

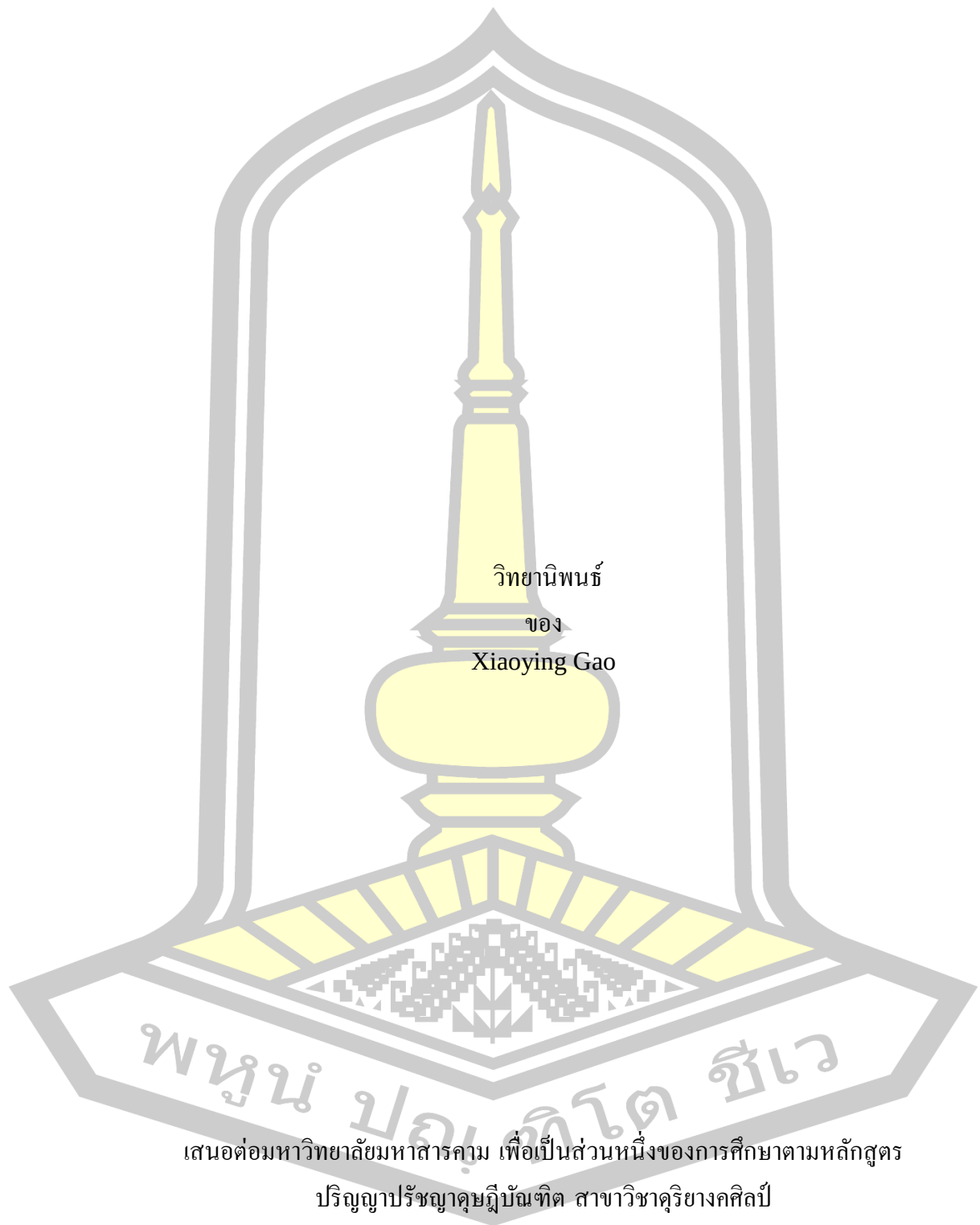
Life and Works of Zhang Baoying

Xiaoying Gao

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Music
February 2025

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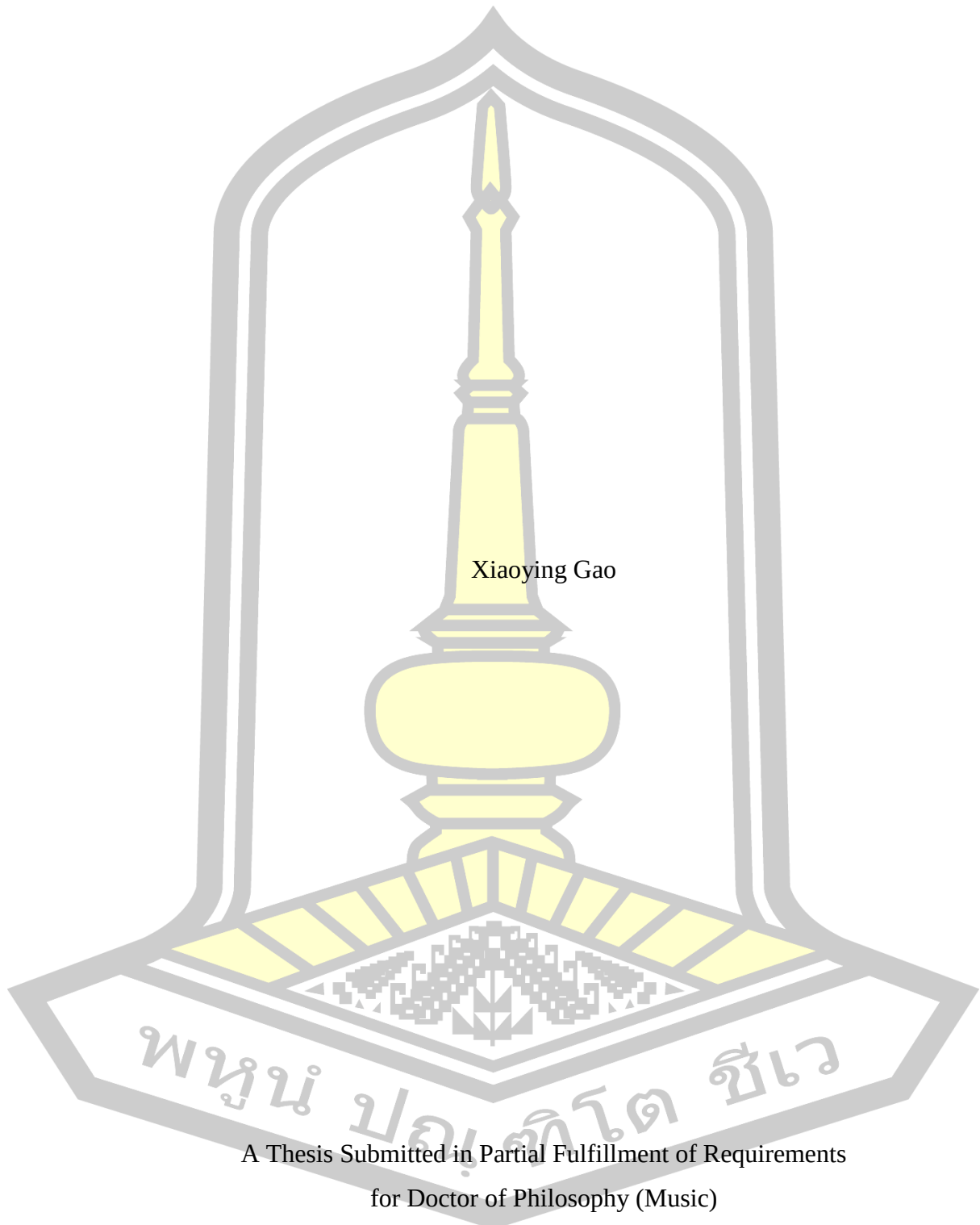
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ABSTRACT

