of the two, they have formed their unique artistic qualities and different styles. There is a direct blood relationship between the two dramas, but there are also great differences. The expression of virtual freehand brushwork in Chinese opera forms a unique stylized, simple and concise style. Different from the symbolic expression of Chinese opera, the singing and dancing of musicals are based on imitating real life. Due to the richness and diversity of life, the song and dance that mimics the real life of the music must be meticulous, true, and complicated, summarizing different content, plot environment and specific production (Chen Gang, 2002)

### **3. Types of Chinese Opera**

3.1 There are five kinds of dramas that are widely circulated in China, namely Beijing Opera, Yue Opera, Huangmei Opera, Ping Opera and Henan Opera. These are all manifestations of Chinese opera.

#### **3.1.1 Beijing Opera**

Beijing opera is the most influential Chinese opera genre, centered in Beijing, and spread all over the country. It is the "quintessence of the country" of China and the top of Chinese opera. It was formed in Beijing around 1840, developed in the 1930s and 1940s, and has a history of more than two hundred years. It is still a major drama with national influence until now. Its mature performances, grandeur and grace, are representative of modern Chinese opera. The Beijing Opera performance system named after Mei Lanfang is regarded as the representative of the Oriental theater performance system and is one of the three major performance systems in the world. Representative figures include Mei Lanfang, Yang Xiaolou, Shang Xiaoyun, etc. (<https://cnki.net>)

#### **3.1.2 Yue Opera**

Yue Opera is mainly popular in Zhejiang, Shanghai, Jiangsu and other places. It has a history of about 150 years. Yue Opera is more lyrical, mainly singing, with a soothing voice, beautiful and pleasant to hear, and the performance is real and moving, with a strong southern local flavor. At first, Yue Opera was dominated by male actors, and later became dominated by actresses. In 1942, a Yue opera actress headed by Yuan Xuefen changed her performance and singing,

forming a soft and delicate performance style. Representatives include Yuan Xuefen, Fan Ruijuan, Xu Yulan, etc. (<https://cnki.net>)

### 3.1.3 Huangmei Opera

Huangmei Opera is the main local opera in Anhui. Formerly known as Tea Picking Opera, it was a folk opera in the middle and late Qing Dynasty. It first became popular in rural areas, then spread to cities, and then continued to develop. The singing of Huangmei Opera is simple and smooth, the melody is lively and brisk, with rich expressive power, and is known for being authentic and lively. Representatives of Huangmei Opera include Yan Fengying, Ma Lan, Han Zaifen, etc. (<https://cnki.net>)

### 3.1.4 Ping Opera

Ping Opera was formed in Tangshan, China in 1909. It became popular in Northeast China around the 1920s. Most of Ping Opera's stories are about educating people not to do bad things and to be a kind person. It reflects social reality and the form of singing is simple. Easy to understand, Ping Opera is still popular in Hebei and Beijing. Its representatives include Xin Fengxia, Wei Rongyuan, etc. (<https://baike.so.com/>)

### 3.1.5 Henan Opera

Henan Opera, which was produced in the late Ming and early Qing dynasties, was initially dominated by a cappella. Its singing voice is sonorous, clear, and good at expressing the inner feelings of the characters. With its high degree of artistry, it is deeply loved by the people, so it develops very rapidly. The musical accompaniment of Henan opera is beaten with Zaomu clappers, so people called Henan Opera Henan Opera a long time ago. Representative figures of Henan opera include Chen Suzhen, Chang Xiangyu, Ma Jinfeng, etc. (<https://cnki.net>)

## 3.2 Ensemble and performance of Chinese Opera

Chinese opera musical instruments are divided into two parts: orchestra and percussion. Orchestral instruments include the erhu, flute, suona, etc. These instruments mainly sing with accompaniment. Percussion instruments include gongs, drums, clappers, etc. These instruments are mainly used to set off the actions of actors and enhance the atmosphere.

The performance of Chinese opera is based on singing, reading, doing, and playing, combining various elements such as performance, singing, dancing, music, and martial arts.

#### **4. Theories used in this study**

##### 4.1 Western Music Theory

The research method of Chinese music theory first began with the discussion and introduction of Western ethnomusicology by many music pioneers. Some Chinese musicians have successively brought back the methods of Western music theory research, bringing the research and development of Chinese music into a whole new field.

