



The Vocal style of Yue Opera in Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province, China

Ying Zhao

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for  
degree of Master of Music in Music

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### ABSTRACT

This research studies the research methods of musicology, Chinese Opera and linguistics, collects and analyzes statistical data through the informant's field. There are two research objectives: 1) 1 To study the development of Yue Opera in Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province, China.2) To analyze the vocal style of Yue Opera in Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province, China.

The results of this paper are as follows: 1) the development of Yue opera is divided into 5 periods:Origin period of Yue Opera (before 1906), early development of Yue Opera (1906-1922), the middle stage of Yue Opera development (1922-1938), mature period of Yue Opera development (1938-1949), flourishing period of Yue Opera (1949-2022).2) The vocal style of Yue opera is divided into 2 kinds:The vocal style of the male role.This vocal style has distinct characteristics, smooth singing and rich feelings. The vocal style of the female role.This vocal style of is graceful, clear words, especially in singing are very attention to pronunciation, the use of a lot of excellent singing skills.

**Keyword :** Yue Opera, Development, Vocal style, Male and female roles, Shaoxing Zhejiang province

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Finished 2 years of studying at MSU. MSU has completed two years of study. In these two years, I learned a lot of new knowledge. During my study in MSU, I will continue to study the development, vocal style and inheritance of traditional opera in the future.

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# Chapter I

## Introduction

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

Yue Opera is the second largest opera in China, known as the second National opera, and is also known as "the most widely spread local opera", known as "Chinese opera" abroad. Yue Opera is one of the five major Chinese opera genres. Originated in Shaoxing, Zhejiang province, prospered in the whole country, spread to the world. Yue Opera is mainly sung, and its tunes are lyrical. The voice is beautiful, the performance is real and moving. Yue Opera is mainly popular in: Shanghai, Zhejiang, Jiangsu and other southern China. Yue Opera is one of the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage. However, since the 1980s, Yue Opera is facing a serious decline. Therefore, preservation and transmission of the Yue Opera are very urgent.

The development of Yue Opera has a long history and has gone through different stages. The predecessor of Yue Opera was "Singing books on the Ground". In 1906, the ground singing book was put on the stage, which went through several stages, such as little song Class, Shaoxing Literary Drama male class, Shaoxing Literary Drama female class, and shaoxing Opera female. It developed into a local opera with national influence from Zhejiang to Shanghai. The first time it was called "Yue Opera" was on September 17, 1925. The troupe performing in Small World Amusement Park was called "Yue Opera" in the advertisement of newspaper for the first time. The Yue Opera originated in Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province, which is a magical land with beautiful mountains and beautiful waters and a long history. It is a travel place for the ancient and modern celebrity. Because of this environment, many talents emerged and rich folk culture accumulated, which provided a deep foundation and fertile soil for the birth of The Art of Shaoxing Opera. (Zhang Yin, 2004)

After the founding of New China, Yue Opera entered a period of all-round prosperity and development under the care and attention of the Party. The performances of Yue Opera spread all over the country and went to the world. It was well received by audiences in France, Germany, the United States, The Soviet Union, Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and other European and American countries, as well as in

Korea, Japan, Southeast Asia, Hong Kong and Macao, and attracted the attention of the international cultural circle and became a national major opera. During this period, new plays proliferated and hundreds of plays made their way onto screens and screens. A large number of young talents emerge in The Yue Opera and are active on the stage. The variety of singing styles of Yue Opera makes the art of Yue Opera more colorful. Under the guidance of the Party's policy on literature and art, and with the efforts of the artists, Yue Opera has won the popularity of the masses of audiences and promoted its own prosperity and development with its sincere and delicate performances, euphemistic and pleasant singing and beautiful lyrical style. (Ying Zhiliang, 2002)

The singing style of Yue Opera has its own characteristics and has research value. In the singing method, through the change of vocalization, timbre and embellish cavity decoration, the formation of different charm beauty. It reflects the artistic characteristics of different schools of singing through the rise and fall of the key, the drawl between and at the end of the sentence, and the constant repetition and change of the melody. In the organization of tunes, each faction has its own distinctive techniques and skills. Through the change of melody and rhythm, form their own basic style. (Xu Jianxin, 2006)

The genres of Yue opera include various artistic factors such as drama, singing, reading and doing, which are reflected in the typical artistic images created. Among them, the singing style has the strongest originality, the most prominent characteristics and the biggest influence, so people call it genre singing style. In 1942, Yuan Xuefen, a famous Yueju opera performing artist, made a comprehensive reform of traditional Yueju opera, which was called "New Yue Opera". The new Yue Opera has changed the lively and jumping singing style of the former "small song class" into a plaintive and soothing singing tune, namely "chi diao tune" and "xian-xia tune", pushing the singing art of The Yue Opera to a new stage. All genres of Yue Opera are developed and enriched on the basis of these two tones. (Wang Xiaoyan, 2006)

In conclusion, Yue Opera has a history of more than one hundred years since it was performed in Shaoxing, Zhejiang province in 1906. In this century, it has grown from an insignificant folk drama to the second largest drama in China. As a local opera based on dialect, it is not easy. Therefore, the study of the development of Yue opera can better understand the culture of Yue opera. Secondly, Yue Opera is a popular opera art, especially the singing style which is widely sung. Singing has laid a solid foundation for

the centennial glory of Yue Opera. Therefore, the study of the singing art of Yue Opera and the understanding of the characteristics and types of singing can provide a broader vision for the singing of Yue Opera. In particular, it is of great significance to develop the excellent traditional culture of Yue Opera.

As mentioned above, the development of Yue Opera has a long history and its singing style has its own characteristics. All of these are of great research value. The researcher is therefore interested in studying the development of Yue Opera, analyzing the singing types of Yue Opera. In order to spread the excellent traditional culture of Yue Opera. At the same time, it provides insights for those who are interested in Yue opera.

## **1.2 Research Objectives**

1.2.1 To study the development of Yue Opera in Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province, China

1.2.2 To analyze the vocal style of Yue Opera in Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province, China

## **1.3 Research Questions**

1.3.1 What is the development process of Yue Opera?

1.3.2 What are the vocal style of Yue Opera?

## **1.4 Importance of Research**

1.4.1 We can know the development of Yue Opera in Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province, China

1.4.2 We can know the vocal style of Yue Opera in Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province, China

## **1.5 Definition of Terms**

1.5.1 Shaoxing refers to the location in Zhejiang province China.

1.5.2 Yue Opera Refers to a kind of traditional Chinese opera made in Shaoxing Zhejiang Province, China.

1.5.3 The development refers to the influence of society, government and cultural environment on the development history of Yue Opera. The development is roughly divided into five stages:

1.5.3.1 Origin Period of Yue Opera (before 1906)

1.5.3.2 Early development of Yue Opera(1906-1922)

1.5.3.3 The middle stage of Yue Opera (1922-1938)

1.5.3.4 Mature period of Yue Opera (1938-1949)

1.5.3.5 Flourishing Period of Yue Opera (1949-2022)

1.5.4 The vocal style of Yue Opera refers to two kinds of ways:

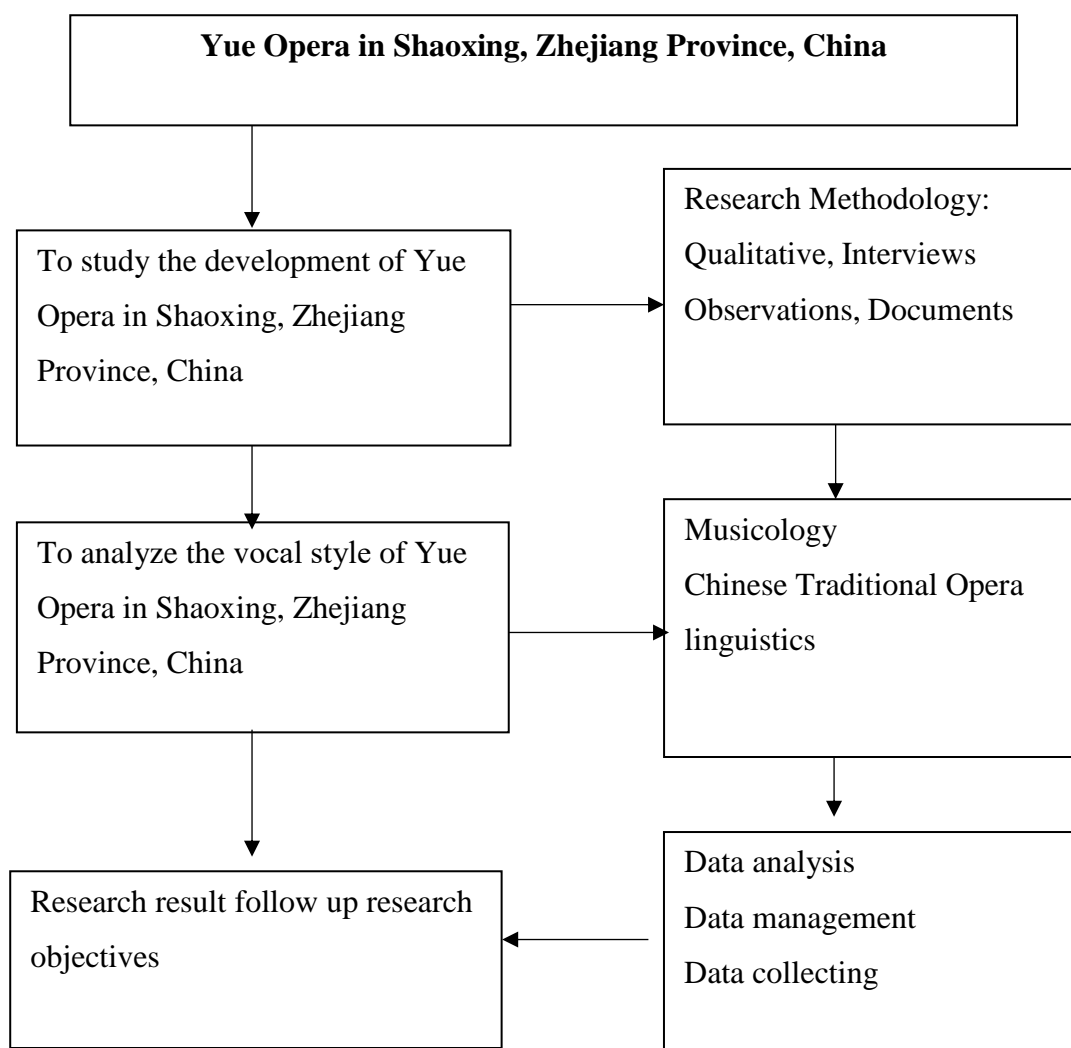
1.5.4.1 The vocal style of the male role

1.5.4.2 The vocal style of the female role

1.5.4.3 The characteristics of the vocal style of Yue Opera

## 1.6 Conceptual Framework

This dissertation uses Yue Opera as the research object. The data is mainly obtained through four research methods of Qualitative, Interviews, Observations, Documents. These data are explained by theories of musicology, Chinese Opera and linguistics.





## Chapter II

### Literature Reviews

This chapter reviews the relevant documents of Yue Opera to obtain the most comprehensive information available to be used in this research. The researcher has reviewed it according to the topic and objectives.

- 2.1 The General Knowledge of Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province, China
- 2.2 The General Knowledge of Yue Opera in China
- 2.3 The General knowledge of the vocal style of Yue Opera
- 2.4 The Types of Chinese Opera
- 2.5 The Theory Used in Research
- 2.6 Documents and Related Research

#### **2.1 The General Knowledge of Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province, China**

##### 2.1.1 The natural environment

The birthplace of Yue opera is Shaoxing area which in the east of Zhejiang Province. There was a place called Sheng county in Shaoxing area, surrounded by mountains and with the Shan River sweeping across the whole territory, Sheng county was located in the Valley basin formed by Shan River and its tributaries. Sheng County for the main river, chengtan River, Changle River, Xinchang River, Huangze River confluence. The Chengtan River is called “Xiong River” by local people, due to its large slope and rapid water flow at the bottom. Changle River, has a relatively flat bottom and gentle water flow, which is called the "Female River". After the above two rivers merged, they merged with the three major water systems of Xinchang River into Shan River south of Sheng County, and then Huangze River into Shan River, and flowed north into Cao River below the three boundaries. Shan River scenery on both sides, charming scenery, from ancient to present attracted many literati linger. The beautiful scenery of mountains and rivers has nurtured generations of beautiful and intelligent people. People honest and industrious, good at farming. The scenery is good, but life is not easy. Especially in the agricultural society, there is very little flat land in Sheng county, and some of the living materials have to be developed into mountains

and streams, which requires a long and hard struggle with nature. But it is also such natural conditions, virtually exercise people indomitable, dare to fight the spirit. (Cultural and Historical Data Committee of Shengzhou County, 2000)

Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province has a subtropical monsoon climate with four distinct seasons. In the valley basins of Sheng county, the main food crop is rice. According to the current agricultural standards, rice can be at least two crops a year in the local area, but before the 20 th century, due to the low level of cultivation, farmers planted rice and other crops, most places can only plant one season a year, the productivity level is very low, single season rice yield per mu is only 200 to 300 jin. For the farmers who depend on this harvest, it is still the most important source of food for their families in a year. So, generally speaking, no matter how far away the farmers are from home, they always return home during the busy farming season to finish the work that is most important to them. The field for the harvest, in good weather, but also can barely survive; If disaster occurs, it will be a great blow to local farmers. Farming in the fields was the main mode of production for local people, and people hummed songs while farming, which also provided the possibility for the birth of Yue Opera. (Cultural and Historical Data Committee of Shengzhou County, 2000)

### 2.1.2 Economic and social environment

At that time, Shaoxing had no decent industry and its economy was very backward. The living conditions of the laboring people were very difficult, and many surrounding areas were richer than Shaoxing. The income from working outside is much higher than that from farming at home. So many people went out to help with farm work and make a living in handicraft industry. In addition, due to the brutal killings of the Tianping Army, the population of Hangjiahu area decreased sharply, large areas of land abandoned, many villages sparsely populated. It attracted a large number of people from eastern Zhejiang to move west. This point is recorded in many books in many places today. It was because of these people's early migration to western Zhejiang and the support and encouragement of the already powerful Ningshao local people that the "little Song Class" artists came on stage for the first time. (Shengzhou County Cultural and Historical Archive, 2001)

At that time, the economy of Shaoxing was relatively backward, and people's ideology was very feudal and conservative. In the old days, women were not allowed

to go out and make a living by singing or performing operas. However, once in the conservative countryside of the countryside, women were not allowed to appear on the stage. Even if they did, they had to sit sideways to show humility, or they would be condemned or even punished. So, women had very limited options. In the general poor family, the food cannot support the whole family, so the parents send the girl to the better family as a child bride to lighten the burden. And the boy is generally not sent out, this is also a feudal society patriarchal thought of a performance. Child brides generally lead a hard life and have a low status in the in-law's family. Of course, this was after the emergence of women's Shaoxing opera. If the May 4th Movement had not liberated the mind and allowed women to act, she would probably have been trapped in the abyss of being a child bride all her life. It is because of this that the actors of the early small choir are all men. (Shengzhou County Cultural and Historical Archive, 2001)