The dissertation is concerned with the study of the Life and works of Zhang Baoying. has the following objectives: 1) To investigate family life and educational background of Zhang Baoying. 2) To investigate working experience of Zhang Baoying. 3) To analyse singing technique of Zhang Baoying. Using the theoretical methods of ethnomusicology, musicology, and sociology, the researcher investigated, analyzed, and described the data collected from a literature review and field work.

The following research results related to the above research objectives were obtained: First, School of Yu Opera during a specific period. Through Zhang Baoying as an individual, we can observe the intricate relationships between folk music culture, social groups, and societal changes. Second, by analyzing and describing Zhang Baoying's working experience, it becomes evident that she could adapt to various types of works, including modern, traditional, and adapted works, each with its own representative classics. Zhang Baoying not only created numerous classic performances but also made tireless efforts to preserve and promote the Cui School of Yu Opera. Furthermore, in terms of vocal techniques, she built upon the foundation laid by her predecessors, integrating her own unique qualities to develop a distinctive singing style that has been widely loved by audiences.

Keyword : Zhang baoying, Family life, Educational background, Working experience, Singing technique

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Xiaoying Gao

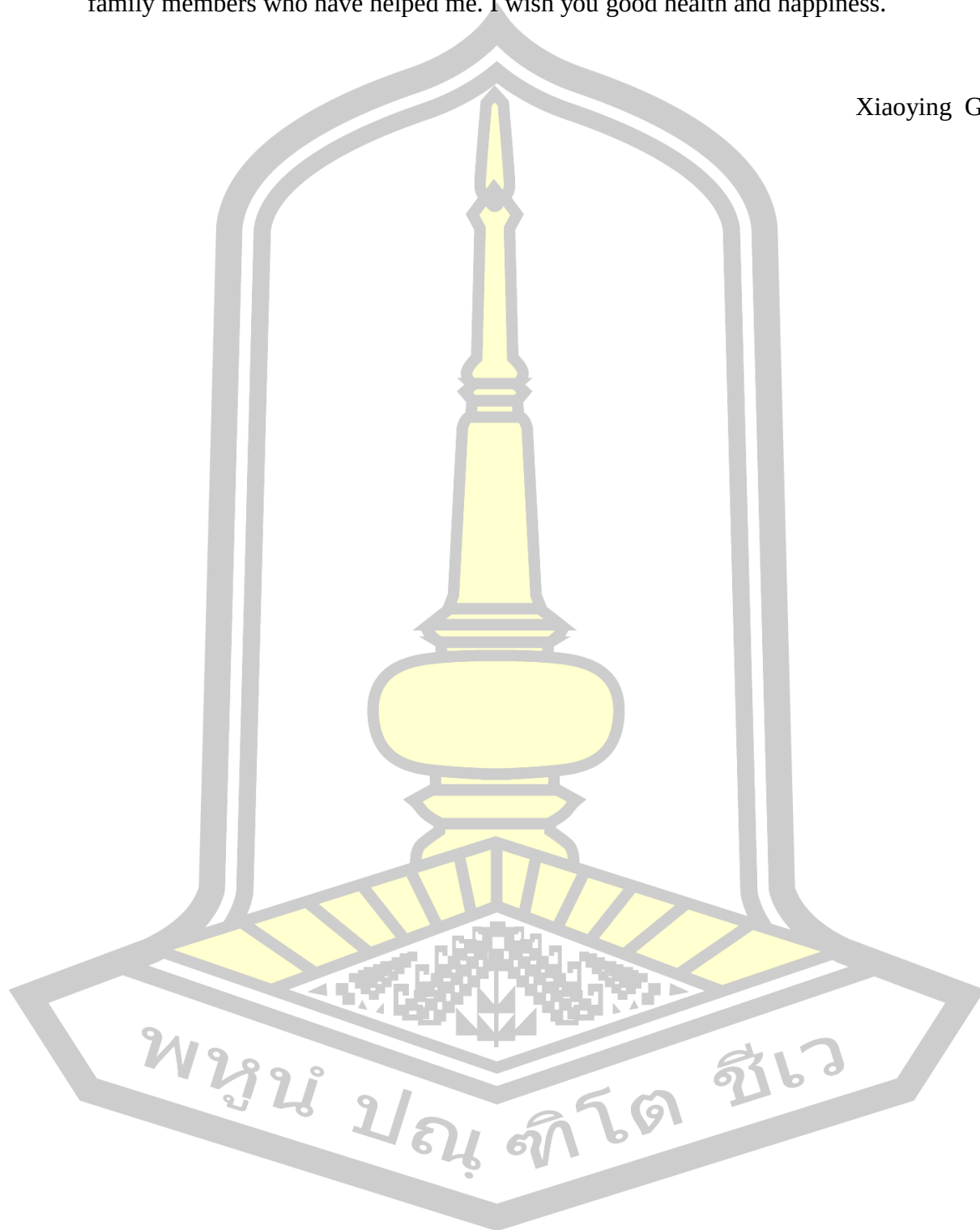
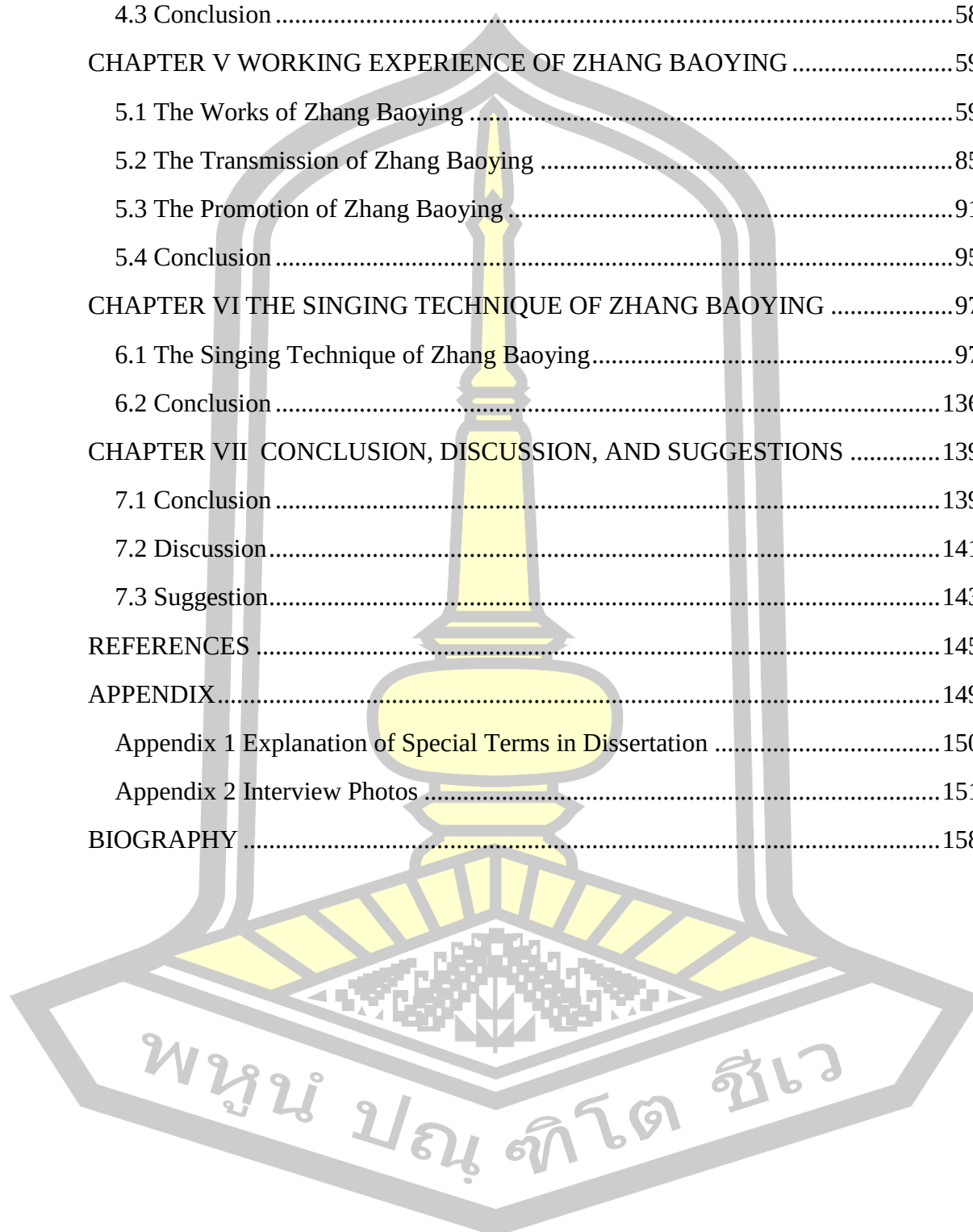