Generally speaking, the music theme is the most distinctive and superior in music. It expresses a complete musical thought and is the core of the music. Music analysis is a comprehensive analysis of various factors such as harmony, polyphony, music structure, orchestration, theme melody, pattern, and rhythm in music works in Western music research. (Liu , 2010)

##### 4.2 Chinese Traditional Music Theory

Ethnomusicology is a theoretical theory. In the atmosphere of folk national music, through the full integration of national musicians, the theorizing of national music can ensure that national music culture can be inherited and promoted in the long river of history.

Professor Zhu Hengfu of Shanghai University in China said in his speech, “Chinese opera has had the names “Baixi” and “Zaju” in the history of performing arts. “Baixi” and “Zaju” mean the same within a period of a stage performance, various performing arts such as singing, dancing, martial arts, acrobatics are presented. China calls this variety “Miscellaneous”. After the formation of the Song Dynasty, opera was a pure drama, but their performance techniques are still “miscellaneous.” The audience can hear beautiful singing, humorous jokes, narrations, and see beautiful dances, difficult martial arts acrobatics, and vivid performances in Chinese opera. The performance forms are highly integrated. (Zhu Hengfu,2012)

#### **5. Documents and research on China Opera**

For example, Sun Hui (2018)’s China Opera: Current Situation and prospects of development and Luo Zhou (2020)’s research on Chinese opera, the two articles mentioned: Chinese Opera is broad and profound. As the crystallization of Chinese national culture, people should pass on this art smoothly, so that Chinese Opera art can be known to more posterity. The history of opera is brilliant and splendid, and it has a very important position in the history of world

drama. From ancient Yuan opera to modern Peking Opera and Henan Opera, these are all forms of expression of Chinese Opera.

But at present, there are two opposing views in the field of opera: one holds that the artistic features of the traditional opera should be kept intact, while the other holds that contemporary artistic elements should be boldly absorbed, let the traditional opera into the contemporary consciousness, both the content and the form, we have to carry out a greater transformation. Now, these two views coexist and often collide, so in the course of the development of China Opera how do we better solve this problem to let China Opera get better dissemination and protection. That's the problem we're facing right now. (Sun hui,2018)

Henan Opera, as an important part of Chinese traditional opera music, has a very important artistic appreciation value and research value. Henan, as a cohesive place of Central Plain culture, the cultural value of Henan Opera is much stronger than imagined. However, under the background of the quickening pace of modern life, people's lifestyles and entertainment styles have changed greatly. From children to middle-aged people, their understanding of opera has become very little, Henan local opera has also been a great impact on modern pop music and Internet entertainment. (Luo zhou,2020)

In normal life, we can see that almost all young people like nowadays are some popular music. Few people can sing a sentence or two of opera music. Younger children cannot distinguish the types of opera in various places. Henan opera music is an ancient music culture. If you want to catch up with the times and advance with the times in this age of rapid technology, you must innovate and reform, learn to absorb new and excellent music Use and learn to use new media technology to improve the communication ability and artistic taste of Henan Opera, use diversified development methods, keep in line with the times, and truly penetrate people's lives. All these can make opera music quickly in a short period time. An efficient way to spread.

Although these two articles mentioned the current situation of Henan Opera and rescue methods, but not enough in-depth. Therefore, we also need to go deep into the investigation and analysis, and then combined with the actual situation of China to carry out analysis to put forward reasonable recommendations.

## **6. Research on the significance of the inheritance and development of Henan Opera**

National intangible cultural heritage masterpieces-"Filmization of Henan Opera", "National Treasure", etc. These books and TV programs mainly provide a relatively complete description of Henan Opera's singing, melody, cultural background and other information integration, cultural soil, and art forms and generalization. The academic research on Henan opera mainly focuses on the music itself, inheritance and protection, and the research also stays at the description and summary level. However, although the research on the protection and inheritance of Henan opera is small and not deep, it still provides for the writing of this article. A very precious document. (Zhang Yizhuo,2018)

## **7. Research on Intangible Cultural Heritage**

Intangible cultural heritage refers to all kinds of traditional cultural expressions that exist in intangible form and are closely related to the lives of the masses and inherited from generation to generation. Intangible cultural heritage is a human-oriented living cultural heritage. It emphasizes human-centric skills, experience, and spirit, highlights intangible attributes, and emphasizes the quality that does not depend on material forms. (<https://baike.so.com>)

In conducting this research The researcher used all of the data that I found as data for comparative analysis to obtain research results that answer my objectives as possible as well as being able to present research results to the point.