The prevailing folk belief in eastern Zhejiang provides a broad stage for the emergence, development and spread of opera. In the villages of eastern Zhejiang, where the life of the villagers is extremely poor, it is common for a large village to have several temples. People worship the gods and hold a variety of temple fairs, where opera groups are invited to perform. Therefore, many places specially built stage some places for parties, acting. Like many places in eastern Zhejiang, there are temples and ancestral halls in every village in Shaoxing. There are only a few hundred families in this village, but there are thirteen places where people can perform, which shows that people in Shaoxing are very keen on drama performance. They have been influenced by a variety of opera culture for a long time, through which they have cultivated their interest in opera and musical sense, which plays an important role in the formation of local opera culture. (Shengzhou County Cultural and Historical Archive, 2001)

### 2.1.3 Cultural environment (arts, music and performance)

The people in Shaoxing are very artistic. In the process of labor, they created a variety of folk songs to encourage and amuse themselves. For those who farm, there are "farm folk songs", for those who raise cattle, there are "cattle folk songs", and for those who punt, there are "rocking boat ditty". Some of these ditties have become a fixed singing style and mode, and can even be composed and performed by themselves, to sing out a neighborhood story or even a relatively complete story. The local accent

and the familiar story are certainly interesting to the listener. Why do folk songs emerge endlessly in mountain villages? Why there are "tea picking folk songs", "sheep herding folk songs", "farming folk songs", I guess, the main reasons are as follows: first, to embolden. Working in the mountains, where wild animals are common, the average man is always a little timid. And singing, of course, can help. Two, to relieve boredom. Work in the mountains, most of the time only one person. Therefore, they compose their own songs and hum them for entertainment. Three, feel the scenery. The scenery in the mountains is very beautiful and spectacular, working in the beautiful environment, people can't help but have a sense of joy, through singing to express the mood. Therefore, the countryside is a good place to produce music, including the origin of many drama music comes from folk songs, and the origin of Yue Opera also comes from this. In addition, as the main auxiliary performance of opera, the existence of Shaoxing blowing and percussion bands is a very favorable condition for the birth of Yue Opera. Unable to feed themselves, many farmers turned to other industries. The band, which is often used in some folk activities or ceremonies, became a part-time occupation for many peasants. Therefore, many farmers who could play, play, and sing appeared in Shaoxing. After the birth of the little song class, many of them became opera musicians or teachers, leading the development of singing of Yue Opera to a certain extent. (Zhu haibin, 1998)

Shaoxing and surrounding places such as Xinchang, Shangyu and Yuyao had many opera performances as early as the Song and Yuan dynasties. In the Southern Song Dynasty, urban and rural opera performances in Shaoxing were already quite prosperous. Since the Ming Dynasty, the opera popular in the southern area, combined with local characteristics, gradually formed a variety of voice. At that time, there were also a lot of people who studied drama, and many of them took it as their career and performed between urban and rural areas. Judging from the geographical distribution of the areas mentioned above, we can reasonably infer that this cultural trend of advocating opera has also influenced Shaoxing, where the opera tradition has a long history. By the 19th century, many operas had been formed around Shaoxing, county. Because of the widespread custom of "social opera" in Zhejiang, many troupes often went to Shaoxing, to give performances. Some opera art has been quite mature, complete trades, skilled performance, specializing in historical stories. Teach people to

have a good moral character, the play is basically daily life anecdotes, easy to understand, very life atmosphere, loved by the local people. Therefore, the strong opera atmosphere in Zhejiang laid a foundation for the emergence of Yue Opera. (Zhu Haibin,1998)

## 2.2 The General Knowledge of Yue Opera in China

As one of the five major operas in China, Yue Opera has experienced a period of birth, development and prosperity. The original form of Yue Opera was "Landing Singing book", which is a form of rap. From 1851 to 1861, some peasants in Shengzhou began to sing the field rap, folk songs ditty and other folk songs. From 1862 to 1874, this kind of singing gradually changed from standing in front of people's houses to singing in halls and tea houses, known as "landing singing book", which was an important auxiliary means for farmers to make a living at that time. With the increasing number of artists singing books, the scope of singing books continues to expand, singing books from the ground to the stage. "Singing books on the Ground" is a folk art created by farmers. Its popularity laid a foundation for the birth of Yue Opera art. (One Hundred Years official website of Chinese Yue Opera, 2005)

In the spring of 1906, songwriters began rapping at the request of listeners on a wooden platform where several rice barrels were combined. One man in one role, first rap to sing. In the same year, the artist staged in his hometown again and achieved very good performance results. In less than a year, almost all the artists in the territory together on-stage performance, the formal formation of the troupe. A new genre was born. At that time, such a troupe was called "little song troupe". When "little song class" first appeared, it was rough and simple in art. Repertoire is singing book bibliography transplanted from, singing without stringed accompaniment, only ruler board, Benedict board. However, "little Song Class" has a strong flavor of life and bright local color, but also can attract the audience with vivid plots and funny language, showing a strong vitality. (One Hundred Years official website of Chinese Yue Opera, 2005)

Since its birth in 1906, the choir has continuously absorbed the nutrition of other operas, enriching its own development in stage performance, singing and repertoire. Performances range from rural to urban, from Shaoxing, Hangzhou, Ningbo to Shanghai. In 1921, ShenBao began to advertise "little song class as "Shaoxing Wen

Opera", which has been in use for more than ten years. At the beginning, the troupe was almost all male actors, and gradually became female actors, so it was called "Shaoxing Literary Drama Male class" and "Shaoxing Literary Drama female class". Women took the stage and were welcomed by the audience. In February 1923, the local people began to hold a women's class and achieved success, which was called the first women's class in the history of Yue Opera. It took 6 years from beginning to dissolution, which was the beginning of the rise and development of women's Yue Opera. During this period, operas had greatly improved in art. Actors sang with stringed accompaniment, and movements were dubbed by gongs and drums. The performances were equipped with special bands, and the stage performances began to become stylized. (One Hundred Years official website of Chinese Yue Opera, 2005)

In the mid 1930s, women's courses were very popular. According to the statistics in 1935, there were more than 20,000 female classes in the country with a population of 400,000, and the total number of female classes was more than 200. In 1938, the Japanese aggressors invaded Zhejiang, and a large number of people from Zhejiang went to Shanghai to take shelter and make a living, providing a large number of audiences for the female class to perform in Shanghai. As its influence grew, newspapers and advertisements began to call it "Yue Opera". The name "Yue Opera" has been further accepted by the audience, the media and actors, replacing other names. In 1942, under the initiative of a group of actors, A comprehensive reform of Yue Opera was launched. Lu Xun's Blessing was also put on the stage and Xianglin Sister was successfully staged. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, Yue Opera developed rapidly and entered a new stage. In recent decades, While the influence of Yue Opera has spread throughout the country, it has also gone abroad and won a high reputation in the world. (Xinhua net, 2019)

### **2.3 The General knowledge of the vocal style of the Yue Opera**

Opera singing art, in the long - term development also formed its own unique style and professional skills. Pay attention to the relationship between character and sound, sound and emotion in singing. It is the first requirement of singing skills to express clearly and accurately the sound and meaning of words, thus a series of singing methods and skills have been produced. Singing generally includes vocalization, articulation, gas, decorative singing and so on. Its purpose is to express the thoughts

and feelings of the characters in the drama. It is the highest aesthetic standard of singing art to sing a song and move people with emotion. Opera numerous actors, in the singing contribution, then singing genre creation. Actors and musicians in the play on the basis of the creation of genre singing, music composition of practical significance. Opera singing can be roughly divided into three types. The first is lyric singing, which is characterized by slow speed, melodies, sparse words, and strong lyricism. It is suitable to show the deep and delicate inner feelings of the characters. The second is narrative singing, which is characterized by medium speed, straight and simple tunes, simple characters and strong declamation. It is often used to tell the plot and narrate the mood of the characters. The third is the dramatic singing, which is characterized by the great fluctuation of melody, the strong change of rhythm and speed, and the arrangement of lyrics can be sparse or dense. It is often used in emotional changes and dramatic conflicts intensified occasions.

### 2.3.1 The singing genres of Yue Opera

Up to now, The Development of Yue Opera has gone through a hundred years and gradually formed its own unique style characteristics. As with all operas, singing, reciting, doing and playing are the four basic skills necessary for the actors of Yue Opera. As a drama based on auditory appreciation, singing, naturally, is the most important component. Since 1906, singing has always been the main form of performance of Yue Opera, and it is the core factor for the expression of the soul of Yue Opera. It can also be said that "good singing" is the main feature of Yue Opera. Therefore, as long as we grasp the core factor of "singing", we can have a better understanding of Yue Opera. Therefore, "singing" has great research value in Yue Opera. Especially the singing of the founder of the early traditional Yue Opera genre, with the long history and the change of times, it needs to be explored and understood by future generations. The formative period of these schools is the important formative period in the rapid development of Yue Opera. Many famous Yue opera masters were accomplished in this period, such as the famous Yue Opera "Ten Sisters", "Queen of Yue Opera" Yao Shuijuan and so on. They have made an indelible contribution to the development and emerging of Yue Opera. (Zhou Dafeng, 1981a)

Thirteen genre founders accumulated and improved continuously during performances, forming distinctive genre art, which has become the main performance

form of Yue Opera handed down till now. They have their own unique vocalization skills, whether in the way of singing, in the long-term exploration, according to their own characteristics to sing processing. In order to sing better, some actors have absorbed other excellent operas and even learned western singing methods. Their achievements have good research significance and reference value. (Zhou Dafeng, 1981b)

### 2.3.2 The singing tunes of Yue Opera

In 1920, the first professional accompaniment band in the history of Yue opera was formed by three musicians from Sheng county folk music organization xike Class, and the musical framework of "banqiang" was initially established. In 1938, Yao Shuijuan performed "Mulan" a play, its singing on the basis of four gongdiao improved, after the "String deng diao", also known as "chidiao qiang" young shadow said. But since the play stopped singing this kind of singing, so it did not catch on. In October 1942, Under the influence of progressive drama, Yuan Xuefen carried out a comprehensive reform of traditional Yue Opera, known as "New Yue Opera" in history. The new Yue Opera has changed the lively and leaping main tone of the "small song class" into a plaintive and soothing tune. In November 1943, When Yuan Xuefen performed Fragrant Concubine and Fan Ruijuan performed Butterfly Lovers, they cooperated with the luthier. Yuan normalized the "chi Diao tune", and Fan created the "Xian-xia-tune". Later, it was absorbed and enriched by other Yue Opera actors, and developed into the main cavity of Yue Opera. On this basis, different genres gradually formed and evolved. (Zhu Yufen, 2001)

From 1958 to 1959, Fu Quanxiang and Yuan Xuefen created a brand new "six-character tone" in "Travel road" and "Kua Fu" in "Shuang Liji" respectively. It was well received and sung by the audience. In 1959, after graduating from the actors' training class set up by the East China Opera Research Institute, the trainees were assigned to Shanghai Yue Opera Theatre to form an experimental troupe of co-performing men and women, and to engage in co-performing exploration in a planned way. They solved the difficulty of men and women singing in duet by using the methods of "same tone and different tone", "same tone and different tone" and "same tone and same tone". In 1965, Yuan xuefen created the "B flat" singing in collaboration with luthier Zhou Bailing when she performed "Fire Coconut Village". (Zhu Yufen, 2001)



Formula is the expression form of opera reflecting life. It refers to the standardization, choreography and repetition of life movements. Program is directly or indirectly derived from life, but it is formed by refining, summarizing and beautifying life according to certain norms. This embodies the painstaking efforts of artists throughout the ages, and it has become the starting point for a new generation of actors to re-create art, so the art of opera performance can be handed down from generation to generation. Closing the door, pushing the window, getting on the horse, getting on the boat and going upstairs have fixed formats. In addition to the performance formula, opera has a certain formula from the form of the script, the role of the line, music singing, dressing and other aspects. Good artists are able to break through some of the limitations of programming and create their own personalized normative art. A program is a model of beauty.

### 2.3.3 The vocal style of the male role

There were six schools of famous actors, founded by six very good actresses. As the female class of Yue Opera was very popular in Shanghai, the situation of female class was established, and the alternation of male and female voices was basically completed in 1936. Therefore, in the early period of the formation of the genre of Yue Opera, actresses were the main actors, and even the male role was done by actresses. As the main trade of the art of Yue opera, male role bears the heavy task of Yue opera, and has formed its absolute importance in the field of Yue opera since the beginning of its formation. In the process of singing, the founders of the new Angle genre constantly groped and sang according to their own voice characteristics and singing habits. Every actor has his own distinct personality. Appreciate their audio and video data, it is not hard to find, the six founder in singing is fluent, especially rich emotion, but the only fly in the ointment was the Yue opera is still in its infancy, also at groping stage in singing, at the same time, owing to the Yue opera was developed from rap book form the ground to sing, so on the singing still exist some deficiencies, for example, as a whole is given priority to with true voice, Larynx is tighter, treble cannot go up and so on. (Chen Dandan, 2009)

### 2.3.4 The vocal style of the female role

Like the male role genre, the founder of female role genre of Yue opera also created the history and glory of Yue opera. There are seven founders of the main genres of the female role, who are excellent in both singing and acting. It is interesting to note that in the woman's genre, which has several genres from Yuan Pa reproduction, thus the difference of Yue opera genres woman is not very large, on the contrary, they learn from each other, there are so many things in common, such as clear manner, especially pay attention to in singing. From the point of view of vocal music, their singing is still in the preliminary stage, but like the new actress, they have a lot of excellent singing skills, charm, worth our analysis one by one. (Chen Dandan, 2009)

## 2.4 The Types of Chinese Opera

Chinese opera is mainly composed of three different art forms: folk song and dance, rap and burlesque. It originated from primitive song and dance and is a comprehensive stage art style with a long history. It was not until the Han, Tang, Song and Jin dynasties that a relatively complete drama art was formed. It was composed of literature, music, dance, fine arts, martial arts, acrobatics and performing arts, with more than 360 types. It is characterized by the aggregation of many art forms in a standard, reflecting their respective individuality in the common nature. After a long period of development and evolution, Chinese opera has gradually formed five opera types: Peking Opera, Yue Opera, Huangmei Opera, Pingju Opera and Henan Opera. (Liang Guoying, 2011)

### 2.4.1 Peking Opera

Peking Opera is one of the most influential operas in China, with its center in Beijing and spread throughout the country. Qianlong in the qing dynasty 55 years (in 1790), the original performance in the south of the "three, four joy, spring machine, and spring" four HuiBan gradually entered Beijing, cooperate with Han Diao artists from Hubei province, at the same time accept the kunqu opera, qinqiang opera repertoire, melody and performance methods, and to absorb some of the local folk tunes, through continuous communication and fusion, eventually form the Peking Opera. (China Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Network, 2008)

Peking Opera has a set of standardized forms of artistic expression in literature, performance, music, stage art and other aspects. The singing style of Beijing Opera is

a variety of style, with Er huang and Xi pi as the main voices. The accompaniment of Peking Opera is divided into two categories, namely, huqin and drum. The roles in Peking Opera are divided into sheng, Dan, jing, Chou, gong, wu and Liu, and the last three are no longer specialized. Each trade has a set of performance routines, singing, reading, doing and fighting skills with their own characteristics. Historical stories are the main content of Peking Opera. There are more than 1,300 traditional operas, of which more than 300 are often performed. (Xu Bin, 2014)