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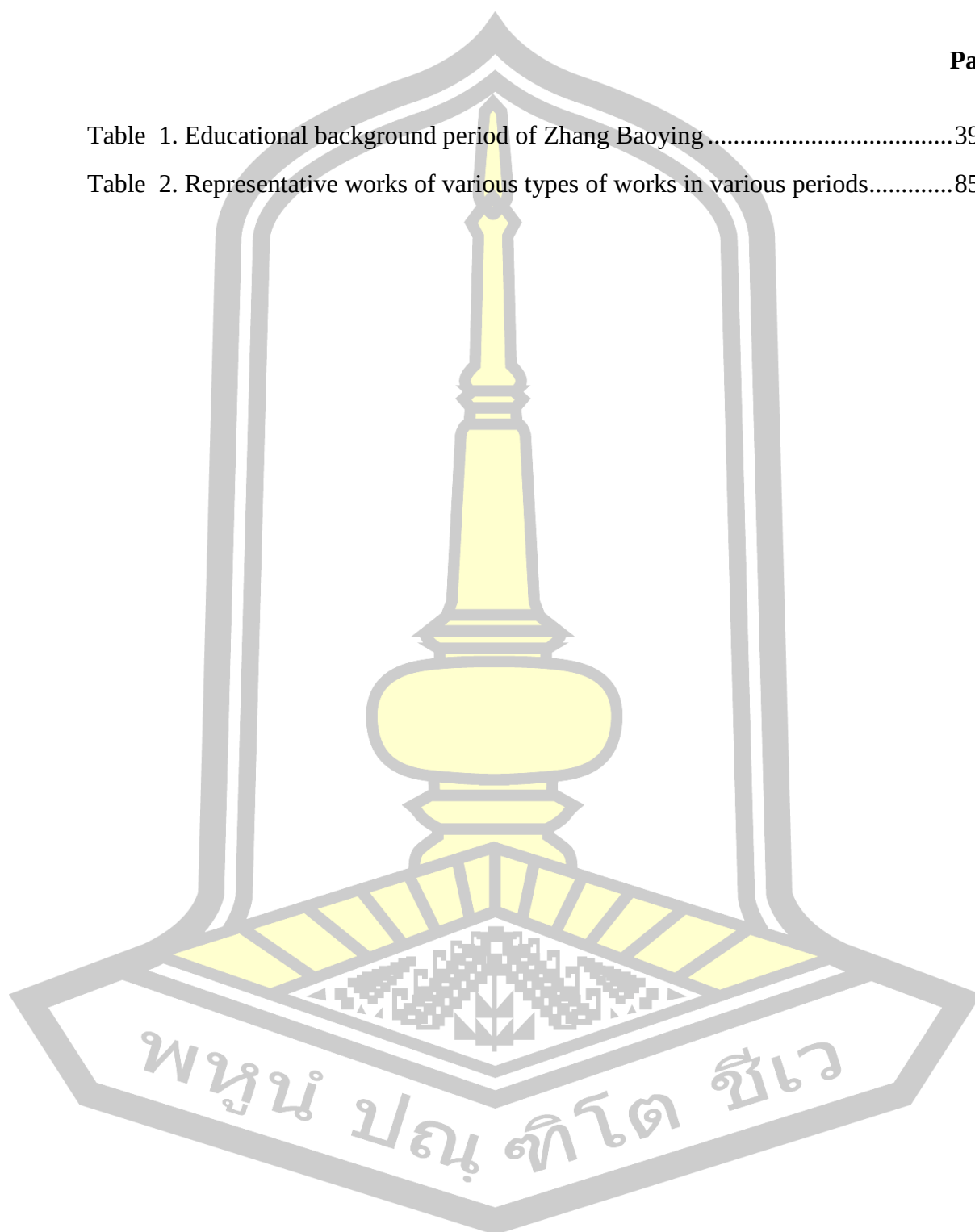
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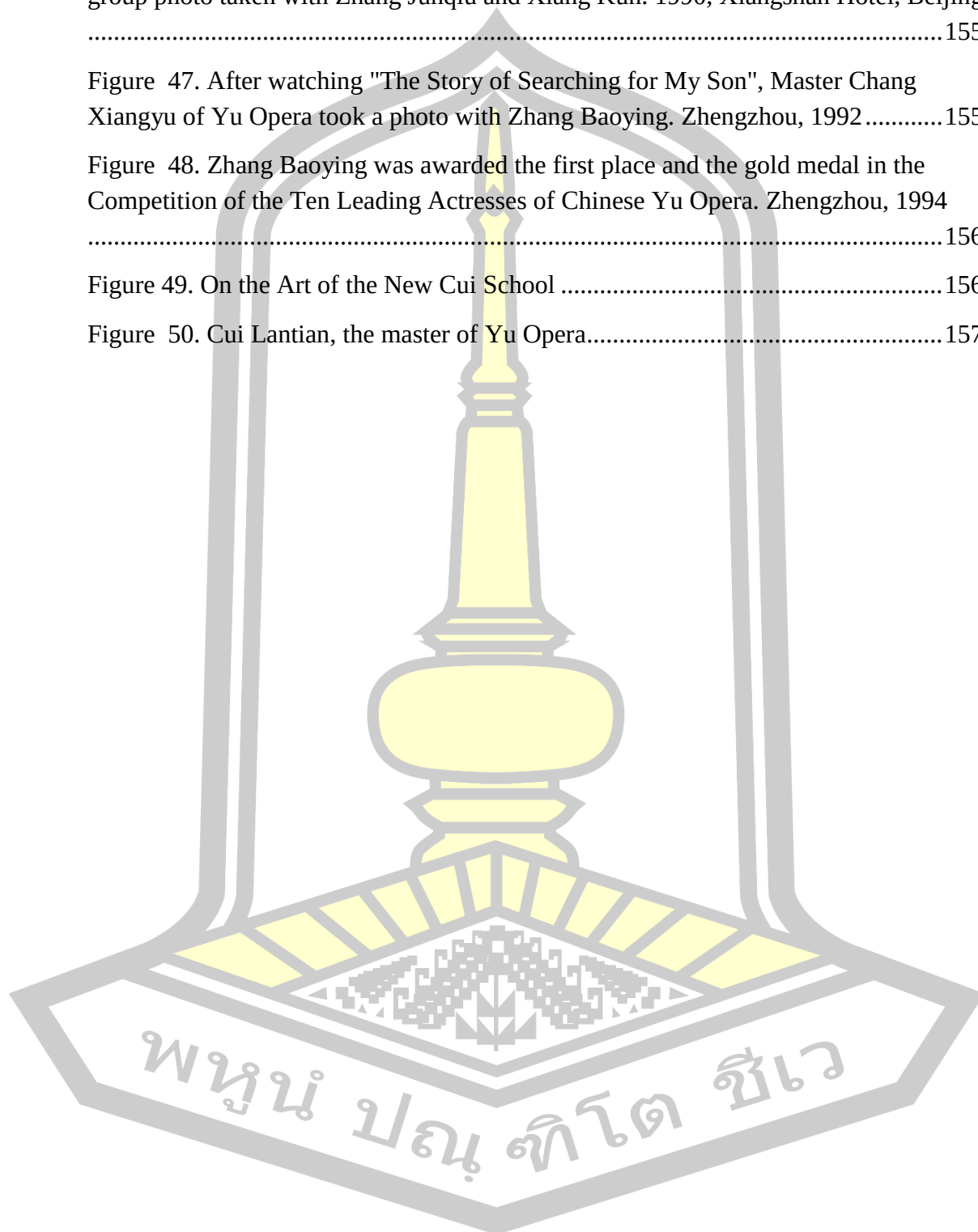
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Yu Opera, also known as Henan Acura, High Key, and Henan Bangzi, originated in the 1930s and became widely recognized by the 1950s. It is popular in Henan and parts of Shandong, Hebei, Anhui, Jiangsu, and Hubei. Yu Opera is one of China's most important opera genres. In the 20th century, various Chinese opera genres formed, with Fu Zhuan noting that an opera genre requires a strong personal style from its performers, recognized and respected by the audience. During this time, five major schools for the Dan role emerged in Yu Opera: Chen (Su Zhen), Chang (Xiang Yu), Cui (Lantian), Ma (Jinfeng), and Yan (Lipin). Cui Lantian, a renowned performer, founded the Cui School, known for its tragic character portrayals and unique style. Her voice, with a wide range and deep, mellow quality, is loved for its beauty and emotional depth, earning her the title "creator of tragic beauty." (Fu Zhuan, 2009)