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH METHODS

#### 1. Research Scope

##### 1.1 Research Content

I studied the development of Henan Opera and analyzed the characteristic of Henan Opera

##### 1.2 The Maps of Selected Institutes

Henan Province referred to as "Yu", is a provincial administrative region of the People's Republic of China. Zhengzhou, the provincial capital, is located in central China. Henan is bounded between 31°23'-36°22' north latitude and 110°21'-116°39' east longitude. The terrain of Henan Province is high in the west and low in the east, bordering Anhui and Shandong in the east, Hebei and Shanxi in the north, Shaanxi in the west, and Hubei in the south.



Figure 1 Location

of Henan Province

Retrieved from : <https://stock.tuchong.com/>

#### 2. Research methods

This article focuses on fieldwork, mainly using fieldwork and other methods.

##### 2.1 Field research

This research conducted field investigations, interviewed Henan opera actors, grasped relevant information and communication methods of Henan opera performances, and understood

their writing and singing. In addition, it is necessary to interview relevant experts and scholars to understand their opinions on relevant research fields and to better grasp the accuracy of Henan opera research.

## 2.2 Selection area

### Kaifeng Henan Opera Troupe

The reason why I chose this place as my research location is because this society is very famous and has a long history. There are many outstanding Henan opera actors in society.

## 2.3 Selection example

I set the criteria for the selection of the opera family. To be studied as follows:

- 1) A famous group is known by people in this city.
- 2) Performed for at least 10 years.
- 3) It is located in this city.

So I got 3 Key informants.

The three informants selected for this investigation are mainly the inheritors of national intangible culture and the inheritors of opera culture. They have high academic attainments in Henan opera singing and the study of opera culture. They provided me with a lot of data and information and provided me with a great reference value for my thesis.

1)Wang Junli



Figure 2Wang Junli

Retrieved from <http://www.xijucn.com/>

Henan opera actor Wang Junli, female, was born in Shandong, China in 1968 and lives in Qi County, Henan Province. She is a national first-class actor. She is also a member of the Chinese Dramatists Association, a member of the Chinese Minority Dramatists Association, a member of the Henan Opera Society, and a member of the Corps Dramatists Association. She won the first prize of the Outstanding Performance Award at the 7th China Drama Festival and is a very outstanding Henan opera actor. Her teacher is Mr. Niu Shuxian, a famous Henan opera performer in Henan. Wang Junli sings very beautifully, lively and lively. She has starred in many large-scale Henan operas. At the same time, she has been in charge of the dissemination and protection of Henan opera.

2)Liu Zhonghe





Figure 3 Liu Zhonghe

Retrieved from <https://image.so.com/view>

Liu Zhonghe, male, born in 1943, a native of Shangqiu, Henan Province, is a national first-class actor. He has been very fond of Chinese opera culture since he was a child. He often followed his grandfather to listen to operas and wanted to become an opera actor. After his hard work, he was finally admitted to Henan Opera School in 1957.

In 1980, the opera Liu Zhonghe sang was recorded and distributed nationwide and Southeast Asian countries. Liu Zhonghe's singing is passionate, high-pitched, vigorous, natural and smooth, and he is especially good at playing the image of the emperor in traditional plays. He is now the leader of the Henan Dramatists Association and the head of the Henan Opera Troupe of Shangqiu City.

### 3) Li Pengjie



Figure 4 Li Pengjie

Retrieved from <https://fanyi.so.com/>

Li Pengjie, male, young actor in Henan opera, was born in 1994 in Anyang, Henan. Since childhood, he especially liked the art of Henan Opera. Through self-study, he participated in Henan TV's program "Pear Garden Spring" and won the championship in 2006, becoming the most dazzling Henan Opera star of the year. He first played the role of a young female and changed to a male voice after the change of voice. From 2009 to 2013, he studied in the Performance Department of the Chinese Academy of Traditional Chinese Opera. After graduation, he was introduced to the Henan Yu Theater Youth Troupe as an outstanding talent. In his work, he has also received praise from many Henan opera performing artists.

#### 2.4 Make Planning to Fieldwork

1) Collect data through my observations in colleges and universities, listening to lectures, interviews with two professors of Henan Academy of Chinese Opera, and field surveys.

2) Collecting data on CNKI and various official websites

3) Through investigation and research, make reasonable suggestions for the development of Henan Opera.

### 3. Data Analysis

I analysis follow up on my objective I use descriptive to give detail of my results.

## CHAPTER IV

### The Current Situation and Development of Henan Opera

This chapter mainly elaborates on the first research objective. I will analyze the current situation of Henan Opera and how we can make Henan Opera better develop in the future. The specific content includes the following main points.