Peking Opera has a wide influence throughout the country and is known as the "National opera". The Peking Opera performance system named after Mei Lanfang is regarded as the representative of the Oriental opera performance system and one of the three major performance systems in the world. Peking Opera is an important form of expression of Chinese traditional culture, in which a variety of artistic elements are used as symbols of Chinese traditional culture. In May 2006, Peking Opera was included in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage list. In 2010, it was inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. (Digital Museum of China's Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2008)

#### 2.4.2 Yue opera

As the second largest type of opera in China, Yue Opera is also known as the second National Opera [2]. It is also known as "the most widely spread type of local opera" [3]. Some people believe that it is "the largest type of local opera" and is called "Chinese Opera" abroad. It is one of the five operas in China. Originated in Sheng county, Zhejiang province, originated in Shanghai, prosperity in the whole country, spread to the world, in the development of kunqu opera, drama, Shaoxing opera and other characteristics of the great success, has experienced a historical evolution from male to female Yue Opera. (Qian Hong, 2006)

Yue Opera is long in lyric, mainly singing, beautiful voice, real and moving performance, beautiful and elegant, most of them are based on the theme of "talents and beauties", and there are various artistic schools. There are as many as 13 recognized schools. It was mainly popular in Shanghai, Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Fujian, Jiangxi, Anhui and other southern regions, as well as most northern regions such as Beijing and Tianjin. In its heyday, professional troupes existed all over the country except xizang,

Guangdong, Guangxi and a few other provinces and autonomous regions. (Chen HX & Huang Yu, 2006)

Yue Opera was included in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage list. In 2006, Shanghai Yue Opera and Sheng county Yue Opera Art Protection and Inheritance Center obtained the qualification of national intangible cultural heritage Yue Opera project protection unit. In 2008, Fujian Fanghua Yue Opera Troupe obtained the qualification of national Intangible Cultural Heritage Yue Opera project protection unit. (China Intangible Cultural Heritage Network, 2006)

#### 2.4.3 Huangmei opera

Huangmei Opera, formerly known as Huangmei Diao or Tea Picking Opera, originated in Huangmei, Hubei Province and developed in Anqing, Anhui Province. Huangmei Opera is the main local opera in Anhui Province. There are professional or amateur troupes performing huangmei Opera in Hubei, Jiangxi, Fujian, Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Hong Kong, Taiwan and other places, which are widely welcomed. (Yang Jianxin, 2006a)

Huangmei Opera is a kind of opera gradually formed and developed from folk songs, Yangko songs, tea songs, tea-picking lanterns and huagu tunes. It absorbed the factors of han Opera, Chu Opera, Gaoqiang opera, tea picking opera, Peking Opera and so on, and gradually formed its own artistic characteristics. The singing style of Huangmei Opera is simple and smooth, good at expressing emotions and rich in expressiveness. The performance is simple and meticulous, known for its real and lively. The song "The Marriage of Heaven and Fairies" made Huangmei Opera popular across China and gained a high reputation overseas. (Yang Jianxin, 2006b)

In 2006, Huangmei Opera was included in the first batch of national intangible cultural Heritage list. In 2011, huangmei Opera applied by Anhui Huangmei Opera Troupe was approved to be included in the third batch of national intangible cultural Heritage representative project list expanded project list. (Xu Jianxin, 2006)

#### 2.4.4 Ping opera

Ping opera, popular in northern China, is one of the traditional Operas of the Han nationality. It is one of the most popular operas among the people and ranks among the top five operas in China. In the late Qing Dynasty, it was formed on the basis of the ditty "Opposite Lianhualuo" in Luanxian County, Hebei Province. It was popular in

rural areas of Hebei province at first, and later entered Tangshan, known as "Tangshan Luozi". Ping opera can be divided into east road and West Road, and east Road is the main road. (Lian Bo, 2006)

Around 1920s, it was popular in northeast China and a group of actresses appeared. After the 1930s, ping opera performances became more mature under the influence of Peking Opera and Hebei Wooden Clappers, with the emergence of schools such as Li Jinshun, Liu Cuixia, Bai Yushuang and Ailianjun. After 1950, operas such as Little Son-in-law, Liu Qiaoer, Flower as The Match, Sister Yang's Complaint and Qin Xianglian had a great influence on the whole country. Ping opera is still popular in north and northeast China. On May 20, 2006, Ping opera was approved by The State Council to be included in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage list. (Li Fei, 2006)

#### 2.4.5 Henan opera

Henan Opera originated in central China. It is the largest local opera in China and ranks first among all local operas in China. Henan Opera is on the basis of henan Bangzi continuous inheritance, reform and innovation developed. Henan opera is one of the Han opera, the first major local opera in China. Henan Opera has also followed henan SATELLITE TV, Henan Yu Theatre, Taiwan Yu Opera troupe and other performance groups through many countries in the world. Such as: Australia, Italy, France, Canada and other countries. It is praised by westerners as "Oriental aria". (Guan Lin, 1986)

Henan opera is famous for its sonorous atmosphere, cadence, sound style, clear words, mellow charm, lively, flesh and blood, and good at expressing the inner feelings of the characters. It is widely welcomed by people from all walks of life with its high degree of artistry. Because of its musical accompaniment of dates wooden Clappers, it was named Henan Wooden Clappers in its early days. (Ma Liangzhong, 1990)

According to the statistics of the Ministry of Culture, besides Henan province, there are professional Henan troupes in Hubei, Anhui, Jiangsu, Shandong, Shaanxi, Shanxi, Hebei, Qinghai, Xinjiang, Taiwan and other provinces and cities. It is one of the most influential operas in China. In 2006, Henan opera was listed in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage list by The State Council. (Fu Jun & Qi Yaxian, 1992)

## 2.5 The Theory Used in Research

### 2.5.1 Musicology

Musicology is the general term for all theoretical subjects that study music. The general task of musicology is to elucidate the nature and laws of various phenomena related to music. For example, studies on the relationship between music and ideology include music aesthetics, music history, music ethnology, music psychology, music pedagogy, etc. The study of the material and material characteristics of music includes musical acoustics, jurisprudence, instrumental science, etc. The study of music form and its composition includes melodic theory, harmony, acoustics, counterpoint, composition theory, etc. There are also from the performance aspect to consider, such as performance theory, command method and so on. (Central Conservatory of Music distance education network 2015)

The researchers made use of these musicological knowledge, combined with opera, to further analyze the singing of Yue Opera.

### 2.5.2 Theater and Chinese Traditional Opera

Theater and Chinese Traditional Opera is an investigation and study of drama theory and history. From the ancient Greek, Roman, Indian and Chinese opera theory and practice, down to the modern and contemporary world drama schools, Chinese drama status quo and trend of theoretical discussion, and use it to guide creative practice. The study of drama and opera is guided by the research results of philosophy and aesthetics, and is mutually referenced and promoted with the neighboring disciplines such as music, fine arts and film, radio and television arts. (Li Jing, 2021)

The researcher will make use of the related theoretical knowledge of opera to study the Yue Opera. Thus, make the conclusion more scientific and rigorous.

### 2.5.3 Linguistics

Linguistics is the study of human language. The scope of exploration includes the nature, function, structure, use and historical development of language, as well as other issues related to language. The object of linguistic study is the linguistic facts that exist objectively. Both modern and ancient languages are objective linguistic phenomena. Although the meanings expressed by different utterances are subjective

and varied, the language information conveyed can be understood by others. Linguistics is generally defined as a scientific and systematic theoretical study of language. And language is the most important human communication tool, is the direct reality of thought. Language is a unique way of human communication. It reflects the highly evolved mental abilities of human beings on the biological or psychological level and the progress of human civilization on the social and cultural level. Linguistics is the study of the language ability, the core instinct of human beings, through the analysis and study of spoken, written and even sign language, and then understand the essence of human beings. (Zhao Danrong, 2018)

Based on the relevant knowledge of linguistics, the researcher further discusses the role of the dialect of Zhejiang in the emergence and development of Yue Opera.

## **2.6 Documents and Related Research**

Up to now, the researcher has collected papers, journal articles and books on Chinese opera and Shaoxing opera. These materials are very comprehensive, rigorous and true, which are of great help to the author in writing his thesis. Starting with these written materials and combining with field interviews, the author makes a thorough analysis of the development process of Yue Opera and the types of singing styles. With the increase of government support and publicity, Yue Opera has become more and more popular in China and even around the world. The following are the references of the author.

2.6.1 Bi jun (2010) Extensive and profound Chinese Cultural History, published by Times Literature and Art Publishing House. The article describes that Yue Opera is the second largest type of opera in China, one of the five operas in China, and is widely spread among the people.

2.6.2 Jin qijun (2011) The Story of Yue Opera was published by China Drama Press. The advertisements describing "women's drama" in the article were successively renamed as "Yue Opera", and after the founding of New China, they were uniformly called "Yue Opera", hence the name of Yue Opera.

2.6.3 Ministry of Culture and Tourism, PRC, 2006. The article records the first batch of Yue Opera national intangible cultural heritage list. Therefore, Yue Opera is an intangible cultural heritage.

2.6.4 Qian hong (2006) *The Grand Canon of Chinese Yue Opera* published by Zhejiang Literature and Art Publishing House. The article introduces that Yue opera is good at expressing emotions, mainly singing, and has various artistic schools, which are recognized as 13 schools. It is a very valuable book, which provides a lot of information for researchers to understand the schools of Yue Opera.

2.6.5 Ying, zhiliang (2002) *The Development history of Chinese Yue Opera*, in China Drama Press. This paper probes into the origin of Yue Opera, introduces its development in the past hundred years, and describes the stages of Yue Opera from the beginning of "singing books on the ground" to the stage performance. This paper provides relevant reference for researchers. (Ying Zhiliang, 2002)

2.6.6 Shi luoping (2004) *Shaoxing Opera* published in Zhonghua Book Company. This is an early drama magazine, introducing the current situation of Shaoxing, the birthplace of Yue Opera, where Yue Opera flourishes and has a strong opera atmosphere. The article initiated a study on the status quo of Yue Opera.

2.6.7 Yuan xuefen (2002) *Seeking the True Meaning of The Art of Life*, Shanghai Dictionary Publishing House. This is a book written by an artist of Yue opera. She is also one of the founders of Yue opera genre and has rich performance experience. She is the representative inheritor of Yue Opera in the second batch of national intangible cultural heritage projects. This book introduces the singing art of Yue Opera, which is very helpful for researchers to study the singing style of Yue Opera. (Yuan Xuefen, 2002)

2.6.8 Lu, shijun&gao, yilong (1997) *A Chronicle of Shanghai culture and Art*, published by North China Drama Publishing House. The article introduces thirteen schools of Yue Opera recognized by the public. This is an introduction to the schools of Yue Opera.

2.6.9 *Memoirs of Yue Opera Artists* (1982) was published by Zhejiang People's Publishing House. This is a memoir of the performing artists of The Yue Opera. Through reading these memoirs, the author has a deeper understanding of the



development of the Yue Opera. It is these older generation of opera artists pay, yue opera culture can continue to innovate. (Memoirs of Yue Opera Artists, 1982)

2.6.10 "Yue opera" originated from "landing to sing books", and later called "women class", "Shaoxing women wenxi", "du class", "Grass-tai class drama", "small song class", "Shaoxing drama", "Shaoxing wenxi", "Shaoxing drama", "Shengju", "Shan drama" and so on. It was first called "Yue Opera". On September 17, 1925, "Dituban", which performed in the Small World Amusement Park, was first called "Yue Opera" in the advertisement of Shenbao. (Xu Bin, 2014)

2.6.11 It was in 1906 that xiao Ge Ban, the predecessor of Yue Opera, was really born. From this year, Yue Opera entered the stage role playing period, which can be regarded as the origin of Yue Opera as opera. However, the little choir did not come into being suddenly, nor did it start out dressed up for the stage. From the 1950s and 1960s, it experienced several decades of embryonic stage, and this stage is divided into two periods, namely "along the door to sing the book" period and "on the ground to sing the book" period. (Luo Ping, 2004)

2.6.12 Thirteen genres founders accumulated and improved continuously during performances, forming distinctive genres art, which has become the main performance form of Yue Opera handed down till now. They have their own unique vocalization skills, whether in the way of singing, in the long-term exploration, according to their own characteristics to sing processing. In order to sing better, some actors have absorbed other excellent operas and even learned western singing methods. (Pan Yuqi, 2009)

2.6.13 The genre of Yue Opera includes various artistic factors, such as drama, singing, reading and doing, which are reflected in the typical artistic images. Among them, the singing style has the most originality, the most prominent characteristics and the greatest influence, so it is called the genre singing style. (Zhang Chao, 2012)

2.6.14 With the reform and development of Yue opera, many Yue opera actors have gradually formed their own personality characteristics and explored out more suitable singing forms. In the process of performance, their artistic originality caters to the aesthetic needs of different audiences. If an audience loves it, someone will want to imitate it and learn to sing it. It is through this form of communication that schools can

spread. The vitality of genres lies in the continuous flow and development, genres in the development, will continue to evolve, produce more factions. (Chen Dandan, 2009)

2.6.15 In the opera circle, the words and sounds of the singing style should be clear, while emphasizing strength. Action is too large, will make the lip muscle tension, destroy sound color, action is too small, and cannot clearly express words and sounds, affect hearing. Therefore, to give a good feeling, it is necessary to maintain accurate articulation. The pronunciation of Yue opera is based on Sheng county dialect. In order to adapt to the non-native audience, it absorbed Mandarin and created a new stage language of Yue opera, forming its own unique tone system. Yue Opera originated from folk music and rap. As a folk art, it is the main starting point to let the audience understand and resonate with it. With a solid foundation of articulation, they could realize their value. Therefore, early Yue Opera actors paid much attention to pronunciation. I realized that I must follow the phonetic rules of Yue Opera. (Xu Jianxin, 2006)

2.6.16 The same canto, different actors are completely different requirements, each person's voice conditions are different, different natural range, can complete the difficulty is naturally different, especially the same high pitch, some may be easy to sing with true voice, and some actors must use falsetto. Most of the actors in the founders of the Genre used falsetto. Different plays show different artistic conception, but for the same play, there will be many differences in the understanding of the script and role due to the different cultural literacy and experience of the actors themselves. These differences are reflected in the singing, which will cause many differences in the treatment of the line, lyrics and so on. (Wang Xiaoyan, 2004)

2.6.17 The inheritance and development of the singing art of Yue Opera is closely related to the artistic accomplishment of the founders of the genres of Yue Opera. They have passed down their fine traditions, thus forming a good artistic atmosphere in the current Yue Opera circle. At the same time, it is because of the continuous innovation of the young generation of Yue opera actors that Yue opera singing today's brilliant. (Li Fei, 2006)

In the literature review of this chapter, the author selected 17 articles on this subject and summarized them into two parts. There are 7 on Historical research documents of Yue Opera, 10 on singing genres research literature of Yue Opera.

Documents and related research reviewed by the researcher will be used as a concept and framework for the study in order to obtain the knowledge and answers according to the objectives set as much as possible.

## **Chapter III**

### **Research Methodology**

This chapter describes the research methodology used in the study, including the criteria for selecting the study area and informants, as well as the process of designing the questionnaire and interview.