Over the past few decades, the heirs of Cui School have made significant strides in preserving and advancing its artistic legacy, with Zhang Baoying standing out as one of the most accomplished figures. Born in November 1940 in Fangcheng County, Henan, Zhang began her opera training at the age of 13, joining the Changge County Popular Yu Opera Troupe. By 15, she moved to the Anyang Yu Opera Troupe, and two years later, she began performing on stage. At 19, she became a student of the renowned Cui Lantian. Cui's guidance was pivotal in shaping Zhang's career, particularly through the foundational play "You Gui Shan: Tou Ya." Under Cui's mentorship, Zhang also studied other opera forms, including Qin Opera with Ma Lanyu and Chen Suzhen, as well as Yueju Opera in Shanghai. This diverse training helped Zhang cultivate a unique style that blended the essence of Cui School with influences from other genres, enabling her to innovate while remaining grounded in tradition (Wang Jixiao, 1999).

During the 1960s, Zhang Baoying toured across China with Cui Lantian, gaining exposure to various regional opera styles, which enriched her artistic

perspective and deepened her understanding of Cui School. She gradually matured as a performer, playing diverse roles in modern dramas. In 1965, she gained recognition for her performance in "Beating Memorial Archway" alongside Ma Jinfeng, becoming a rising star in the Henan opera scene. Despite the challenges posed by the Cultural Revolution, Zhang's career flourished as she performed revolutionary operas, earning her recognition across China. In 1980, her portrayal of "Bao Qingtian" became a national sensation, and she was affectionately referred to as "Qin Xianglian of Henan." Zhang's success in adapting the film's script to the stage solidified her status as a leading figure in Yu Opera and a prominent representative of Cui School (Zhengzhou Evening News, 1985).

Zhang Baoying continued to innovate throughout the 1980s, with key roles in plays like "Peach Blossom An," "Chen Sanliang Climbing the Hall," and "Dui Hua Gun," which gained widespread popularity through television broadcasts. In 1985, her performance in the ancient costume drama "Qin Xianglian Later" won her first prize in the Henan Provincial Drama Competition, marking a major milestone in her career. By the late 1980s, Zhang's unique style had become widely recognized, earning her a reputation as a dynamic and influential artist. In addition to her onstage success, she has mentored over 65 disciples, ensuring that the legacy of Cui School continues. In 2021, her disciple Wu Huixia starred in the successful film "New Peach Blossom Temple," further cementing Zhang's lasting impact on the world of Yu Opera. Through her dedication to innovation and tradition, Zhang Baoying has played a crucial role in adapting Cui School's art to modern tastes, ensuring its continued vitality and relevance (Yang qi, 2019).

This thesis focuses on the life and works of Zhang Baoying, her singing techniques, and the transmission and promotion of Zhang Baoying in Yu Opera. The researcher hopes that through this study, more people who are interested in Zhang Baoying in Yu Opera will gain a deeper understanding of this art form, and that more people will recognize the artistic value and social significance of Zhang Baoying in

Yu Opera, thereby promoting the continued transmission and development of Zhang Baoying in Yu Opera in the future.

1.2 Research Objectives

- 1.2.1 To investigate family life and educational background of Zhang Baoying.
- 1.2.2 To investigate working experience of Zhang Baoying.
- 1.2.3 To analyse singing technique of Zhang Baoying.

1.3 Research Questions

- 1.3.1 What was family life and educational background of Zhang Baoying?
- 1.3.2 What were working experience of Zhang Baoying?
- 1.3.3 What were singing technique of Zhang Baoying?

1.4 Research Benefits

- 1.4.1 We learnt family life and educational background of Zhang Baoying.
- 1.4.2 We learnt working experience of Zhang Baoying.
- 1.4.3 We learnt singing technique of Zhang Baoying.

1.5 Definition of Terms

Zhang Baoying refers to the well-known Yueju opera performer, the No. 1 famous dan role in the top ten famous dan roles of Yueju opera, and an outstanding inheritor of the Cui School.

Family Life refers to early Life and Family Background of Zhang Baoying - Before 1955.

Educational Background refers to the five stages of Zhang Baoying's artistic career, namely the Beginning of a Professional Actor's Career, succession period, beginning period, mature period and transmission period.

Working Experience refers to the operas works by Zhang Baoying, which include traditional works, modern works, and transplantation works. Zhang Baoying's contribution to the transmission and promotion of the Cui School art of Yu Opera.

Transmission refers to Zhang Baoying's transmission of Cui Lantian's Yu Opera art as well as Zhang Baoying's transmission of Yu Opera art, which includes her acceptance of a wide range of apprentices, organisation of training courses, participation in local theatre troupes' performances and teaching, as well as the establishment of inheritance bases in schools.

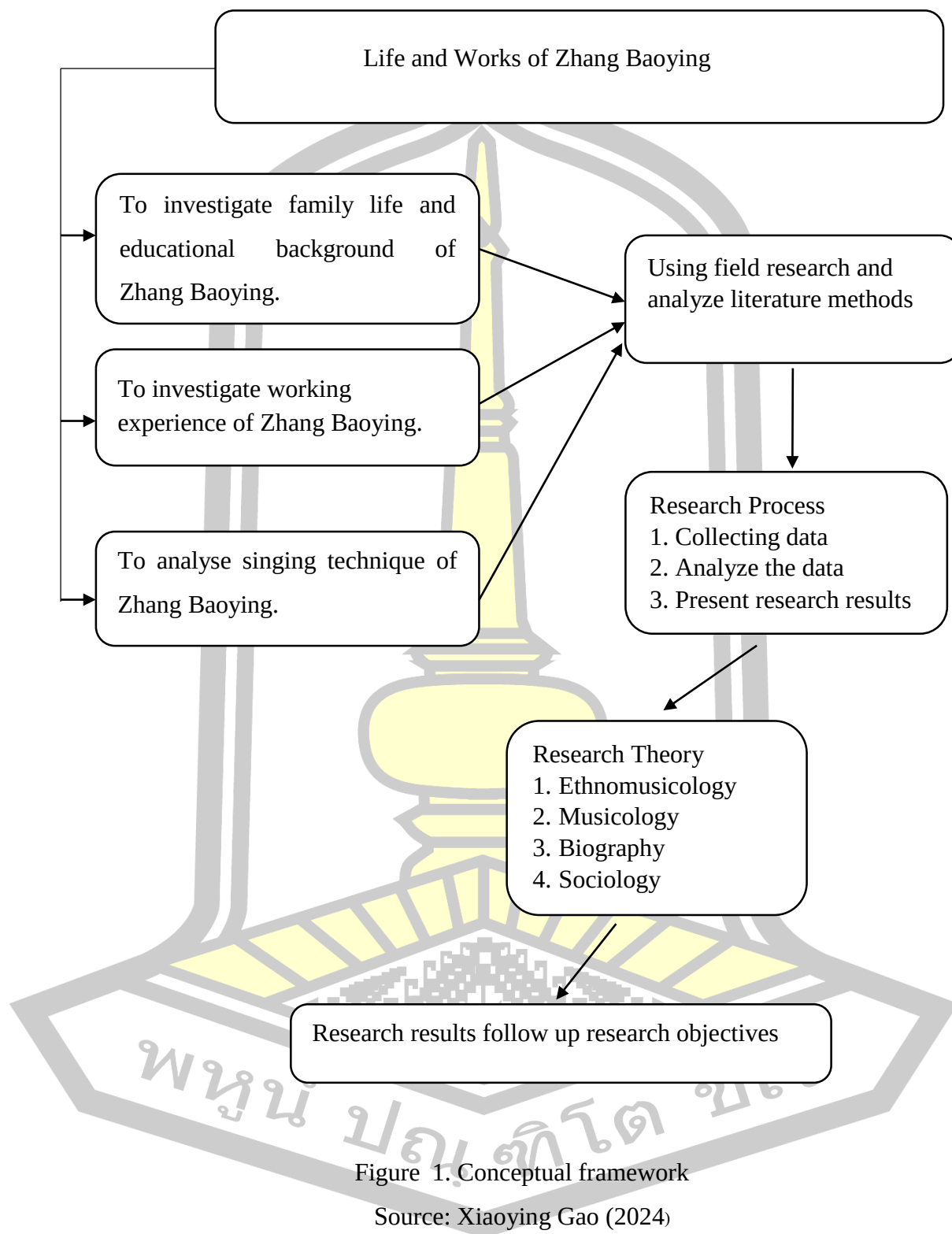
Promotion refers to the early use of film and television works and records, and more recently, the use of new media, such as TikTok and Kuaishou, short video platforms for promotion.