#### 1. The Current Situation of Henan Opera

Drama script is drama literature. As a unique literary style, drama literature has been loved by readers since its birth. Drama literature is different from other literature in that it is a style specially designed by playwrights for theatrical stage performances. The literary creation of Henan Opera began in the 1950s and 1960s. Not long after the founding of the People's Republic of China, the liberated theater workers were moved by the changes of the times and radiated their creative enthusiasm. They picked up the pen in their hands and started real drama and literature creation, and a large number of popular drama literature emerged. However, Because script creation requires a lot of time and energy and is not paid, in recent years, only some retired drama workers still insist on creating, so the output of excellent scripts is small.

The existing Henan Opera Troupe in Kaifeng City began to appear around the 1950s. At the beginning of its establishment, the troupe served political propaganda. In the past few decades, these troupes have experienced ups and downs. Some troupes have tried to take the corporate route, some have experienced interruptions, and some have completely disappeared.

Today, under the impact of various entertainment elements, people's amateur cultural life, material civilization, and spiritual civilization have become more and more colorful. Neither the entertainment nor the social education function of Chinese opera can be better developed. As a result, Henan Opera gradually faded out of the public's field of vision. First, it lost its vitality and vitality, and more importantly, the relevant departments lacked attention and did not have corresponding protective measures. Especially young people nowadays, most of them don't like opera. The result of the vicious circle is that the Henan Opera culture is gradually depressed.

##### 1.1 Problems faced by Henan Opera

Henan Opera gradually faded out of the public's field of vision. First, it lost its energy and vitality, and more importantly, the relevant departments lacked attention and did not have corresponding protective measures. Especially young people, most of them don't like opera. The result of the vicious circle is that the Henan Opera culture is gradually depressed. These problems faced are mainly reflected in the following aspects:

1) The theme of Henan Opera is single

Since the reform and opening up, the continuous intrusion of foreign culture has spawned many new cultural activities. The people's entertainment activities have also become rich and colorful, and the rapid pace of life makes the slow pace of Henan Opera seem incompatible with this society. Faced with increasing pressures, the new generation of young people have to choose some more relaxed and simple entertainment arts to enrich their spiritual needs. However, the ancient art of Henan Opera remains in a single form of performance. Due to its slow pace and outdated plot, few young people like it. This requires Henan Opera to make some adjustments and innovations in the subject matter, and choose some themes preferred by the young people for creation to attract them.

2) Different levels of professional actors

As far as the current actor group is concerned, although most Henan Opera actors have great enthusiasm for Henan Opera, several issues that are more prominent:

First, the professional level of actors needs to be improved. This reflects that the inheritance of our Henan Opera is in this era of multiculturalism. If the cultural and professional level cannot reach a high level, the cultural heritage of Henan Opera will be difficult to reflect. At the same time, the innovation of Henan Opera, the market research and the research of Henan Opera and the development of culture will have great restrictions.

The second is the aging of actors. The direct consequence is that the team's age structure is unreasonable, the profession is incomplete, the lineup is uneven, and the performance is incomplete. Sometimes even if a large-scale repertoire can be put on the stage, it is improvised and cannot achieve a complete performance effect. It is not attractive to the audience, it has no vitality for the troupe, and lacks integrity for the artistic performance.

The third is the serious brain drain. The development of opera is inseparable from people, but the downturn in the opera market has led to a serious loss of talents, and this

phenomenon exists in all troupes, which is detrimental to the development of Henan Opera. On the other hand, the training of Henan Opera talents is not enough, and the quality of Henan Opera talents is uneven. These are all important factors affecting the development of Henan Opera.

### 3) The Audience of Henan Opera

The progress of society and the development of the Internet have led to a world of difference between the entertainment and aesthetic tastes of young people and the older generation. From September 18 to 28 in 2011, the second Chinese Henan Opera Festival just came to an end. A random check was conducted on the audiences in six theaters of Henan Opera during the performance. It was found that the middle-aged and elderly people over 40 accounted for 85%, 30-40-year-old accounted for 12%, some of which were due to the needs of drama teaching, and the 30-year-old accounted for 3%, which means that the audience of Henan opera is middle-aged and elderly. With time, the elderly audience group is gradually shrinking. How to attract more young people to understand and like Henan opera has become a necessary issue for its development.

#### Lack of innovation

Quite a several Henan opera troupes lack a certain sense of innovation. Innovation mainly involves management mechanisms, market adaptability and the creation of works. The most important thing is the innovation of works. The new drama is used as an indicator to measure the strength of the troupe, due to the influence of Henan opera talents and funds. The lack of ability to interpret new dramas will not improve the market competitiveness of Henan opera in the long run.