#### **3.1 Research Scope**

##### **3.1.1 Scope of content**

##### **3.1.2 Scope of research site**

##### **3.1.3 Scope of time**

##### **3.1.4 Methodology**

#### **3.2 Research process**

##### **3.2.1 Selection site and key informant**

##### **3.2.2 Research equipment**

##### **3.2.3 Research Tools**

##### **3.2.4 Data collecting**

##### **3.2.5 Data analysis**

##### **3.2.6 Presentation**

#### **3.1 Research Scope**

##### **3.1.1 Scope of content**

This study includes the development process of Yue Opera in Zhejiang Province of China and the vocal styles of Yue Opera.

##### **3.1.2 Scope of research site**

Zhejiang Province is the birthplace of Yue opera. Yue opera is mainly spread in the central regions of Zhejiang Province. Yue opera is the main representative opera in Zhejiang.

Shaoxing City is the main carrier of contemporary Yue opera. Zhejiang Yue opera Troupe is located in Shaoxing City.

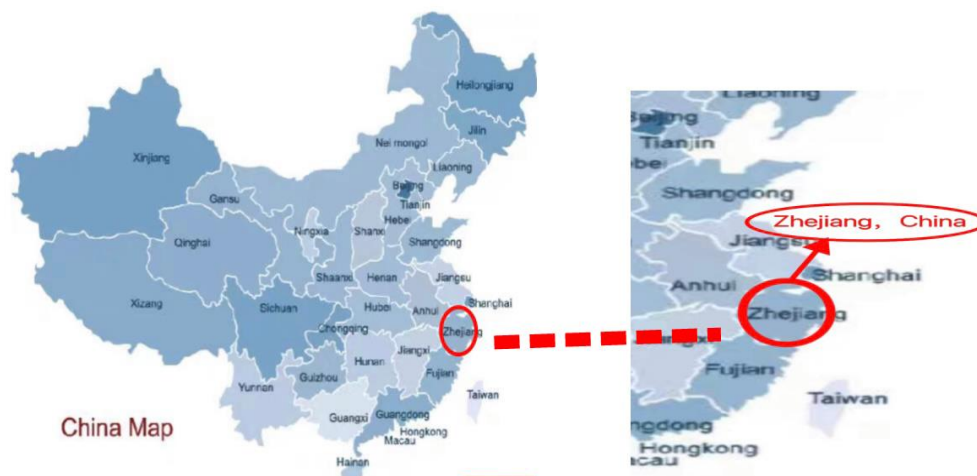


Figure 1. Map of Zhejiang Province, China

Source: <https://baike.baidu.com/>

### 3.1.3 Scope of time

I will study December 2020 to September 2021

### 3.1.4 Methodology

- The researcher used a qualitative study process.
- The researcher mainly used the fieldwork study process using interviewing, questioning, observation techniques.

## 3.2 Research process

### 3.2.1 Selection site and key informant

3.2.1.1 Research site: Shaoxing ,Zhejiang Province, China. The reason:

Shaoxing, a prefecture-level city in Zhejiang province, is referred to as "Yue" for short, and the name of The Yue Opera is also derived from this place name. Shaoxing, an important city in the Yangtze River Delta, is located in east China and central and northern Zhejiang Province. Subtropical monsoon climate, warm and humid, four distinct seasons. Shaoxing is the birthplace of Yue Opera. Here, Yue Opera has become a popular stage performing art from the initial "singing on the

ground". Shaoxing's natural environment (geographical location and climate), economic and social environment, and cultural environment are all important factors affecting the development of Yue Opera. The hometown of many famous Yue Opera performing artists was also in Shaoxing. Since the reform and opening up, with the continuous support of the government, Yue Opera has developed vigorously and made a lot of achievements. On May 20, 2006, Yue Opera was approved by The State Council to be included in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage list. In recent years, in order to spread and protect the culture of Yue opera and promote the development of cultural industry, many professional Yue opera troupes have been set up in Shaoxing. The establishment of these Yue opera troupes further promoted the inheritance and development of Yue opera culture.

#### 3.2.1.2 Key informants :Criteria for selecting key informants

The following five criteria for selecting key informants were provided by Li Lei, the heirs of Chinese intangible culture:

- 1) They have been engaged in the creation, singing or performance of Yue opera for at least 30 years.
- 2) They knows the culture and development of Yue opera.
- 3) They have won the highest award in various Yue opera competieions.
- 4) They must be the above provincial level Yue opera transmittor awarded by the goverment
- 5)They have made outstanding contributions to the dissemination and development of Yue opea.

According to the above selection criteria, the key informants I choose are, Wu Fenghua, He Saifei and Chen Guoliang. Because they are the most outstanding representatives of key informants.

I interviewed 3 key informants, including 1 scholar and 2 famous Yue opera actresses, who are also the transmitters of Zhejiang provincial intangible cultural heritage of Yue opera. The three people are my most important informants, mainly because Wu Fenghua and He Saifei are famous actors of Yue opera. They were national first-class actors. They have performed many classic operas of Yue opera, won many first prizes in national competitions, and have rich experience in Yue opera performance.

Chen Guoliang is a famous composer of Yue opera music. They are a national first-class composer and has created many excellent Yuediao music works. They are very familiar with the development and vocal style of Yue opera music, which will contribute to the subsequent research of this dissertation.

### Wu Fenghua



Figure 2. Key informant Mrs. Wu Fenghua

Source: Wu Fenghua

Wu Fenghua, born in shaoxing, Zhejiang province in 1970, is a member of The Chinese Dramatists Association and a national first-class actor. She studied with performance artist Fan Ruijuan. She has performed in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Beijing and other places with the troupe, covering half of China. In constant exploration and practice, she gradually formed her own characteristics, has been recognized by the audience and experts, known as a rare actor in the yue Opera circle. On September 15, 2015, Wu Fenghua was awarded the title of "National Young and Middle-aged Literary Worker with Both Virtue and Art". In October 2016, Wu Fenghua won the 15th Mandarin Performance Award. In her solo show in Shanghai, she summarized her 17 years of work into two themes -- inheritance and innovation. With the support of the government, she established her own Yue Opera studio and led the Yue Opera troupe to perform, making great contributions to the inheritance and development of this national intangible cultural heritage.

### He Saifei



Figure 3. Key informant Mrs. He Saifei

Source: He Saifei

He Saifei, born in Daishan County, Zhoushan City, Zhejiang Province in 1963, is a national first-class actor and a performing artist of Yue Opera. In 1982, he was admitted to Zhejiang Daishan Yue Opera Troupe, and in 1983, he was transferred to Zhejiang Little Baihua Yue Opera Troupe. She rose to fame in 1984 for her role in the Yue drama Five Women's Birthday Worship. In 1985, he graduated from Zhejiang Art School majoring in opera performance and joined the Chinese Dramatists Association in the same year.

### Chen Guoliang



Figure 4. Key informant Chen Guoliang

Source: Chen Guoliang



Chen Guoliang is a composer of Yue opera who has been working hard behind the scenes. In 1964, Chen Guoliang entered Shengxian Yue Troupe, where he served successively as performer, composer and head of the troupe. In the early 1980s, he went to Shanghai Conservatory of Music for further study in the composition department of folk music theory. After graduation, he continued to work in the troupe. Influenced by academic theories and years of artistic practice, he has become a very bright rising star in the field of Yue opera compositions, and also a music composer with remarkable achievements.

### 3.2.2 Research equipment

3.2.2.1 Voice recorder: Record information about the interview.

3.2.2.2 Camera: Record information about the observation.

3.2.2.3 VCR: Record information about interview and observation.

3.2.2.4 Laptop: Store photos and videos, record text and information.

### 3.2.3 Research Tools

The research tools used in this dissertation are mainly interview and observation. In order to obtain the research data, the researcher designed the questionnaire and designed the corresponding interview form and observation form according to research objects.

process of making the questionnaire (based on research objective).

3.2.3.1 Bring it to the advisor to examine.

3.2.3.2 Be modified according to advisor editing.

3.2.3.3 Send it to an expert for inspection before using

3.2.3.4 Modified according to specialist advice before being used in the field work

### 3.2.4 Data collecting

The author will collect data through documents analysis and fieldwork. In order to make an in-depth study, researchers refer to literature materials in libraries and cultural centers and use network platforms such as CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure) and other network platforms to complete the documents analysis.

The authors then plan to travel to the study site (Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province, China) to conduct field research. Researchers will document the study through interviews, observations, audio and video recordings.

### 3.2.5 Data analysis

The author analyses data follow up the objectives and the definition of term by using concepts and theories.

In the first objective, the author will use literature analysis to collect and sort out the data. Study the development process of Yue Opera.

In the second goal, the author will interview my main informant, Ms. Wu Fenghua, an actress of Yue Opera, through field investigation. To analyze the singing style of Yue Opera.

### 3.2.6 Presentation

In this dissertation, the researcher will present on 7 chapters:

- 3.2.6.1 Chapter I Introduction
- 3.2.6.2 Chapter II Literature Reviews
- 3.2.6.3 Chapter III Research Methodology
- 3.2.6.4 Chapter IV The Development of Yue Opera
- 3.2.6.5 Chapter V The Vocal Style of Yue Opera
- 3.2.6.6 Chapter VI Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions

## Chapter IV

### The Development of Yue Opera

In this chapter the researcher will analyze the development stages and characteristics of Yue Opera according to the literature and fieldwork results and propose the development context of Yue Opera.

- 4.1 Origin Period of Yue Opera (before 1906)
- 4.2 Early development of Yue Opera (1906-1922)
- 4.3 The middle stage of Yue Opera development (1922-1938)
- 4.4 Mature period of Yue Opera Development (1938-1949)
- 4.5 Flourishing Period of Yue Opera (1949-2022)
- 4.6 Conclusion

From the emergence and development of Yue opera, it can be seen that in the long historical process of Chinese opera art from the emergence to the development of thousands of years, the art music of Yue opera is still relatively young. After more than one hundred years of development, Shaoxing Opera has created great achievements. It is a well-known opera type in the world and has certain influence and status in the history of Chinese drama at present. After nearly a century of changes, the development of Yue Opera has gradually formed a unique style of opera art and culture in southern China. Different from many other traditional operas in China, the occurrence and development of Yue Opera did not evolve from the voice of traditional opera music. The reason why the development of Yue Opera is influenced by the public aesthetic and market demand, and developed from the changes of the form of performing arts. In nearly 100 years, due to the influence of social culture and market demand in different periods, Yue Opera went through the "embryonic stage" to the "formation and development stage" and then to the "mature and prosperous stage".

#### **4.1 Origin Period of Yue Opera (before 1906)**

Yue Opera originated in the fields of Zhejiang Province, developed in the expansion and perfection of Hangshaoryong area, and then took root in the warm and wide Shanghai soil to spread branches and leaves, realizing its powerful national influence.

Through continuous efforts and innovation, Yue Opera has finally skillfully integrated urban and rural culture with human customs, closely matched accompaniment music with singing performance, and vividly expressed tenderness and leisure.

In the early stage, the transformation of Yue opera from rap art to opera prototype also prompted the renewal and iteration of its accompaniment form. Hu Qin instruments were presented as one of the members of the first orchestra in the history of Yue opera, gradually forming an accompaniment band pattern with the main Hu as the core in the development process of Yue opera, replacing the single mode limited to drum accompaniment in the singing period. And gradually built a close relationship with singing partners, promoting the development of Yue opera music.

According to Wu Fenghua, a performer of Yue Opera, the early history of Yue opera is relatively obscure due to the lack of written records and incomplete data, which mostly rely on the oral historical materials of some old artists to spread among the people. Everyone who knows Yue opera knows that its predecessor is "Falling to the Ground Singing Book", which was created by a farmer named Jin Qibing in Ma Li village, Shengxian County, Shaoxing in about 1870. However, before "singing books on the ground", there was a process of initiation and development, that is, the first time from the Tiantou rap to singing performances along the door, and then into teahouses and restaurants, and then gradually evolved into the opera form of "singing books on the ground". According to historical records, Tiantou singing books flourished during Daoguang period of Qing Dynasty from 1820 to 1830, and the formation of "Landing singing books" was mainly popular in Shaoxing, Hangzhou, Jiaxing and Huzhou during Xianfeng period of Qing Dynasty in 1870. (Literature and History Materials Committee of Shengzhou, Tracing the Origin of Yue Opera, Zhejiang Literature and Art Publishing House, 1992)

4.1.1 Development of performance form from "Tiantou singing books" to "singing along the door"

"Singing books" was a form of self-entertainment for peasants, and the performance was flourishing during the period of Daoguang of Qing Dynasty from 1820 to 1830. Whenever the labor, the farmers will gather in three or five groups singing in the field. Or in the night to gather in the grain field, with singing books to describe what they saw and heard, express feelings. Many farmers have the ability to improvise words, and

some vivid riffs have been learned by others. At this time, singing books was completely amateur and was generally called "Tiantou singing books".

After 1860, sing the book from the farmer's entertaining pastime, gradually evolved into a living, some can sing "farm book" farmers need to go out door to door in the seller, in order to survive over time appeared a group of farmers and arts artist, they busy farming fields in the countryside, in the (usually grade in lunar calendar to tomb sweeping day) sing book out, As a supplementary means to solve economic difficulties, the form of performance at this time had evolved from "Tiantou singing books" to "singing along the door". (xubin,2014).

The performance form of "singing books along the door" is extremely primitive: carrying a gold stay on the left shoulder, a bag of grain on the right shoulder, holding a long dry pipe made of bamboo in the hand, knocking on the threshold of the people is the accompaniment, singing is generally auspicious words, local called "Caitou words", short length. At that time, there was no fixed record book. In addition to the learned jokes, the singers gave full play to their ability to improvise and sing as they went along. After singing, the host family usually gave out a few white rice cakes as a reward.

"Singing books along the Door" In order to meet the market demand, people in the slack season of farming to improve income and seek a living, so they sing songs along the door for alms, which presents a performance practice form along the door to sell songs, indicating that this period has had a semi-professional nature of singing books. It is precisely because this singing performance form is simple and can solve certain livelihood problems, in its birthplace, many poor farmers have followed suit, it can be seen that in this period of special background, farmers busy farming, rural leisure singing books become the main form of poor farmers in this area to make up for their livelihoods. At the same time, from the aspect of music content, the form of music performance at this stage adopts simple language, the style of artistic performance is realistic and romantic, and the main content of its presentation is mostly derived from the association and imagination of daily life. In the performance, the expression techniques such as exaggeration, metaphor and irony are displayed, showing the vivid image and strong expression of the artistic practice of "singing book along the door" in this period. (Li Jing,2021)

4.1.2 Development of performance form from "singing along the door" to "singing on the ground"

"Singing books along the door" mainly means walking around in the countryside, so it is also called "walking books". As the tunes are easy to learn, easy to sing, and the content is easy to understand, they are very popular, and more and more people sing books. With the development of society, around 1870, the performers of "singing books along the door" flowed from Shaoxing Sheng county to nearby counties, and gradually entered the tea houses and restaurants in small towns and towns, and signed contracts with the tea house owners, and had a relatively stable singing place. Since then, the performance form of "singing books along the door" has developed into the performance form of "singing books on the ground".(Li Jing,2021)

The singing form of "Landing Singing Book" is very different from the previous forms of performance. From people's simple entertainment singing, it has gradually developed into a mature semi-professional and professional form of singing, which is mainly reflected in the more stable singing place and better environment for performers. The original village field entertainment component more entertainment singing has been transformed into a commercial practice performance. "Landing Singing Book" was formed on the basis of folk Tiantou singing. During this period, its influence gradually expanded to Hangzhou, Jiaxing, Huzhou and other regions in Zhejiang Province, and formed two major art schools of "Landing Singing Book" in the north and south, which gradually stabilized into a mature professional singing form with fixed venues in the middle and later stages of development.(xubin,2014)

During this period, the number of singing songs increased, and the length of singing could be improvised and created according to the needs of the audience. Due to the relatively fixed performance places and audience base, medium and long story plots were more commonly used during this period. Therefore, artists would gradually evolve the singing methods from one solo to two or three choruses according to the needs of the plot of the songs. The lead singer and accomplice were formed for the storyline, which laid the foundation for the performance form with accomplice in the early stage of Yue Opera. As for the props for singing accompaniment, the artists of singing books abandoned the simple props of pipe and cloth stays in the semi-professional period, and gradually added the ruler board made of bamboo pieces and the "Dugu" made of bamboo festival.(xubin,2014).