Singing Technique refers to the technique of Zhang Baoying in terms of use voice, breath, sound production, resonance, vocal ornamentation, dynamic ornamentation, tempo ornamentation, and pitch ornamentation.

1.6 Conceptual Framework

This research, entitled, Life and Works of Zhang Baoying. Its research objectives were : 1) To investigate family life and educational background of Zhang baoying; 2) To investigate working experience of Zhang baoying; 3) To analyse singing technique of Zhang baoying .Written documents and field data were collected. Field data were obtained through observations and interviews. The research theories included--- ethnomusicology theory, singing theory, music theory, combination of literature and fieldwork theory, Biographical research method theory, singing art theory, the nature and scope of aesthetics theory, aesthetics in fine arts theory, social change theory, and basic music elements theory. The conceptual framework was shown in the diagram below:





CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This thesis is a systematic study of Zhang Baoying in yu opera. Zhang Baoying inherits, develops and innovates on the basis of the Cui School art created by Cui Lantian, thus forming her own artistic style and becoming one of the top ten famous dancers in Chinese Yu opera. In the study of Zhang Baoying's singing art, the researcher will refer to the research results of other Yu opera performing artists' singing art and will compare them with Cui Lantian's singing art, so the combing of related literature is firstly about the study of Chinese Yu opera's singing art. Secondly, this topic takes the special and complex music form phenomenon of Run Cavity as a breakthrough, and reveals the rules and characteristics of Zhang Baoying's singing art through the summary of Run Cavity's techniques and the generalization of Run Cavity's characteristics, so it is also necessary to sort out the studies related to Run Cavity. Then it is the literature combing of Cui school art research. Finally, the research on Zhang Baoying's singing art is sorted out.

- 2.1 General Knowledge about the Yu Opera
- 2.2 General Knowledge about the the Art of Yu Opera by Zhang Baoying
- 2.3 The theory used in the research
- 2.4 Research related
 - 2.4.1 Research on Yu Opera Singing Art
 - 2.4.2 Research on Runner Cavity
 - 2.4.3 Research on the Art of Zhang Baoying's Singing Voice
- 2.5 Conclusion

2.1 General knowledge about the Yu Opera

Yu Opera, one of the five major Chinese opera genres and the first local opera genre in China, is a traditional drama mainly popular in Henan Province, Hebei Province, Shandong Province and spread all over China, and is one of the national intangible cultural heritages. As early as during the Qianlong period of the Qing Dynasty, Yu opera has become a very influential opera genre in Henan Province.

During the generation and development of Yu Opera, it drew on the artistic factors of Kun Cavity, Blow Cavity, Leather Reed, and other vocal styles of the Bang Bang Opera, and at the same time, extensively absorbed the popular music of the folk in Henan Province, the music and rapping of songs and the popular songs of the local community, thus forming the characteristics of the genre which is straight, simple, rich in subtlety, and full of the local flavor. Yu Opera has been praised by westerners as "Oriental Aria", "Chinese Opera", etc. In 2006, Yu Opera was listed by the State Council as one of the first batch of national intangible cultural heritages.

In terms of work, stage performance, characterization, expression and music, Yu opera is deeply influenced by the culture of the Central Plains, especially the local culture of the Yellow River Basin, and displays a unique local style and characteristics of Henan, with distinctive regional features. At the same time, the literary language, performance and music of Yu opera are simple, easy to understand, close to the masses, close to life, showing the simple beauty and simplicity of Henan culture, thus constituting the simplicity characteristics of Yu opera.

The musical structure of the Yu Opera singing is a plate change body, and there are four main vocal plates, namely, the two-eight plate, the slow plate, the flowing plate, and the scattered plate. The two-eighths plate is the most expressive and varied among the four major types of plates in Yu opera. The slow board is generally a three-eyed board with 4/4 beat, and its upper and lower phrases start from the middle eye and fall on the board. The upper line falls more freely, and the lower line falls differently in the Yu Dong and Yu Xi tunes. The slow plate is one of the commonly used plate styles in Yu opera singing. The flowing board is also one of the commonly used boards in Yu Opera, which can be divided into flowing board, slow flowing board, fast flowing board, flowing board, etc. The singing is usually done with the eyes on the board. The singing is generally in the form of a single board with the eyes rising and falling. Different speed changes can be made according to the needs. Flying board is also known as "non-board", no board, no eyes, free rhythm, belonging to the loose board category. The lyrics of the above four major types of boards are generally sung in "three, three, four" meter of the cross sentence, or "two, two, three" meter of the seven-word sentence, and sometimes also use some of the words varying in the number of long and short sentences.

In terms of vocal style, Yu Opera belongs to the Bangzi Opera genre, which is divided into five main schools: the singing style centered on Kaifeng is called "Xiangfu Tune"; The singing style centered around Shangqiu is called "Yudong Diao" or "Donglu Diao"; The singing style centered around Luoyang is called "Yuxi Tune", also known as "Xifu Tune"; The popular tune in southeastern Henan is called "Shahe Diao", also known as "Local Bang"; After the founding of the People's Republic of China, under the leadership of Yang Lanchun and others, the singing styles of the four major regional schools of Yu Opera were comprehensively absorbed and greatly reformed, using scientific pronunciation and incorporating opera elements, forming a modern school, also known as the Modern Opera School.

The characters in Yu Opera are composed of "Sheng Dan Jing Chou", commonly known as Si Sheng, Si Dan, and Si Hua Lian. The "Four Lives" refer to the old life, the big red face (Hongsheng), the second red face (Wusheng), and the young life; The "Four Dans" refer to Zhengdan (Qingyi), Xiaodan (Huadan, Boudoir Dan), Laodan, and Caidan; "Four Flower Faces" refer to blackheads (secondary cleanliness), large flower faces, two flower faces, and three flower faces (ugliness). Actors generally have their own specialized roles, and there are also some actors who are versatile and can perform in other roles.