#### The government's lack of attention to Henan Opera

Henan Opera is a characteristic of Henan. But as a native of Henan person, many people have very little understanding of Henan Opera. In the final analysis, the government does not pay enough attention to it, and its propaganda power is too low. Living in an information age, everything depends on propaganda to enter the public's attention. At present, most troupes have few professional performances due to a lack of audience. Some troupes have financial constraints, and some of their musical instruments and costumes are even worn out. Its quality is even more difficult to guarantee when the rehearsal hall and rehearsal equipment cannot meet the requirements. In the general environment of sluggish opera culture, many Henan theaters are faced with many difficulties due to the low-performance market and the serious shortage of government funding for opera.

## 2. The development of Henan Opera

The development of Henan opera is an integral part of the development of contemporary Chinese opera. The participation of literati and writers has enabled Henan Opera to maintain its distinctive folk characteristics while also improving its cultural taste, providing a model for contemporary opera creation. During this period, Henan Opera has experienced three stages of development.

### 2.1 Development of Henan Opera during the Republic of China

1) In the 1920s and 1930s, that is, in the early Republic of China, although Henan Opera had been widely disseminated, there was no more standardized system. Mainly manifested in the following aspects. First, the cultural qualities of artists are generally low, illiterate, illiterate, have no correct understanding of opera, and the art inheritance is basically based on oral teaching, everything is carried out in accordance with the performance and singing of the master, lack of reform and progress. Second, the content of the performance is relatively rough, and it is inevitable that there will be some low-level interesting things in it. At that time, the so-called performance group was restricted by many factors, and there was no screenwriter and director, resulting in a messy performance and no literary character, but it was precisely this form that was liked by the people. Third, the performance conditions are generally poor, the stage is simple, the costumes are worn, the makeup is rough, and the beauty is lacking.

2) In the middle and late period of the Republic of China, the development of Henan Opera entered a period of rapid development, mainly due to the emergence of some intellectuals and female actors. The Henan Opera at this stage presents the following characteristics. First, the script of Henan Opera began to appear. In the early days, Henan opera practitioners generally had a low cultural level, and many actors were illiterate. In the middle and late Republic of China, due to the participation of intellectuals, Henan Opera began to have scripts. There were many excellent works at that time. Second, the establishment of a formal theater company. In the past, troupes performed in the fields and on the streets, crowded with people and no sound equipment. Under this background, it was difficult to improve the artistry of performances. Therefore, with the support of the government, the first formal theater in Henan Province was established in Kaifeng, which ended the history of Henan opera without a fixed venue. Third, a large number of outstanding actors

and repertoires appeared. As intellectuals entered the Liyuan world, Henan opera performances began to be standardized, and their popularity became higher and higher. The social status of its actors has also improved, and professional artists have begun to appear instead of wandering artists forced by life.

## 2.2 The development of Henan Opera after the founding of New China

The 17-year period from 1949 to 1966 was the second stage of the modern development of Henan Opera. The development of Henan Opera during this period was closely related to the country's policies on the reform of opera. How to strengthen the function of opera to reflect reality and to absorb many excellent elements is the urgent requirement for opera performance in the new era. So the cultural department put forward the work of sorting out and adapting Henan Opera. The richness and diversification of the content and form of opera have satisfied the entertainment and appreciation needs of the masses, and the development of opera has entered a lively and prosperous period. This cultural policy has directly promoted the development of Henan Opera. Although there are twists and turns, Henan Opera has achieved good results with the unremitting efforts of some playwrights. Especially "Mu Guiying takes command" and "Mulan" have become the business cards of Henan culture, winning national honors for Henan Opera.

## 2.3 The development of Henan Opera in the modern era

After the new period in 2000, the modern development of Henan Opera has entered a new historical stage. The reform and opening policy brought about the emancipation of the mind, expressing cultural feelings in entertainment, exploring inheritance and innovation, and keeping up with the pace of the times are the issues facing the development of opera at that time.