The singing style of "singing books on the ground" is very different from previous performances. In front of the singer is generally placed a case table, while rapping while doing some simple movements with the hand, the people who help the cavity in the side to beat the ruler board, Du drum, and with the human voice to the tail cavity. As the audience became predominantly urban, and the audience gathered in groups rather than just families, as in the past, singing short songs or stories about rural life was not enough. In terms of performance content, entertainers drew on biographies, folklore, drama stories and tanci to compile some long books with twists and turns. Most of the historical stories adapted from the books were "Golden Dragon Whip", "Pearl Boa Gown" and "Three Fairy Furnace". These plays, with vivid twists and turns, can be sung for a long time, many of them can be sung for ten days, half a month, and some can even be sung for several months.(xubin,2014).

From "Singing books at the head of the field" to "singing books along the door" and then to "singing books on the ground", the "singing books" as a form of art performance, is completely a language art of oral creation, without a fixed record. Artists pay attention to accumulation, hard training improvisation ability, export chapters, can cope with a variety of scenes. With the growing maturity of this professional form of singing, singing conditions and creative works of artists have been greatly improved. Such changes have improved the overall artistic level of "Landing singing book", and its influence has been gradually expanded by the fixed field, the expanding team of the troupe and the scope of the audience. The early development of this kind of rap art form has also made adequate preparations for the transformation of landing singing book into the embryonic form of opera.

Therefore, according to the performer Wu Fenghua and historical records, it can be seen that the creators of the early development of Yue opera were a group, and the performance form of "singing books on the ground" can be regarded as the real predecessor of Yue opera. From "Tiantou Rap" to "singing along the door", to "walking on Taiwan" in tea houses and restaurants, to the "small song class" period in 1906, Yue opera completed its first transformation, that is, before 1906, it was the origin stage of Yue opera. At this time, with the development of the art of "singing books", it not only has auditory image, but also adds visual image. The practice of performance has formed a transition from singing books in the form of quyi to opera in the form of stage play.

## 4.2 Early development of Yue Opera (1906-1922)

Yue opera, in its phase - "the ground book" period, from "farm to sing" to "door to door in the book" to "walk" along the way, go on March 27, 1906, completed a qualitative leap, from folk arts become opera, entered the song "small class" period, began the development of it as a local Chinese opera flourishing.

### 4.2.1 The birth and dissemination of the performance form of "Small Song Class"

"Small Song Class" is the name of the early stage of Yue opera's evolution from quyi to opera. The performance form of "Small Song " in "Small Song Class" is evolved from the performance form of "Sing book". It is named after the folk tune in Shaoxing Sheng county. It is a kind of indigenous tune with strong song flavor and strong local flavor. The name of the "small song class", in March 27, 1906, by the "landing singing book" artists Yuan Fusheng, Li Maozheng, Gao Binghuo, Li Shiquan and other groups of classes, borrowed four rice barrel bottom shop on the door, in front of the Dongwang village Xianghuo Hall audition in Shengxian County, Shaoxing city, Zhejiang Province, the "small song class" was formally formed. At this time, it had made a significant breakthrough in music, equipped with stringed instruments based on the Huqin, and the performance level of the actors also greatly improved, not only the original rap, singing and body shape had become an important part of it. At the same time, he also adapted such important plays as "Jade Hairpin" and "Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai". (Grand Canon of Chinese Yue Opera ,2006).

Because of the social reasons at that time, "small song class" flourished in Shengzhou County rural areas, the development speed is very amazing. Less than a year after the birth of the Little Singing Class in 1907, more than 200 troupes sprang up in Shaoxing, with all male actors. At that time, Sheng county was only ten areas of more than 1000 square kilometers, with a population of more than 300,000 people. It was difficult to accommodate hundreds of opera troupes at that time, and the artists tried to spread out to survive. The performances soon expanded form Sheng county to Shanghai, Hangzhou and other places.

### 4.2.2 "Small Song Class" in Shanghai and music development

With the development of the commercialization of small singing classes, many semi-farmers and semi-artists have turned into professional performers, and a troupe agent



has emerged. In 1910, it began to enter the provincial capital Hangzhou to explore the market. In 1917, artists led by Yuan Sheng Mu Troupe first entered the beach. Subsequently, a large number of artists with indomitable spirit of hard work, after years of hard work, created a number of new plays such as "Jade Hairpin", "Butterfly Lovers", in instrumental performance, formed a "three pieces head" band with three Musical Instruments of "drum, banhu and douzi". At the beginning of 1921, the first band in the history of Yue Opera was finally established in Shanghai Shengping Stage. In 1920, Hangzhou set up a small concert venue in the "Big World", marking the maturity of the provincial capital performance market.

During this period, the repertoire in the form of "small singing class" was gradually enriched. Some of the repertoire were transplanted from the original landing singing books, while some were borrowed from other local operas, such as Xinchang Gaoqiang, Dongyang Wuju, Shaoxing Ziyun Class, Yuyao Yingge Class, etc. They also made plays based on stories from scrolls, books and folklore. At the same time of performing small life plays, artists also tried to perform ancient costume plays, and the performance line is gradually complete, and the division of labor has been more detailed and clearer. Makeup also changed from the original "clean water dressing", and this period established the fine tradition of makeup without opening up in the future. During this period, the costumes were mainly borrowed from other operas, but the style of dressing was still light and light. At this stage, the small singing class made some improvements in the singing style, melting the loud and rough of the southern school into the smooth and graceful of the northern school. In the performance, they showed a low mood of sobbing and a high mood of impassioned music expression. The plate rhythm has been divided into adagio, mediato and allegro, and the tunes have been divided into cry tune, break work tune, Qiantang tune, cross tune, etc., which can basically meet the needs of general repertory performance.

After ten years of practice, improvement, dissemination and promotion experience, the "Small Song Class" had the conditions to enter the big city, so that artists could spread the performance form of this period to the most prosperous metropolitan area of Shanghai at that time. The period of promotion to greater Shanghai was 1916-1921. Among them, during the three years from 1917 to 1919, Yuan Shengmu, Zhi Jinxiang, Wei Meiduo, Xie Zhiyun, Ma Asshun, Chen Su E, Wang Yongshou, Ma

Chaoshui and so on, the famous artists of the small Song class, respectively, went to Shanghai to perform. However, they failed several times because the audience in Shanghai thought that "Daiduban" was too crude and unfashionable to sell seats. Undaunted, however, the singers realized that in order to make it big in Shanghai, they must find an art form that can be accepted by the Shanghai audience. Artists try every means to absorb artistic nutrients from Shaoxing Daban, Beijing Opera and other operas to improve their performance skills. At the same time, the reform was carried out in the aspects of repertoire, music, costume and makeup, especially in the language of Yue opera mixed with some Shanghai white, so that the language of Yue opera could not break away from the local dialect, but also could be accepted by the Shanghai audience. Through these efforts, "Small Singing Class" entered Shanghai again in April 1920, and was welcomed by the audience. Finally, it gained a foothold in Shanghai.

While performing in Shanghai, "Small Song Class" began the first innovation in the music of Yue opera. Zhou Linzhi, owner of Shanghai Shengping Ge Stage, is a keen fan of the art of Yue Opera and a music lover. When he saw the difficulties in the musical reform of the artists, he took the initiative to return home and invited Zhou Xiaotang, the teacher of "Opera class", Zhou Xiaocan and Wang Chunrong, the piano players, to form the first full-time band in the history of Yue Opera. With full-time musicians, Wei Meiduo, Zhang Yunbiao and Ma Chaoshui, three artists, devoted themselves to music reform. First of all, the accompaniment and tuning without accompaniment should be changed, and the stringed instruments should be added to form the entrance similar to the singing voice and enrich the timbre. Then, according to the actor's singing, the musician mimics the level of the pitch and gently plays to form a supporting tone. This reform was successful. It greatly enriched the music of Yue Opera. After the painstaking exploration of the musicians, it also absorbed the folk tunes "Liu Qingniang", "Little Door", "Crying the Emperor" and other musical tones and Qu styles. Meanwhile, these Qu styles borrowed during this period have been passed down to the present day and become the traditional Qu styles of Yue Opera. At this point, the small song class band has been complete, initially with the scale of opera band, this change marks the history of the history of the small song class period and the beginning of the "Shaoxing opera" period.



Figure 5. The first band used the three Instruments: drum, banhu, douzi,

Source: Yue Opera Museum

### 4.3 The middle stage of Yue Opera development (1922-1938)

In September 1921, by Fei Cuitang, Yan Huanting and other groups of male class, in Shanghai first theater performance. The next day, the News newspaper published an advertisement "Move from the west gate to play Shaoxing Opera", which was the first time for Yue opera to be called "Shaoxing opera". On June 16, 1922, "Little Song Class" entered "Big World", the largest comprehensive entertainment venue in Shanghai. On this day, an advertisement was published in Shenbao, using the name of "Shaoxing Drama of Yue County Class". In 1923, Ma Tiao, Wang Yongchun and more than 30 people, separated from the Shengping Song stage, another group of opera troupe performed in the Shanghai Big World, because at that time in the big world performance and Shaoxing Big class, in order to distinguish the brand of "Shaoxing Opera". Thus, the development of Yue opera entered a new historical stage. The name of "Shaoxing Literary drama" was changed from "small song class" to "Shaoxing Literary drama". (Shen Liang,2005).

This period is a succession and development period from the content to the form of Yue opera. Great progress was also made in the transformation of the repertoire, such as the formation of Jasper Hairpin, Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai and Meng Lijun, which showed the unique style of Yue opera and laid the development direction of "talent and beauty drama" in Yue opera. At the same time, by learning from Wuju, Peking Opera, Shaoxing opera and other great operas, artists replaced the original small life operas with ancient costume operas and serial-script operas, and added dozens of new plays, such as

Maitreya Buddha, Meng Lijun, Liu Jin Sending a Melon, A Girl for a Prince, Jade Dragon Prince, Zhaojun and Pan, La Camellia, Meng Jiangnu, Lotus Lamp and so on. It can be seen that in this period, in the development stage of the small song class to Shaoxing opera, the artists are eager to learn to progress, bold reform, in the improvement of the level of music performance and art have made remarkable achievements.

The development of Yue Opera in this period, from the perspective of the main body of performance, has developed from only male actors to female actors, "Shaoxing opera" in this period can be divided into two stages: male class (1922-1923) and female class (1923-1938).

#### 4.3.1 Male Class (1922-1923)

During this period, after entering Shanghai, the male class artists struggled for several years, insisting on learning with an open mind and continuous innovation, and finally opened up the situation. This greatly encouraged the artists who stayed in Sheng county. They thought that men would have a future if they learned drama, so they recruited apprentices to take classes and become teachers to train the next generation. The best of them are continuously transported to Hangzhou, Shanghai opera. In addition, although more artists did not have the opportunity to enter Shanghai, but more than ten of them as a team, tour in the local urban and rural areas, some also flow in Shaoxing, Zhuji, Linhai, Xiangshan, Cixi and other places, so that the influence of Shaoxing opera spread to more places. According to incomplete statistics, in the heyday of men's Shaoxing literary drama, the male class has been in Shanghai Xinhua Garden, Jinghua Opera Garden, Shengping Stage, Republican Theater and other more than 30 theaters. There are more than 20 opera groups, such as "Yuan Shengmu Class, Meiduo Ashun Class, Ma Chaoshui Zhang Yubiao Class, Wang Yongchun Bai Yumei Class, and almost all the famous performers in Shaoxing Sheng county are concentrated IN Shanghai.

During this period, the singing gradually evolved into various styles (medium plate, allegro) and wailing-style. In addition to retaining the chiban and flat drum accompaniment, Erhu has replaced the voice "Lingshou" accompaniment, and some have added three strings and percussion instruments. The main melody is Sixian normal tune, so this period is also called men's Sixian normal tune period. Later, in order to show historical themes more widely, the artists of Shaoxing Untantan were recruited, so Shaoxing Untantan was used as the main instrument and the way of accompaniment was

developed. According to the content of the play, it is divided into martial arts play and literary play. The martial opera is accompanied by big gong, big drum, King Kong leg, Banhu, three strings and suona. The singing is made of "Erfan", the main melody of Shaoxing Rutan, including various styles. In the performance, gongs, ruler plates and single leather drums were used to beat, and the singing style was still in the original normal tone. At the same time, it also absorbed the "Wulin tone" of Hangzhou Opera and the "Qing singing style" of Yao Opera.

#### 4.3.2 Female Class Stage (1923-1938)

During the performance in Shanghai, male classes were influenced by "Mao Opera", the male class had the idea of returning home to do women's classes. In July 1923, the first female course in the history of Yue Opera was opened in Shijia 'ao Village, Ganlin Town, Sheng county, Shaoxing. Since then, Shaoxing literary drama has entered the stage of female class development.

Shaoxing literature creation of female class, at that time many of the young woman, to break the old social and family of resistance and the constraints of their own, took to the stage, not only has the ability to make a living, but also changed their social status, the fight for human rights in the society, the fight for freedom, the most important thing is to promote the development of Yue opera.

In the Shaoxing opera period, mixed performance of men and women appeared. From a sociological point of view, the main reason was that it was difficult to make a living by farming at that time, so artists gradually gave up farming and farming, and their wives and children accompanied them as the troupe began to travel abroad to perform for a long time. Some clever children and young women also learn to sing by constant influence. When their relatives can't perform on stage, the situation of mixed performance naturally appeared. In the period of mixed performance, roles were assigned according to the talents of actors, not necessarily men playing men and women playing women. Therefore, it was natural for girls to give birth to boys, or even boys and girls to share the same stage and act together.

Such development and performance, first of all, it changed the development direction of Yue Opera. The birth of the female class is the beginning of the transformation from the all-male opera troupe to the all-female opera troupe, which means that the situation of the stage dominated by the male actors will come to an end. This art form, in

which both male and female roles are played by women, has led to great changes in music singing, performance style and the content of the repertory, leading to the development of the opera style in the direction of elegance and beauty. (Xu Wei,2004).