There are over 1000 traditional works of Yu Opera, a large part of which are based on historical novels and romance. Such as Fengshen Opera, Three Kingdoms Opera, Wagang Opera, Bao Gong Opera, Yang Family Generals Opera, Yue Family Generals Opera, as well as a large part of dramas that depict marriage, love, ethics and morality. After the establishment of the People's Republic of China, there were many modern dramas and newly edited historical dramas that depicted real life, which led to new developments in the Yu Opera industry. Such as "Chaoyang Gou", "Xiao Er Hei Gets Married", "People and Horses Roar", "Unfortunate Uncle's Marriage", "Tears of Acacia", etc. According to statistics in 1956, there were 647 traditional plays. Representative works include "San Shang Jiao", "Yu Zhou Feng", "Ji Mei An", "Chun Qiu Pai", and so on. Since 1949, many traditional plays have been organized and adapted, such as "Hong Niang", "Hua Mulan", "Mu Guiying Takes Command", etc; Modern plays that have been adapted and created include "Chaoyang Gou", "Liu Hulan", "Li Shuangshuang", "People and Horses Roar", etc., as well as transplanted

plays such as "Xiao Er Hei Gets Married", "Five Girls", "Red Detachment of Women", etc. Among them, dozens of films have been made, including "Mulan", "Hua Da Chao", "Mu Guiying Takes Command", "Tang Zhi Xian Shen Gao Ming", "Seven Rank Sesame Officials", "Qin Xianglian", "Bao Qingtian", "Chaoyang Gou", etc. In the 21st century, many new works of Yu Opera have emerged, such as "Red Plum under the Knife", "Chang Xiangyu", "New Legend of the White Snake", "Village Official Li Tiancheng", "Cheng Ying Saves the Orphan", "On the Qingfeng Pavilion", "Fragrant Soul Girl", "Crossing the Gully Again", and so on. Yu Opera is rough and bold, simple and popular, flowing freely and lively, emitting a lot of artistic charm. Yu Opera is a leader in contemporary local opera in terms of work production, number of troupes, audience, and market efficiency. It is one of the popular and popular genres of contemporary opera.

Due to the rapid development of the times and the great changes in social ideology and aesthetic style, the survival of Yu Opera has begun to appear in crisis. The number of audiences has shrunk sharply, there is a lack of performing talents, and many traditional works, especially representative regional genres, have been nearly lost. In this situation, the state vigorously carries out the protection of intangible cultural heritage, and the inheritor, Zhang Baoying, is the representative inheritor of the second batch of national intangible cultural heritage projects of Yu opera, a national-level actor. In May 2006, the Henan Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Center became the national intangible cultural heritage of Yu opera. Center became the protection unit of national intangible cultural heritage of Yu opera. In 2018, the ministry of education recognized the Yu opera transmission base of Henan University as the first batch of the national general colleges and universities of China's outstanding traditional culture transmission base. In 2021, the Yu opera troupe of Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps became the protection unit of national intangible cultural heritage of Yu opera.

2.2 General knowledge about Zhang Baoying in Yu opera in Henan Province, China

Zhang Baoying, a national-level actress, studied under the master of Yu opera Cui Lantian in 1959, and is an outstanding successor of Cui School and an expert with

outstanding contributions to the country. She is one of the top ten famous dancers of Yu Opera and the outstanding successor of Cui School. Her singing voice is thick and deep, sincere and sincere, and her performance is subtle. On the basis of inheriting her predecessors, she has the courage to learn from others' strengths, and has formed her own unique style, and she has promoted the development of the art of Yu Opera voice with her creative artistic practice. She has published "Zhang Baoying's performance work", the movie "Bao Qingtian"(包青天), TV "Three Scholars" (三进士), "Peach Blossom Nunnery" (桃花庵), "Qin Xianglian's Posterior" (秦香莲后传), etc., and more than ten kinds of cassette tapes of "Zhang Baoying's Selected Singing Voice".

In the early 1980s, Zhang Baoying began to scrutinize her singing and performance according to new aesthetic standards, focusing on making traditional singing more attractive in the new era to show her distinctive artistic personality. Her success in the movie and stage play "Bao Qing Tian" made this famous Cui school play become her most popular favorite play on the stage in the last decade or so, and she was known as "Qin Xianglian of Henan Province". After the movie "Bao Qing Tian", Zhang Baoying collaborated with playwright and director Yang Lanchun and opera musician Wang Jixiao to organize and rehearse "Selling Miao Lang" (卖苗郎), one of the four major tragedies of the Cui School. From the script, singing voice, and table direction, they made new creations, making this famous play, which had not been performed for many years, shine with new luster. Zhang Baoying, according to the characteristics of his own singing voice, on the basis of maintaining the essence of the Cui School, boldly absorbed the nutrients of sister operas and created a new cavity with the charm of the Cui School, but also with the atmosphere of the times. After the performance in Henan, Hebei, Shandong, Shanxi, Shaanxi, Anhui, Shenzhen, Beijing and other places, the play was popular for a while, and was regarded as a model for the teaching of qingyi opera by local and municipal opera schools. During the performance in Beijing, experts from the Chinese Opera and Music Society commented: "Her singing is innovative and not clichéd, i.e. it is pure Yu Opera, but with a new development. It is a pure Yu opera with a new development. It can give people infection and enlightenment". An article in Beijing

Daily commented: "Zhang Baoying has promoted the development of the art of Yu Opera's voice through her creative artistic practice". "Qin Xianglian's Posterior" is a representative play of Zhang Baoying which was newly rehearsed in 1985 and became a success. In this play, she ate the role thoroughly and dared to make a big breakthrough, creating a flesh and blood Qin Xianglian.

Musical singing is the main means of characterization in opera. Zhang Baoying sings and reads, bites the words clearly, moves the cavity and embellishes the cavity with care, the yin and yang staccato is clear, the true and false voices are combined naturally, the high and low tones are used freely, which can produce a strong artistic effect. Her performances are well organized, natural and generous, not deliberately seeking to work, not to show off her skills, seemingly ordinary, but fascinating as winning, and has reached the state of the art of pure fire.