Different from the past, the reform and development of Henan Opera in this period was caused by the development and changes of social life and successfully integrated into the development of national opera. It is worth noting that the script creation of playwrights has led the reform and development of Henan opera into a major landscape. The influence of Henan opera is often inseparable from the script creation of excellent playwrights. The script provides a solid foundation for the performance. The success of a script often means that a drama is more than half successful. Whether it is adapting traditional dramas, new historical dramas, or creating real-life modern dramas, playwrights keep pace with the times, do not stick to a single ideological concept, think about and choose from many aspects of life, and constantly explore. The creation of Henan

opera presents a different form from the traditional in content and form. It has cultivated and brought up a new generation of actors and formed new performance characteristics. At the same time, in order to adapt to the changes in the audience's aesthetic taste, Henan Opera in this period often draws on the stage performance methods of other performing arts. In terms of singing, while maintaining the bold and rugged singing characteristics of Henan Opera, it also constantly creates new opera performance formulas, which not only maintains the connection with tradition but also strives to form new performance characteristics. Although this reform has caused a lot of controversies, it also shows the exploration and efforts made by contemporary drama artists to adapt to the new situation.

After many trials and hardships, Henan Opera has undergone hundreds of years of evolution. From a single artist who teaches himself and sings to a series of opera disciplines, Henan Opera has grown from nothing, from general to complex, from single pleasing to later culture. The media has gone through several years of vicissitudes and great changes. Henan cannot do without Henan Opera, and the development of Henan Opera cannot do without Henan.



## CHAPTER V

### The characteristic of Henan Opera

The Henan opera "Mulan" can be said to be an opera that everyone knows. In this chapter, I choose Hua Mulan as the object of my analysis. There are two main reasons: the first is because of the recommendation of the inheritor, and the second is because Hua Mulan is an ancient Chinese heroine. She is famous at home and abroad for her female disguised as a man and her father attacking the enemy.

In the study of this characteristic, the researcher categorizes 3 topics to study points as follows:

- 1) The Characteristic of Singing
- 2) The Characteristic of Music
- 3) The Characteristic of Performance

#### 1. The characteristic of Singing

##### 1.1. The characteristics of the singing style of Henan opera

The characteristics of the singing style of Henan opera can be roughly divided into four basic categories. They are:

The single-chamber style, is the synchronization of language and singing, regardless of the length of the sentence, a whole sentence of lyrics can be done in one go. The lyric, narrative and singing vocals are the objects that the single-cavity style is good at.

The two-chamber style divides a lyric into two parts and completes it with one lyric. The rhythm and movement of natural language are broken and different styles of artistic processing are performed. The artistic treatment here means that the methods of segmentation are different and the categories are similar. In Henan Opera, the two-chamber style is the same as the single-chamber style, which is a kind of high-use and large-volume style, which echoes the single-chamber style in the singing process.

The three-chamber style, which divides a sentence into three parts, or adds two additional sentences to the lyrics, or repeats a sentence based on the two-chamber style. The single-chamber style is responsible for singing the main sentence section.

The multi-chamber style refers to more than the three-chamber style. In addition to the use of the two-chamber and the three-chamber singing, it also adds other elements. It is characterized by lively form, dexterity and changeability, strong drama, and loose structure. But on the whole, the amount used in singing is not much.

### 1.2 The Characteristics of the Use of the Breath of Henan Opera

Due to the influence of the geographical environment and the humanistic characteristics of Henan, the vocal tone of Henan Opera has always been high-pitched, bright, clear, and vigorous since its birth. Because the actors and fans who like Henan opera know that the sound of faint, swaying, weak and non-penetrating sound cannot express the vocal characteristics of Henan Opera. Therefore, Henan Opera actors pay attention to strengthening the breath training, especially outstanding Henan Opera actors performing. The breath that is inhaled is large and deep, and the breath that is exhaled is strong and impulsive. These characteristics in Henan Opera coincide with the use of breath in national vocal music.

For example, when the Henan Opera "Mulan" is sung, the voice is mellow and loud, and the real voice and false voice cooperate with each other to sing. Its vocal music style is subtle, emotional, and delicate, with melodious vibes. Generally speaking, in this scene, the actors have achieved steady utterance, peaceful speaking speed, and a decent contrast between strengths and weaknesses in luck, making the singing sound clean and tidy.

## 2. The Characteristic of Music

### 2.1 Music melody

The musical melody of Henan Opera is smooth, and the artistic style can be bold and violent, but also soft and comfortable. The singing melody conforms to the phonetic intonation of Henan dialect and is easy to understand, thus forming a unique interval, such as the combined use of the third degree and the minor second, and the combined use of the pure fourth and the minor third, often accompanied by the sixth and fourth. Jump into the degree, pure fifth degree and minor seventh degree. The tonic falls on 1, the range is "5-i", and the basic melody line performed is

5i655321. In Henan opera music, #4 is also an important color tone. It is often used as an auxiliary tone between 5 and 5, between 6 and 5, and between 2 and 5.