Among the hundreds of local operas in China, there are co-productions of men and women, men playing female roles and women playing male roles. However, the female troupe of Yue opera was the only one in which women played all the male and female roles, and later became a unique type of drama in the Chinese opera art garden. It can be said that the birth of the female troupe directly changed the development direction of Shaoxing literary drama, and also laid a solid foundation for the female Yue opera.

#### **4.4 Mature period of Yue Opera Development (1938-1949)**

In the century-long history of the history of Yue Opera, the outbreak of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression became an important dividing line. Before that, the performance form of Yue Opera was mainly dominated by male classes. "Shaoxing Wenopera" of that period was in its heyday after repeated improvement and reference by artists, and famous actors and performances were mainly concentrated in the metropolitan area of Shanghai. However, although the emergence of "women's opera" is also booming, the activity area is mainly in Zhejiang. Although there are also women's opera performances in Shanghai, most of them are of a fluid nature, and they have a low status and little influence in the cultural pattern of opera music in Shanghai. However, with the outbreak of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression in China, the situation changed significantly, and female opera troupes swarmed to Shanghai. Meanwhile, male performing groups coexisted with female performing groups, but declined sharply and were soon replaced by female performing groups. At this stage, the main body of Yue opera performers changed from male to female, and the opera completed a great transformation.

Since 1938, women's opera troupes have gradually replaced men's opera troupes. Famous actresses of Yue Opera, such as Yao Shuijuan, Shi Yinhua, Xiao Dangui, etc., were all predecessors committed to the reform of Yue opera at that time and made their own contributions to the development of women's Yue Opera. In 1942, practitioners of Yue Opera led by Yuan Xuefen began a comprehensive reform of the opera. Since then, Yin Guifang water recruitment has also been cast into the ranks of reform. Of course, the

most influential is at that time in order to the development of the career of Yue opera and joint benefit performance, in order to really promote the reform of Yue opera "Yue opera ten sisters": Yuan Xuefen, Yin Guifang Cong Shuizhao, Xiao Dangui, Xu Yulan Fu Quanxiang Fan Ruijuan, Xu Tianhong Zhang Guifeng, Wu Xiaolou they made a great contribution to the development and progress of Yue opera. In October 1942, practitioners of Yue Opera led by Yuan Xuefen began a comprehensive reform of the opera, which was called "New Yue Opera". Beginning in September 1944, Yin Guifang and Zhu Shuizhao started to create the ranks of "new Yue Opera". Later, major Yue opera troupes in Shanghai took this road, which brought about great changes and development of Yue Opera. The main body of Shaoxing opera has changed from male actors to female actors, and the Shaoxing opera has completed a great transformation.

In a word, the communication and promotion of Yue opera in this period had moved from rural areas and small and medium-sized towns in Zhejiang province to Shanghai, the largest metropolis in China. In order to adapt to the environment and audience in Shanghai, and to stand, survive and develop, the actors of Yue Opera continued to make changes. At the same time, influenced by the social and cultural environment of Shanghai, it has provided rich nutrition for the progress of the art of Yue Opera, and provided a rare historical opportunity for the rapid development of Yue opera. It can be seen that the reform of Yue Opera in this period created a soft and sad melody in music, which became the main tone for the development and performance of Yue opera in the future, and gradually formed a genre of singing. It had a profound influence on the establishment of the form and style of Yue opera in the repertoire, music, stage image, troupe structure and operation mechanism, and opened up a new stage in the history of Yue opera.

#### **4.5 Flourishing Period of Yue Opera (1949-2022)**

With the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the development of women's Yue Opera entered a vigorous period. The whole circle of Yue opera has been continuously reformed and improved, and great achievements have been made in various aspects such as organization, construction, talent training, repertoire creation and comprehensive art, etc. Numerous schools of singing have been formed, and the performances of Yue opera are known to more people, and the popularity of Yue opera

actors has also been continuously improved. Since the 1950s, it has gradually expanded to the outside world, and has been loved by audiences and listeners all over the country and even overseas.

The 1970s was a golden period for the development of Yue Opera. Led by Zhejiang Province, Yue Opera performers were selected from various cities for centralized training, especially vocal music teachers were hired for auxiliary guidance. With the increasing influence of Yue opera, the number of Yue opera troupes is also on the rise. According to the statistics of Zhejiang Provincial Cultural Market Administration Office in 1995, there were 238 folk Yue opera troupes registered with local cultural authorities with more than 7,000 practitioners.

By the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, the development of Yue opera was very rapid. There were nearly 100 folk Yue opera troupes in Shengzhou, the hometown of Yue opera, and more than 200 in Huangyan, Luqiao, Yuhuan, Wenling, Jiaojiang and other places under Taizhou. Other cities also have a large number of folk Yue troupes set up and developed. During this period, Yue Opera went abroad and was performed in Asia, America and Europe for many times, generating great response. After watching the Yue Opera, the famous Japanese folk dancer Dai Jieko said, "Your performance is so beautiful. Your folk music is beautiful and beautiful." The city government of Grenoble in France also held a grand reception, awarded the city's Medal of Honor to the general director of art Yuan Xuefen, awarded the city's Medal of Honorary citizen to the three leaders of the troupe, which shows the influence of Yue opera in foreign countries.

At the present stage after the 21st century, the artists of Yue opera have made bold innovations, breaking the regularity and conservatism of traditional Chinese opera, so that we can see the distinctive personality and characteristics of Yue opera, which is to learn from other people and innovate without sticking to conventional methods. With the continuous development of science and technology, it is worth noting that the changes in stage beauty of Yue Opera are also very significant, the scenery on the stage also began to try to use real or made vivid props to arrange, not only in the house, plants began to pay attention to three-dimensional scenery, but also use real water and rain to express the plot, even the use of spray painting, LED and other individual plays and even do special design. Rain is rain falling from the sky, water is water flowing on the



earth, and life is closely integrated. For example, the lighting also has a greater change, there are more tones, so that the stage is more beautiful, and the lighting is controlled by the computer, more flexible. In the aspect of dancing, he dares to be the first, adding a large number of modern elements, using the artistic conception combining image and abstraction to perform. During this period, the Yue Opera from Zhejiang to the whole country, became a major type of opera, is considered to be the second largest type of opera in China, also known as "the most popular local type of opera", in foreign countries known as "Chinese opera", the first batch of China's national intangible cultural heritage list.

#### 4.6 Conclusion

This chapter mainly studies the development of Yue opera from five parts:

1) Origin period of Yue Opera (before 1906), the form of Yue opera during this period was "Tiantou Singing Books" to "Landing Singing Songs" performance period. At this time, with the development of the art of "singing books", it not only has auditory image, but also adds visual image. The practice of performance has formed a transition from singing books in the form of quyi to opera in the form of stage play. The early development of this kind of rap art prepared for the transition from Yue Opera to opera.

2) Early development of Yue Opera (1906-1922), this period was the "small song class" performance period of Yue opera. "Little Song Class" has experienced the rapid development from birth to spread and then to Shanghai. "Small song class" of the band has been complete, initially with the scale of the opera band. This change marked the end of the "Little Song Class" period in the history of Yue Opera and the beginning of the next "Shaoxing Literary Opera" period.

3) The middle stage of Yue Opera development (1922-1938). During this period, Yue Opera experienced the performance form of "Shaoxing Literary Opera" and male class stage to female class stage. Such development and performance, first of all, it changed the development direction of Yue Opera. The birth of the female class is the beginning of the transformation from the all-male opera troupe to the all-female opera troupe, which means that the situation of the stage dominated by the male actors will come to an end. This art form, in which both male and female roles are played by

women, has led to great changes in music singing, performance style and the content of the repertory, leading to the development of the opera style in the direction of elegance and beauty.

4) Mature period of Yue Opera Development (1938-1949). This period was the performance form of "Women's Yue Opera". At this stage, the main performers of Yue opera changed from male actors to female actors, which completed a great transformation. The spread of Yue Opera from rural Zhejiang Province to Shanghai, China's largest metropolis, At the same time, influenced by the social and cultural environment of Shanghai, it has provided rich nutrition for the progress of the art of Yue Opera, and provided a rare historical opportunity for the rapid development of Yue opera. It can be seen that the reform of Yue Opera in this period created a soft and sad melody in music, which became the main tone for the development and performance of Yue opera in the future, and gradually formed a genre of singing. It had a profound influence on the establishment of the form and style of Yue opera in the repertoire, music, stage image, troupe structure and operation mechanism, and opened up a new stage in the history of Yue opera.

5) Flourishing Period of Yue Opera (1949-2022). This period was the "Comprehensive" Performance Form. With the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the development of women's Yue Opera entered a vigorous period. The performance of Yue Opera is known to more and more people, and many singing styles have been formed. Since the 1950s, it has gradually expanded to the outside world, and has been loved by audiences and listeners all over the country and even overseas. During this period, the Yue Opera from Zhejiang to the whole country, became a major type of opera, is considered to be the second largest type of opera in China.

Table 1. The Development of Yue Opera in Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province, China

Period	The development	Performance form
Before 1906	Origin period of Yue Opera.The development of this period include the 3 performance forms.	From "Tiantou Singing Books" to "singing alone the door",from "singing along the door"to "singing on the ground".
1906-1922	Early development of Yue Opera.The development of this period is "small song class"form, include the 2 parts.	1.the birth and dissemination of "Small song class"2."Small song class" transferred to Shanghai
1922-1938	The middle stage of Yue Opera development.The development of this period is "Shaoxing Literary Drama "form, include the following 2 parts.	1.Male Class (1922-1923) 2.Female Class (1923-1938)
1938-1949	Mature period of Yue Opera development	The development of this period is "Women's Yue Opera"performance form.
1949-2022	Flourishing Period of Yue Opera	The development of this period is "Comprehensive" performance form.

## Chapter V

### The Vocal Style of Yue Opera

This chapter describes and reviews the vocal style of Yue opera based on field investigation and information provided by informants. The research is carried out from the following parts:

- 5.1 The vocal style of the male roles in Yue Opera
- 5.2 The vocal style of the female roles in Yue Opera
- 5.3 The characteristics of the vocal style of Yue Opera

#### **5.1 The vocal style of the male roles in Yue Opera**

In 1936, the alternating of male and female voice performances in Yue Opera had been basically completed. During the formation period of the early Yue opera genre, female actors were the main actors, even male roles were performed by female actors. As the main line of the art of Yue opera, male characters bear heavy responsibilities, and their absolute importance in the field of Yue opera has been established since the beginning of its formation. By 1966, six outstanding female actors had created six genres of male roles. In the process of singing, the founder of each school constantly gropes and performs according to his own voice characteristics and singing habits. Every actor has his own distinct personality. After appreciating their audio and video materials, it is easy to find that the founders' singing style is smooth, especially full of emotion. The following will analyze and sort out the singing characteristics of Yin Guifang, Fan Ruijuan, Bi Chunfang and other three most representative founders of the "male role" genre. (Zhao Danrong,2018)

##### **5.1.1 The vocal style of Yin genre**

Yin Guifang founded the Yin genres of Yue Opera, which is one of the most popular genres today. Yin Guifang was born in Xinchang, Shaoxing on December 1, 1919. She inherits the fine tradition of Chinese rap art, and sings smoothly and eloquently. In the 1940s, Yin Guifang was actively engaged in the reform of Yue Opera. On the basis of inheriting the tradition and combining with his own conditions, she learned from others' strengths, blended in one stove, and deliberately sought for innovation, and

founded a unique genre. The famous drama critic Shen Zu 'an explained: "Yin genre of verve, similar to Women school of painting in the light ink landscape." (Chen HX, Huang Yu ,2006). Yin Guifang concluded that: "The singing should start from the content, not be constrained by some characteristics of the genre of singing, but also play to the unique style of the genre of singing." (Li Huikang 1995).

Yin genre is characterized by euphemistic lingering, free and easy deep, simple and meaningful, fresh and open, which is a typical style based on soft, soft and rigid. Yin send show tone kind nature, according to the different characters in different plays specific feelings, like using grace note, the note presents a variety of changes, especially the aria, large section of the narrative as the emotion turn, interject a slow, lasting appeal, full-bodied cavity, not only to fully express emotion, and make the audience get the satisfaction of auditory appreciation.

The representative works of Yin genre include "Wang Qiang" in the play Apricot Flower Village, "Ge Nenniang" in the play Ge Nenniang, "Liang Shanbo" in the play Liang Shanbo, "Qu Yuan" in the play Qu Yuan, and "Jia Baoyu" in the play Dream of Red Mansions.

Yin Guifang Yin sent descendants of excellent representatives and genre includes: shinohara GuiFang, Yin Ruifang, XingGuiFen, small fang, Chen Shujun, yoon Mao Weitao, frank zhao, xiao ya, junan wang, Elaine teo, li-yu Chen, Wang Yimin, li-hua xing, Wang Weiping, Li Xiaowen, Wang Qing, chun-lei qi, zhang Lin, Yang Wei Wen, Wu Sufei, Cai zhe, etc.



Figure 6. Yin genre actors to sing opera

Source : Zhao Ying



Figure 7. Music ensemble scene of Yin genre

Source : Zhao Ying



Figure 8. Yue opera “Apricot Flower Village”

Source : Zhao Ying

In figure 8, "Apricot Flower Village" this classic verse, shows the character's psychological activities. From the use of musical elements and the creation of lyrics, we look at the music image portrayal of the music. From the point of view of the tonality of the music, there is no doubt that this is a piece of national mode. However, it is not composed with pure national pentatonic scale, but with partial components. In just two bars, so many partial notes are added to "change palace", which makes the performance of the music vary, because the previous phrases are all ethnic pentatonic scale, without partial notes, very peaceful and neutral.



Figure 9. Yue opera “Apricot Flower Village”

Source : Zhao Ying

In figure 9, the sudden and numerous additions of the partial tone make the gentle music with undercurrents, but also makes the singing with a little bit of uneasiness, so that the audience also has such psychological expectations. Lyrics of "Yuan yuan bang qiao san geng tian", the performance of the quiet night, Bangzi sound can be heard clearly. And lyrics of "Fu qi xiang dui shang wei mian ", it causes people to question, has been three more days, why not sleep? Lyrics of "Jian niang zi feng yi zai deng xia ", then switched a scene, husband and wife relative speechless, the wife to sew clothes to express messy mind.



Figure 10. Yue opera “Apricot Flower Village”

Source : Zhao Ying

In figure 10, it can be seen that the use of scales and musical expression are vividly combined. After the adagio, his mood gradually advanced, the speed of music also accelerated, and the promotion of his musical image was coordinated with the use of mode scale. The front is still the main pentatonic, and the back of the partial change palace.



Figure 11. Yue opera “Apricot Flower Village”

Source : Zhao Ying

In figure 11, The added offset makes the musical performance of the music more passionate. Although it is wandering in the middle and low notes, it appears firmer.

#### 5.1.2 The vocal style of Fan genre

Fan Ruijue was born in Huangze town, ShengZhou city, Zhejiang province on January 6, 1924. As a master of Yue opera, her achievements and character are admirable. Fan RuiJuan became famous at home and abroad for her performance of"

The Butterfly Lovers". The Yue opera genre she founded, Fan genre, has a very colorful and smooth melody, and uses dense notes to describe strong feelings without any hard or artificial feeling.

Because of her hard work and good voice condition, Fan Ruijuan showed her artistic talent very early. After coming to Shanghai in January 1938, he absorbed a wide range of artistic nutrition, studied hard and practiced hard, and developed a relatively broad tone.