The image shows a musical score for Henan opera. It consists of four staves of music in a 2/4 time signature. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: hua mu lan xiu da da. The second staff starts at measure 10 and continues the melody. The third staff starts at measure 18 and includes the lyrics: zun yi sheng he yuan shuai. The fourth staff starts at measure 23 and includes the lyrics: xi ting duan xiang zhen qian de hua mu li. The music features various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests.

Figure 5 is selected from Henan opera *Hua Mulan*

The main idea of lyrics :

This lyric mainly talk about that after the war, Mulan left the barracks and returned to her home, took off the boys' clothes and put on the girls' clothes again. Her comrades were stunned when they saw it, so Mulan used this drama to tell her comrades in arms that she was a girl, because her father was old and there were no other boys in the family. She did not want her father to die in the war, so she pretended to be a boy, go to the battle for his father.

From Figure 6 we can see "Mulan" that the main voice of the melody always falls on 1, and the melody is mostly strong at the beginning and end. It embodies the peculiar color of Yu Opera, which is tactful, deep, heavy and protracted.

## 2.2 Music rhythm

In Chinese opera, the general term for beat and rhythm is called “banshi”. In Henan Opera "Mulan", the most common is the two-eighth board, which refers to 16 bars, 2/4 beats. For example, in Figure 7 of Henan Opera, because Hua Mulan is a man in disguise, the rhythm is relatively simple, mostly composed of eighth notes. The melody lines in the play are not very

different, but it is worth noting that every short accompaniment is added to the sentence, and this kind of accompaniment is relatively rare in Henan opera. This processing not only makes the melody more beautiful and smooth but also makes the mood more coherent, making it more convincing, in terms of rhythm. It also formed a sharp contrast, creatively developed the "two-eight board", which played an extremely important role in shaping the masculinity of Hua Mulan.

qian zhen wan xian ke dou shi ta men lian na!

普例 1-5

zhe nv zi men na yi dian er bu ru er nan

ke ke

Figure 6 is an excerpt from "Mulan"

The main idea of lyrics :

Hua Mulan chatted with the soldiers on the way to the battlefield. One of them, Liu Zhong, said that men do all the hardships in the world, and women do not need to do anything at home. As a woman, Hua Mulan naturally knew that it was not easy for women to be at home, so she persuaded Liu Zhong with reason and let everyone know that it was not easy for women.

In terms of rhythm, this piece of music also uses a half-talk and half-sing syntax, and the colloquial five-character singing method is used in many places, which makes it closer to life, the rhythm is more compact, and it sounds straightforward and convincing.

### 2.3 Music tunes

In Henan opera music, the most used are the Chinese national modes, “Gong” mode and “Zhi” mode. We can see from this snippet in Figure 8, in the four-sentence singing, the first two sentences fall on the 1, which is the “Gong” mode, the tune is deep and stretched, and the last two sentences fall on the 5, it is the “Zhi” mode, high and excited, this The transcript expresses Hua Mulan's desire for her parents to live a long life.



Figure 7 is an excerpt from "Mulan"

The main idea of lyrics :

This is a transcript that Hua Mulan sang when weaving in the room. Daddy's illness has improved in the past few days. Mulan is very happy. She is weaving in the room and is preparing to make new clothes for her parents, praying for their parents to live long. This section meticulously portrays the image of Hua Mulan as a hardworking and filial rural girl.

### 3. The Characteristic of Performance

The Henan opera "Mulan" is mainly composed of six themes. The musical theme of the first paragraph is gradually unfolded in the magnificent symphony. Afterward, Mulan sits by the window and narrates, praying for her parents to live a long life. The second part of the music describes Hua Mulan's sad mood after learning that her elderly father is about to go to the battlefield. Then she figured out a way and decided to fight for her father. In the third paragraph, Hua Mulan does ideological work for her parents and rushes to the battlefield after seeking their consent. The theme of the fourth paragraph is that Hua Mulan met a complaining companion on the road, so Mulan firmly explained the truth to him. At this time, the music rhythm became more rapid, and the melody had a strong drama. In the fifth paragraph, Hua Mulan went to the battlefield to kill the enemy bravely and captured the enemy's leader. The victory of the war highlighted Hua Mulan's brave and passionate character. In the sixth paragraph, Mulan went home and put on women's clothing. His partner came to visit Mulan, and then he realized that Mulan turned out to be a girl.