In 1945, when she performed the "Butterfly Lovers Ai Shi Shan Bo", she cooperated with her lute master Zhou Baocai. Based on the traditional singing style of "six-character tone", she absorbed the "anti-Erhuang" form of Peking Opera and invented the "string down" form of Yue Opera, which made great contribution to the development of Yue opera music. She grasped the artistic characteristics of opera music, which is revelatory and summative, and made good use of the creative and performance techniques of calling the head and quoting the sentence, so as to achieve the goal of winning the lead. She is good at expressing the advantages of emotion, and in the pronunciation of the injection of strong emotional color, dig the thoughts and feelings of the characters in the play, so that the music image rich and colorful. Like Yin Guifang, Fan Ruijuan also like using grace note, but the purpose of using and skills has its own features, she is more grace note from the big jump into line to represent the rising tone, falling tone, emphatically pay attention to the change of tone, the volume of the charge, strengthening feeling or strengthen the male sex of fortitude, and on the basis of the men and thick atmosphere to improve the ability to sing. (Zhou Dafeng 1981).

The representative works of Fan genre include Liang Shanbo in "Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai", Jiao Zhongqing in "Peacock Flying Southeast", Zheng Yuanhe in "Li Wa Biography", and Guo Yuan in the "Gold Branch".

Outstanding successors and representative figures of Fan genre are: Ding Saijun, Chen Qi, Shi Jihua, Shao Wenjuan, Shi Jihua, Chen Xueping, Jiang Yao, Zhang Ruihong, Han Tingting, Meng Kejuan, Fang Xuewen, Wu Fenghua, Zhang Qingqing, Wang Roosang, Chen Xinqi, Xu Ming, Xiao Mingzhu, etc.





Figure 12. Fan genre actors to sing opera

Source : Zhao Ying



Figure 13. Music ensemble scene of Fan genre

Source : Zhao Ying

4 慰, wei, 她说道 ta shuo dao 咫尺天涯 zhi chi tian ya  
 难相会, nan xiang hui, 此身未来心已来, ci shen wei lai xin yi lai,  
 5 但见她 dan jian ta 珍重二字 zhen zhong er zi 满纸写, man zhi xie, 她望我除灾 ta wang wo chu zai  
 8 又脱 you tuo 晦, hui, 英台啊! ying tai a! 可怜我刻骨相思染重病 ke lian w ke gu xiang si ran zhong bing  
 可怜你 ke lian ni 要想聚首 yao xiang ju shou 不能 bu neng 来。 lai.

Figure 14. Yue opera "Liang Zhu"

Source : Zhao Ying

In figure 14, the lyrics of "Butterfly Lovers" show the image of Liang Shanbo after receiving a letter from Zhu Yingtai. At this time, he was seriously ill, because Zhu Yingtai's letter added to his worries. Although Zhu Yingtai expresses her feelings in the lyrics, it does not bring comfort to Liang Shanbo who is seriously ill, which is clearly shown in the lyrics.

(白) 这是她的青丝细发吗? (bai) zhe shi ta de qing si xi fa ma?  
 5 杭城读书 hang cheng du shu 三 san 长 chang 载, zai, 实指望为梁家 shi zhi wang wei liang jia  
 增 zeng 光 guang 辉, hui, 谁知道为 le 了 英台啊 ying tai a 女, nv,

Figure 15. Yue opera "Liang Zhu"

Source : Zhao Ying

In figure 15 , Chinese opera is particularly good at drawling, and there are many drawling in this piece, too. Especially when Liang Shanbo is seriously ill, it is more vivid. At the same time, the lyrics form a sharp contrast with the opera voice, a word with many sounds, a sense of polyphony music, but the lyrics and melody of the different polyphony.

The music has two speed marks, one is the speed mark of the singing voice, the other is the speed mark of the instrument interplay.

The musical score consists of three staves. The first staff is instrumental accompaniment in 4/4 time with a tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = 55$ . The second staff is a vocal line in 4/4 time with a tempo marking of *Lento*  $\text{♩} = 48$ . The lyrics are: 母 亲 带 回 英 台 信, (mu qin dai hui ying tai xin,). The third staff is another vocal line in 4/4 time with a tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = 55$ . The lyrics are: 书 信 上 面 言 安 (shu xin shang mian yan an), 慰, (wei,). The lyrics for the final part are: 她 说 道 咫 尺 天 涯 (ta shuo dao zhi chi tian ya).

Figure 16. Yue opera "Liang Zhu"

Source : Zhao Ying

In figure16 , the music "fast accompaniment and slow singing" makes the image of Liang Shanbo in pain and dying, in sharp contrast to the slightly faster speed of the music. Two different speeds produce a sense of contradiction in the hearts of the audience, so that the auditory psychology has asynchronous pressure, so that it is easier to understand Liang Shanbo's mood at this moment. In addition, the scale used in the music is the Qingle scale of the national scale, and its composition is consistent with the western scale mode, except that the Qingjiao and Changgong are in the position of partial tone. The use of Qing music scale makes the musical image of the music richer

and more three-dimensional, and also vividly shows Liang Shanbo's missing in pain, lingering because of illness in hospital bed, and the pain of parting.

### 5.1.3 The vocal style of Bi genre

Bi Chunfang was born in Shanghai. At the age of 12, she entered Hong Xing Stage Theater. In 1948, she participated in the Snow Sound troupe led by Yuan Xuefen, and then transferred to the Dongshan Yue Arts Club led by Fan Ruijuan and Fu Quanxiang. In 1950, he partnered with Qi Yaxian to form the Yue Troupe, and they cooperated for half a century. She learned from Fan Ruijuan in singing and performance, and then absorbed some characteristics of Yin Guifang. She kept innovating in practice and formed her own singing style, which was recognized as "Bi School". Bi Chunfang founded the genre of male role in Yue opera: Bi genre, is another important genre of male role in Yue opera.

Her performances style first learned from Fan Ruijuan in singing and performance, and then absorbed some characteristics of Yin Guifang. Therefore, both performance characteristics and singing skills have a lot of characteristics of Fan and Yin. In practice, she kept innovating and gradually formed her own unique style in singing. Bi Chunfang sings anacreontic bold and unrestrained, fluent and free, with rugged male characteristics. She often appears in the line of rhythm, so that the tune is angular and elastic. Bi Chunfang's singing always gives people a sense of stretch, no matter the bass and treble can be used freely. The melody of the phrase fluctuates greatly, but she can integrate the pronunciation well into the melody, and the words are clear. (Lian Bo 2006). At the same time, Bi Pai is good at performing dramatic roles, using exaggerated and changeable singing to show the character image, through the pitch of strong and weak contrast and meticulous and changeable singing, to deduce the character's inner feelings.

The representative works of the Bi genre include Xu Xian in the “Legend of the White Snake”, Guangxu Emperor in the “Guangxu Emperor”, Wang Jinlong in the “Yutang Spring”, Lin Zhaode in the “Blood Handprint”, Selling You Lang in the “Selling You Lang” and Tang Yin in the “Three Smiles”, etc.

Outstanding successors and genre representatives of Bi's genre include: Yang Wenwei, Ding Lianfang, Dong Beifen, Ding Lianfang, Bi Jifang, Xu Ningsheng, Yang

Tonghua, Zhang Zhenying, Xu Wenfang, Qi Xiaohong, Ding Sufen, Yang Tonghua, Ding Xiaohua, Sun Jianhong, Ruan Jianrong, Li Xiaoxu, etc.



Figure 17. Bi genre actors to sing opera

Source : Zhao Ying



Figure 18. Music ensemble scene of Bi genre

Source : Zhao Ying

5 一轮明月照高楼 万倾银光冷悠悠  
 yi lun ming yue zhao gao lou wan qing yin guang leng you

9 悠悠。秀英想起终身事，甜酸苦辣  
 you. xiu ying xiang qi zhong shen shi, suan tian ku la

涌心头。光阴似箭催人老，青春已逝  
 yong xin tou. guang yin si jian cui ren lao, qing chun yi shi

Figure 19. Yue opera "Ji Gui"

Source : Zhao Ying

In figure 19, Wang Xiuying in the lyrics of the moon sigh has passed the youth and their own restless state of mind. Wang Xiuying's lament is presented by the national scale, there is a partial tone change palace, coupled with the clear Angle in the door, constitute the performance of the seven sound scales. In traditional Chinese music, some musical sketches can be expressed in pentatonic scale. If the narration of a long opera is to express the emotions, it is necessary to use the partial to the pentatonic scale. The sad solo is in stark contrast to the duet of the next two. The former is often attached to the point rhythm, and the basic rhythm match and adagio, so that this sad pacing music image performance.

6 说远不远近不近 离此约有三里零  
 shuo yuan bu yuan jin bu jin li ci yue you san li ling

11 清河坊开豆腐店，招牌叫做许隆兴。我叫许大，  
 qing he fang kai dou fu dian, zhao pai jiao zuo xu long xing wo jiao xu da,

年十八，至今尚未许婚姻。小户人家少礼仪，  
 nian shi ba zhi jin shang wei xu hun yin xiao hu ren jia shao li yi,

Figure 20. Yue opera "Ji Gui"

Source : Zhao Ying

In figure 20, when the singer sings in opposition, the rhythm becomes brighter and the range of melody intervals is much larger. This shows that the singers are getting on well with each other. The syncopated rhythm is added to the answer part, which gives the music more thrust and makes the dramatic conflict more intense. Moreover, syncopated rhythm is used in the rhythm of both singing and answering, which achieves unity in music thinking. The constant unification of the rhythm of the music also unifies the singer's mood.

## 5.2 The vocal style of the female roles in Yue Opera

As female role genres, the founder of Yue opera female role genres also created brilliant. There are seven founders of the main genre of female role, and they are all excellent and distinctive in both singing and performing. It is interesting to note that in the female role genres, several genres are derived from the Yuan genre, so the difference between the female role genres of Yue opera is not very big. On the contrary, they learn from each other, but there are a lot of common ground, such as graceful, clear pronunciation, especially in singing are very attention to the emotion with sound, sound in the emotion. From the point of view of vocal music, they have mastered a lot of excellent singing skills, it is worth our analysis and learning. The following part focuses on the analysis and analysis of the performance style and singing characteristics of the three most representative founders of the female role genres, including Yuan Xuefen, Lv Ruiying and Fu Quanxiang.

### 5.2.1 The vocal style of Yuan genre

Yuan Xuefen founded the Yuan genre of the female role genre of Yue Opera. She is the source of several female role genres of Yue Opera formed later, and plays a special important role in the development history of the singing art of Yue opera. Yuan Xuefen was born in 1922 in Sheng county, Zhejiang Province, the hometown of Yue opera. At the age of 11, she entered the Four Seasons Spring Opera class. In October 1942, Yuan Xuefen advocacy of shaoxing opera reform, starting from the characters, in the traditional singing tone, frequent and repeated use of in flexion, form a kind of sad cry singing tone, gradually formed a radical, the downward melody characteristic, present a slow deep singing style, therefore, play mostly tragedy. Yuan School performances do not pursue fancy tunes, but pay attention to the expression of real

feelings, forming the characteristics of plain, gentle and delicate, deep and implicit, mellow charm. Good at according to the character's specific personality and emotion, the tune is simple, singing with emotion, with real feelings and embellish the charm of the heart. The melody of the song twists and turns, the aftertaste is endless, and the tone is delicate and graceful, forming a unique charm. She performs freely, the color of her voice is relatively simple, lack of a little metal texture, but formed her unique wailing, deeply plaintive performance tone.

The representative works of the Yuan genre include Xianglin Sister in the play of “Xianglin”, Cui Yingying in the play of the “Western Chamber”, Zhu Yingtai in the play of The Sad History of “Liang Zhu”, and Fragrant Concubine in the play of “Fragrant Concubine”.

Outstanding successors and representatives of Yuan genre include: Qi Yaxian, Zhang Yunxia, Jin Caifeng, Lv Ruiying, Xiao Shuizhao, Zhu Dongyun, Fang Yafen, Tao Qi, Hua Yiqing, Li Peijie, Chen Huidi, Xu Qiong, Xu Xiaofei, etc.



Figure 21. Yuan genre actors to sing opera

Source : Zhao Ying





Figure 22. Yuan genre music accompaniment scene

Source : Zhao Ying

(幕后爆竹声  
(mu hou bao zhu sheng)

(祥林嫂白) 过年了, 又是一年了我在这世上过了多  
(xiang lin sao bai) guonian le, you shi yi nian le wo zai zhe shi shang guo le duo

少年了? 长啊  
shaonian le? zhang a

Figure 23. Yue opera "Xianglin Sister"

Source : Zhao Ying

In figure 23, "Xianglin Sister" This piece of music is the character's monologue, or with reading, or with singing, will sing out their own tragic life. The compact rhythm and the sound of firecrackers, accompanied by the old and weak confession of Xianglin Sister-in-law, is so sad and helpless. As the background music, the intensity of the prelude is from *p* to *pp*, which sets off the confession of Xianglinsao. At the beginning of the melody, the music adopts the pentatonic scale, for the musical expression, relatively easy to proceed, the melody is smooth.

年。这长长的日子我  
nian. zhe zhang zhang de ri zi wo

怎么过? 如梦(啊)似真  
zen me guo? ru meng (a) si zhen

在眼前。  
zai yan qian.

Figure 24. Yue opera “Xianglin Sister”

Source : Zhao Ying

In figure 24, this section of singing, the addition of partial tone makes the emotion of the music more intense, adding variation on the basis of the original, so that the singer's mood further forward. The music gives the character "Qian" a close-up, which means to emphasize it with a long drawl and emphasize the starting point of Xianglinsao's tragedy from the length and point of time.

祥林(他)还在摇篮眠。我是  
xiang lin (ta) hai zai yao lan mian. wo shi

日间喂他三餐(啊)食,  
ri jian wei ta san can (a) shi,

半信半疑难自解,  
ban xin ban yi nan zi jie,

似梦似醒离人  
si meng si xing li ren

Figure 25. Yue opera “Xianglin Sister”

Source : Zhao Ying

In figure 25, In the Xianglin sister-in-law recalled that they will take care of Xianglin raised music, only Bangzi and Yue Hu accompaniment. Without the support of the band, this piece of music, which is similar to the chorus, has a strong contrast with the whole. At last, the music becomes more sorrowful when it is added to the chorus. She ended the painful inquiry with a chorus of female voices.

### 5.2.2 The vocal style of Fu genre

Fu Quanxiang founded the Sinian school of Yue opera: Fu School. Fu Quanxiang's voice condition is good, wide range, sweet and bright timbre, known as the "golden voice". At the age of ten, Fu Quanxiang enrolled in a training class and studied with Shi Yinhua, who was known as the originator of women's Yue opera, to learn singing and singing characteristics. After entering Shanghai, he learned singing skills from Xiao Bai Yumei and other Yue opera artists, and learned from Peking Opera master Cheng Yanqiu and Pingtan artist Xu Yunzhi's singing characteristics such as vocalization, luck and pronunciation. According to her own conditions, using the method of combining true and falsetto, she opened up her vocal range, enhanced the expression, and gradually formed a solo singing style.