Performance is very important in opera singing. The combination of performance and singing is a tradition of Chinese opera art and an important feature of Henan opera singing art. Any opera art is a synthesis of many factors of literature and art, using stage actions and musical language to interpret stories, shape images, and express ideas. Actions and martial arts are two methods of stage performances in Chinese opera. Through their performances on stage, actors combine the audience's hearing and vision, understand the combination of character images and emotional connotations, and move their hearts.

After Mulan joined the army, her role was to be a boy. On the battlefield, Mulan walked proudly, revealing the pride that women, like men, can go to battle to kill the enemy. During the singing, a series of movements such as holding fists, waving hands, shaking the body, fully express the masculine spirit in Mulan's bones.

## CHAPTER VI

### Conclusion Discussion and Suggestion

#### 1. Conclusion

This article takes Henan Henan Opera as the research object, takes inheritance and protection as the starting point, and selects Henan Henan Opera "Mulan" as an example. The research conclusions mainly include the following aspects:

1) As Henan's cultural heritage, Henan Opera has different characteristics from other art forms in terms of music, singing and performance.

2) In the long history of development, Henan Opera has also undergone many reforms and evolutions, which are mainly divided into three stages. In these three stages, Henan Opera has been continuously perfected and enriched its connotation and meaning.

3) The development of Henan Opera has gone through ups and downs several times. Until now, Henan Opera has gradually embarked on the international stage. However, in the new era, Henan Opera is also facing new problems. Under the impact of more and more popular music and modern music trends, how can Henan Opera survive the numerous competitions and challenges, it is a problem that we need to study.

#### 2. Discussion

Henan Opera is a typical representative of Henan folk music, and its development has a history of more than two hundred years. Of course, whether it is Henan Henan Opera or the Beijing Opera that we are familiar with, they face the same problems in development and protection. To protect and develop the traditional culture of Henan Opera, we must take some measures to change the status quo of Henan Opera:

1) Some adjustments and innovations are needed in the themes of Henan opera, and some themes preferred by the young people are selected for creation.

2) For the development of Henan Opera, in the absence of staff, the theater should train new talents.

3)It is necessary to go deep into colleges, primary and secondary schools and communities to carry out activities such as the introduction of opera art into campus to promote and popularize Henan Opera, and continuously cultivate and accumulate the audience of Henan Opera.

### **3. Suggestion**

3.1 There should be studies in different areas.

3.2 Other opera performances should be studied in order to compare the information.

3.3 There should be an in-depth analysis of the relationship between music and performance.



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## Appendix

### Interview Record

1.Time

June 2020 to November 2020

2.Site

Kaifeng City, Henan Province

Name	Question	Results
Zhangtao	Do you usually listen to Henan opera? 2. Can you sing Henan opera? 3. What is the name of the Henan opera that you often listen to or can sing? 4. How many Henan operas can you sing? 5. How did you learn Henan Opera? 6. Will you continue to inherit and protect the Henan opera music? 7. What can you do to protect Henan opera?	1. yes  2. yes 3. “Muguiyingguashuai”  4. 3  Learn via TV or radio Yes I can participate in Henan Opera performances and promote Henan Opera to people
Li yunfeng	Do you usually listen to Henan opera? Can you sing Henan opera? 3. What is the name of the Henan opera that you often listen to or can sing? 4. How many Henan operas can you sing? 5. How did you learn Henan Opera? 6. Will you continue to inherit and protect the Henan opera music?	1. yes 2. No 3. “Mulan”  4. No 5.No studying

	7. What can you do to protect Henan opera?	Yes I can learn Henan opera and show it to my classmates at school
Liu huilan	Do you usually listen to Henan opera? 2. Can you sing Henan opera? 3. What is the name of the Henan opera that you often listen to or can sing? 4. How many Henan operas can you sing? 5. How did you learn Henan Opera? 6. Will you continue to inherit and protect the Henan opera music? 7. What can you do to protect Henan opera?	1. yes  2. yes 3. “Chaoyanggou”  4. 7  Find a teacher to learn Yes 7.I can form a Henan Opera interest group to attract people to participate
Ma chunyan	Do you usually listen to Henan opera? 2. Can you sing Henan opera? 3. What is the name of the Henan opera that you often listen to or can sing? 4. How many Henan operas can you sing? 5. How did you learn Henan Opera? 6. Will you continue to inherit and protect the Henan opera music? 7. What can you do to protect Henan opera?	1. yes  2. yes 3. “Mulan”  4. 5  Learn via TV or radio Yes 7.I can participate in Henan Opera performances and promote Henan Opera to people

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**NAME**

Miao Wang