Fu Quanxiang performance features mellow, colorful, colorful tunes hopping scene, rich small cavity, singing when full of passion. Especially in the key singing sentences, jumping into the sixth, seventh, octave, or even larger intervals is often used. The high notes in Fu School singing have broken through the range of high notes commonly used in Yue opera. Moreover, when the characters have specific emotional needs, the singing is extended in the high pitch area to form a high tone that shakes the heartstrings, thus pushing the singing to a dramatic climax, which is relatively rare in Yue opera singing. Fu Quanxiang has been constantly seeking to improve the style, through delicate and rich singing and flexible use of volume, rhythm, speed, etc., to shape and depict the characters' inner thoughts and feelings. For example, in the "A thousand miles of Soul Fly" in the "Love Probe", she opened the rhythm, with seven degrees of music, to depict Fu Guiying's surging emotions, waves of anger. (Ma Liangzhong 1990). It can be seen that her singing style combination of true and false voice, euphemism and soft in the bass, high pitch area Qiaoqiao bright, high and low connect naturally, thus forming Fu genre singing distinctive characteristics.

The representative works of the Fu genre include Zhu Yingtai in the play of the “Liang Zhu” Mu Guiying in the play of “Qin Tan”, Liu Lanzhi in the play of the “peacock flying southeast”, Li Qingzhao in the play of “thinner than yellow flower”, Xishi, Wang Zhaojun, Diaochan, Yang guifei in the play of “The Four Beauties”.

Outstanding successors and representatives of the Fu genre include: Xue Ying, Zhang Jinyue, Hu Peidi, Zhang Lajiao, Hong Fenfei, Chen LAN, He Ying, Chen Ying, Chen Fei, Yan Jia, Chen Yi, Qiu Danli, Dong Jianhong, Sheng Shuyang, etc.



Figure 26. Fu genre actors to sing opera

Source : Zhao Ying



Figure 27. Music ensemble scene of Fu genre

Source : Zhao Ying

The image shows a musical score for Yue opera Ku Ling. It consists of two staves of music. The first staff has a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written in a staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are: 一 见 梁 兄 魂 魄 消 这 (yi jian liang xiong hun po xiao zhe). The second staff also has a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The melody continues with the lyrics: 飞 来 横 祸 想 不 到 我 还 道 天 从 人 愿 (fei lai heng huo xiang bu dao wo hai dao tian cong ren yuan). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Figure 28. Yue opera Ku Ling

Source : Zhao Ying

In figure 28, pentatonic scales are inadequate for expressing complex feelings. Especially with this kind of strong sadness, need to add more offsets, to create the character parting scene. Through the analysis of the score, we can see the use of the seven-tone Qing scale in the music. At the beginning of the piece, we use only the deviant of the changeover, which we can call the hexatonic level with the changeover, which is the emotional setting stage. We only call the notes outside the pentatonic scale partial, like the clear horn and the change of palace in the Qing music scale, because these notes do not play a dominant role in the musical expression, only a subordinate role. In other words, the pentatonic scale is the framework, and the partial is the decoration. However, when the music requires a strong emotional expression, the use of these offsets is no longer off-set. They appear more often and, in more positions, and are more critical to the composition of the skeleton of the musical body.

你为我染成痴相思 到如今你都不知英台。  
 ni wei wo ran cheng chi xiang si dao ru jin ya ni dou bu zhi ying tai.

来吊孝 梁家只有你单丁子 你  
 lai diao xiao liang jia zhi you ni dan ding zi ni

莫不是无人披麻把孝带 呀梁兄啊你一眼闭  
 mo bu shi wu ren pi ma ba xiao dai ya liang xiong a ni yi yan bi

一眼开 是不是难舍小妹 祝英  
 yi yan kai shi bu shi nan she xiao mei zhu ying

Figure 29. Yue opera Ku Ling

Source : Zhao Ying

In figure 29, "Ni wei wo ran chneg chi xiang si" sentence, partial tone change palace are just through the notes. And as the mood of the music progresses, its position becomes more and more important. For example, the word "Lai", changgong is in the main position of downbeat, and the three words "only you" are all partial. And to the end of the music, in addition to changing palace, also used the Angle of the deviant. In addition, the use of stress marks makes the interpretation of the music firmer. Of course, the use of clear Angle in this song is limited, except here, and the decorative door of instrumental music used once. In fact, the use of the term "off-tone" is inherently biased. In music there is no right tone and partial tone, because all notes should serve the performance of the music. The note is positive as long as it is conducive to the performance of the music, regardless of how often it is used.

### 5.2.3 The vocal style of lv genre

Lv Ruiying was born in Shanghai. In 1940, she enrolled in the "Four Friends Club" in Shanghai. In 1949, he entered Dongshan Yue Art Club, and Ding Saijun, Jin Caifeng was called "Dongshan" by the audience of the "Tripod a". In the summer of 1951, she joined the Yue Opera Experimental Troupe of East China Opera Research Institute, which was later rebuilt as Shanghai Yue Theater. Lu Ruiying has a broad opera path and specializes in female roles. She is also good at Hua Shan, Qingyi and Dao Ma Dan. Her voice range is wide and her tone is sweet.

Lv Ruiying founded the Lv genre of the female role genre of Yue Opera. Among the traditional performers of Yue opera, the singing of Lv genre is closer to the singing method of modern national vocal music songs. Lv genre is developed on the basis of Yuan genre. On the basis of inheriting the euphemistic, elegant and exquisite style of Yuan genre, it also adds lively, delicate and bright melodic colors, forming a colorful and graceful unique singing voice, which is unique in Yue opera.

In Lv Ruiying's singing tone performance, there are often four and seven partial tones. Good use of syncopated forms to increase the vitality of tunes. For example, in the Story of the Western Chamber, the phrase "I stopped embroidering when I sat at night" uses four syncopated forms to make the melody colorful and fresh. At the same time good at the use of glissando to reflect the plot, such as "A dream of Red Mansions" in Xue Baochai's singing section "Lord Yake to frequently, who do not want to high friends can Yingmen", "can" the word use seven degrees under the glissando, so that the melody is more consistent with the character of Xue Baochai. It can be seen that Lv Ruiying's singing sense of music is strong, the tune is gorgeous, the melody and rhythm are full of changes.

The representative works of Lv genre include Empress Xiao in Bleak Liao Palace Moon, Xue Baochai in A Dream of Red Mansions, and Mu Guiying in Mu Guiying in Chief.

Outstanding successors and representatives of the genre include Wu Suying, Sun Zhijun, Zhang Yongmei, Wu Suying, Tao Huimin, Huang Yiqun, Chen Huiling, Zhou Liuping, Zhao Haiying, etc.



Figure 30. Fu genre actors to sing opera

Source : Zhao Ying



Figure 31. Music ensemble scene of Fu genre

Source : Zhao Ying



Figure 32. Yue opera "Kao red"

Source : Zhao Ying



In figure 32, in order to create the character, the music uses scales, speed and force. First of all, let's look at the scale. Three partial notes are adopted in the singing passages of the music, which not only have the use of clear Angle and changing palace, but also add the changing characteristics, making the music style fresh and deep feeling at the same time. From the perspective of this piece of music, the use of the national and elegant music scale, using the change of the palace and the change of the two partial notes. The drawl of "Hou", which contains a resting rhythm of one beat, coupled with variations, gives the music full expression.

The musical score consists of four staves of music in a single system. The first two staves are vocal lines with lyrics in Chinese and Pinyin. The third staff is an instrumental line starting with a 'slow moderato' tempo marking and a 'mf' dynamic marking. The fourth staff continues the instrumental line. The lyrics are: 其 间 何 必 苦 追 究。 夫 人 啊， 你 得 放 手 时 且 放 手， 得 罢 休 时 且 罢 夜 坐 时 停 了 针 绣，

Figure 33. Yue opera Kao red

Source : Zhao Ying

In figure 32, in the lyrics, when persuading the old man, the music continuously uses the deviation of changing palace, so that the deviation occupies the main position in the music and becomes the "positive" tone. With "bias" as "positive", it shows the bold image of the characters. Secondly, the speed and strength of the music are very meticulous in shaping the music image. It starts with a slow midplate, which is the beginning of the narrative, and it starts with mf (medium strong). In the drawn-out part,

the music is "slightly slow" processing, and the intensity gradually becomes *p* (weak), showing the soft music image.

The musical score consists of four staves of music in treble clef. The first staff has lyrics: 要 (yao) 到 (dao) 西 (xi) 厢 (xiang) 去 (qu) 问 (wen) 候 (hou). It is marked with a dynamic of *p* and a tempo of 'Slightly slower', ending with a *mf* dynamic. The second staff is marked 'Original speed' and 'slow moderato'. The third staff is marked '*p*' and 'fast moderato'. The fourth staff has lyrics: 月 (yue) 儿 (er) 才 (cai) 上 (shang) 柳 (liu) 梢 (shao). The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

Figure 34. Yue opera "Kao red"

Source : Zhao Ying

In figure 34, in the narrative of the scene when the characters meet, the music speed is a little faster, with "Kuaizhongban" playing, performance that exciting scene. Thus, it can be seen that both the use of scales and the speed and intensity of the music are closely combined with the musical expression, which is a prerequisite for creating a successful musical image.

### 5.3 The characteristics of the vocal style of Yue Opera

The vocal style of Yue opera has been continuously accumulated and improved in the performance, forming various distinctive genre arts. It has become the main form of singing and performance in Yue opera. According to the role division, there are male role vocal style and female role vocal style. There are three representative male genres and three representative female genres. According to the characteristics and methods of their singing and performance, the researchers focus on their singing techniques, performance style, vocal characteristics and other aspects of the study. The vocal style of Yue Opera is systematically combed and summarized.

Male and female roles have different vocal styles. It is manifested in singing techniques, performance style, voice characteristics and so on.

As the main part of the art of Yue opera, the male role undertakes the important task of performing Yue opera. Since its emergence, it has formed an important position in this role. The male role in the singing process, constantly explore, according to their own voice characteristics and singing habits singing treatment, each actor has his own distinct personality. The male roles sing smoothly and have rich feelings. In the male role, Yin genre is characterized by euphemism lingering, free and deep, simple meaningful, fresh and stretch, is a typical soft based, soft apartment just style. Fan genre's tunes are very fluid, often using dense notes to describe stronger emotions. Bi genre's vocal style is clear and bold, with masculine characteristics. The use of dotted rhythm makes the tune clear and elastic. In the singing, exaggerated and changeable singing methods are used to express the characters' images, and the inner emotions of the characters are interpreted through the contrast between high and low pitch and the delicate and changeable singing methods.

The vocal style of female roles is different from that of male roles. The female roles sing and act well. Among the female character genres, several genres were copied from the Yuan genre, so the differences between female character genres in Yue Opera are not very great. They learn from each other and have many things in common, such as a graceful style, clear words, especially when singing, they pay attention to pronunciation and enunciation. From the point of view of vocal music, their singing reflects a lot of excellent singing skills, charm, we should learn. The performance of Yuan genre is free, the voice color is relatively simple, and its singing style does not pursue complex tunes, but pays attention to the expression of true feelings, forming the characteristics of simplicity, euphemism and delicacy, deep and implicit, and mellow charm. In accordance with the character and feelings of singing, simple tunes, with true feelings to move the audience. Singing melody twists and turns, infinite flavor, elegant and delicate, forming a unique charm. Fu genre's performance features mellow and mellow, changeable tunes, rich melodies and passionate singing. Especially in the key words, often use six degrees, seven degrees, octave jump, or even greater interval jump. The treble has broken through the commonly used treble range of Yue opera, combining

true falsetto, soft middle and low notes, bright high notes, and natural connection between high and low notes. The singing of Lu vocal is closer to the vocal style of modern national vocal music songs.

The Lu genre developed on the basis of Yuan genre. On the basis of inheriting Yuan genre's euphemistic, elegant, delicate and meaningful style, it added high and bright melodic colors to form a unique singing style. Singing a strong sense of music, melody and rhythm rich in variation.



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## Chapter VI

### Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions

#### 6.1 Conclusion

6.1.1 According to the documents and the field investigation, the researcher found that the development of Yue opera is divided into:1) Origin period of Yue Opera (before 1906). The form of Yue opera during this period was "Tiantou Singing Books" to "Singing on the ground" performance period. At this time, the early development of this kind of rap art prepared for the transition from Yue Opera to opera.2) Early development of Yue Opera (1906-1922) .This period was the "small song class" performance period of Yue opera. "Small Song Class" has experienced the rapid development from birth to spread and then to Shanghai. This change marked the end of the "Little Song Class" period in the history of Yue Opera and the beginning of the next "Shaoxing Literary Opera" period.3) The middle stage of Yue Opera development (1922-1938). During this period, Yue Opera experienced the performance form of "Shaoxing Literary Opera" and male class stage to female class stage. 4) Mature period of Yue Opera Development (1938-1949).This period was the performance form of "Women's Yue Opera". At this stage, the main performers of Yue opera changed from male actors to female actors, which completed a great transformation. 5) Flourishing Period of Yue Opera (1949-2022).The development of women's Yue Opera entered a vigorous period. The performance of Yue Opera is known to more and more people, and many singing styles have been formed.

6.1.2 According to the documents and the field investigation, the vocal style of Yue opera is divided into:1) The vocal style of the male role. Male roles sing according to their own voice characteristics and singing habits. This vocal style has distinct characteristics, smooth singing and rich feelings.2) The vocal style of the female role. The vocal style of female roles in Yue Opera are not very different. They learn from each other and have a lot in common. Graceful, clear words, especially in singing are very attention to pronunciation, the use of a lot of excellent singing skills.

## 6.2 Discussion

With the development of diversified social environment and cultural environment, traditional culture is gradually marginalized, and it is inevitable that Yue Opera will encounter difficulties and gradually decline. Contemporary young people have lost interest in Yue opera. Therefore, the government should attach importance to the protection and publicity of the Yue opera, provide policy and financial support, and provide a better platform for its development. We should also respect the artistic style of Yue opera, inherit and develop its culture, inherit and innovate its vocal style.

In the field survey, the researcher found that the interviewees were very willing to be interviewed. In the study of the development of Yue opera, the interviewees provided the researcher with a lot of effective information and materials. In the study of the vocal style of Yue opera, they provide clues and facts. The effective information about the research objectives provided by the interviewees is of great help to the research of this paper. However, these interviewees are older, they are mostly engaged in the Yue opera performance of the older generation of artists. Therefore, it is necessary for more young people to inherit and carry forward the Yue opera.

## 6.3 Suggestions

This dissertation aims to make contributions to the preservation and development of Yue opera. Due to my limited knowledge and ability, my thesis writing still has many deficiencies. The researcher hopes to get in the subsequent research process.

6.3.1 There are many representative works of vocal style of Yue opera. This study only analyzes part of the representative works and does not make a comprehensive analysis of many works on a large scale. These works deserve more in-depth analysis.

6.3.2 This study only analyzes the skills and accompaniment used by performers in the singing of Yue Opera. Besides singing, there are also complex performance skills and rules in Yue Opera. It is hoped that some researchers will study it in the future

6.3.3 The results of this study can also provide some novel perspectives for future researchers who will pursue further research into Yue opera.

6.3.4 The cultural and tourism departments of the government can adopt the results of this research into publicity materials and policies. In this way, Yue opera will be Transmission and Preservation.



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