Zhang Baoying has formed her own unique style of singing on stage, and has her own audience in urban and rural areas, as well as a large number of fans in all parts of China, and even in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao. A series of representative plays such as "Bao Qing Tian", "Peach Blossom Nunnery", "Selling Miao Lang", "Qin Xianglian", and "The Story of Finding a Child" (寻儿记) fully demonstrate her artistic style of carrying on the past and starting the future. She has become a model for more and more young actors and actresses in the Yu opera world. Her many disciples are active on the stage, and today the art of Cui Pai is already based on Zhang Baoying, with her vocal art as the main body and her transmission as the carrier, enjoying great popularity among the masses. Zhang Baoying was elected as the first of the Ten Famous Chinese Yu Opera Artists Gold Medal with absolute superiority, which graphically illustrates her value and significance in the history of the development of contemporary Yu Opera.

Peach Blossom Nunnery is one of the representative works of the Cui School. 2021 Yu Opera movie "New Peach Blossom Nunnery" brings the Cui School's "Peach Blossom Nunnery" from the stage to the big screen, which is the best interpretation of the art of the new Cui School of Yu Opera, led by Zhang Baoying, who has been passing the art of the Cui School down to the next generation, and keeping the correctness of the art of the Cui School. Zhang Baoying is the artistic director of the movie.

2.3 The theory used in the research

2.3.1 Musicology

Musicology is the study of music. researcheritative music encyclopedias such as *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (2001, titled "Musicology") and *The History and Status of Music* (1997, titled "Musikwissenschaft") provide a comprehensive and extensive overview of musicology. Musicology provides a comprehensive and wide-ranging overview. They state that musicology today encompasses approaches from all disciplines, studying music in all its forms and contexts, be it physical, acoustic, digital, multimedia, social, sociological, cultural, historical, geographic, ethnographic, psychological, physiological, medical, pedagogical, therapeutic, or any other music-related discipline or context (Parncutt, 2007).

The year 1945 was a pivotal moment for musicology. Before 1945, there was only historical musicology and systematic musicology. And after 1945, new branches began to appear, including historical musicology, systematic musicology, and ethnomusicology. The object of study and focus of musicology varied from one period to another. In addition to the basic objects of study, it also studies the music-related behaviors of all individuals and peoples, i.e., the physiological, creative, performative, and aesthetic behaviors of music, both historically and in the present. Meanwhile, the specific research methods of musicology and other humanities and natural science disciplines vary according to the objectives and the researcher, but in general they include both empirical and speculative approaches. (Shepherd & Wicke, 1997) The general task of musicology is to elucidate the nature and laws of various phenomena related to music. For example, studies of the relationship between music and ideology include music aesthetics, music history, ethnomusicology, music psychology, and music pedagogy. The study of the material properties of music includes the study of acoustics, jurisprudence, and instrumentation. Musical forms and their composition include melodic theory, acoustics, counterpoint, and compositional theory. Performance aspects also need to be considered, such as performance theory, conducting methods, etc. (Beard & Gloag, 2016).

In this study, Chapters IV, V and VI mainly adopt musicological research methods. Chapter IV will introduce major events in the life of Zhang Baoying, and all the plays performed by Zhang Baoying, including modern works, traditional works, transplant works, etc. Chapter V will focus on analyzing the singing technique and music characteristic of Zhang Baoying in Yu opera, including singing methods, the melody features of his singing, especially the analysis of Zhang Baoying's singing style. Therefore, musicological methods are extremely important in this study. Chapter VI will sort out the and promotion of Zhang Baoying in Yu Opera.

2.3.2 Ethnomusicology

Ethnomusicology includes writings on contemporary music and cultural studies, creative insights into history through reflective essays, interviews with contemporary artists, and perspectives and critiques of popular culture analysis. It does so in a way that allows all people to better appreciate and understand the creative arts, the process, the history, and its meaning and application. (William C. Banfield, 2015)

Ethnomusicology is historically associated with the field of comparative musicology, a branch of the field that was adopted in the late 19th century and explored in the early decades of the 20th century. Disciplinary research and teaching in ethnomusicology typically focuses on the existence of music as a form of human expression that exists in the context of everyday life; students and scholars study the meaning and structure of music, viewing the music performed at each cultural event as a meaningful experience in the lives of individuals and communities. While early research was framed by methodologies from musicology, music theory, and cultural anthropology, work that has emerged over the past several decades has prompted an expansion of its focus. (Jennifer C. Post, 2004)

Two common approaches to ethnomusicological research are the anthropological approach and the musicological approach. Ethnomusicologists who use the anthropological approach usually study music to understand people and cultures. Those who use a musicological approach study people and cultures to understand music. Charles Seeger distinguishes between these two approaches, describing the "anthropology" of music as the study of how music is "part of cultural and social life," while the anthropology of music "views social life as a performance"

and explores how music is "part of the construction and interpretation of social and conceptual relationships and processes". (Seager, 2004) Also, fieldwork is an important method of ethnomusicological research. Bruno Nettl, Professor Emeritus of Musicology at the University of Illinois, defines fieldwork as "direct examination [of music, culture, etc.] at the source" and states that "the importance of fieldwork lies in the fact that anthropology and ethnomusicology are the closest. The ethnomusicologist's experience in the field is his/her data; experiences, texts (e.g., stories, myths, proverbs), structures (e.g., social organization), and the 'immeasurable things of everyday life' all contribute to the ethnomusicologist's research." (Bruno, 2005)

In this study, the methodology of ethnomusicology runs through every chapter, as the analysis of Zhang Baoying's life events, the plays he has performed, and the characteristics of his singing style requires on-site investigation and field work to record, describe, and analyze. Therefore, the methods of ethnomusicology are extremely important for this study, and this topic will also be completed using the theories and methods of ethnomusicology.

2.3.3 Combination of literature and fieldwork

Fieldwork, is one of the most common and important methods of ethnographic research and is categorized as qualitative research. It means that ethnologists go deep into an ethnic society, live with its members for a long period of time, use their language, participate in and observe the lives of the local people, establish good social relations with them, study their social structure and do their best to understand the local people's concepts, with a view to researching the society and culture of that ethnic group.

The procedure of fieldwork is first to determine the purpose of the study and the object of the study, followed by obtaining the qualification to enter the on-site field site for investigation, then living with the local residents and establishing a good relationship, which in turn leads to targeted collection of information, and finally analyzing the information to write a research report.

For the writing of the dissertation, the collection of literature has been basically completed, but it still needs to be further collected in depth and comprehensively, and sorted out and analyzed. Next I will formally open the

fieldwork, and for the research objectives of the thesis, I will conduct an interview with Zhang Baoying. In addition to formal interviews, there will be communication through the Internet, telephone and other forms. During this period, I will also conduct a questionnaire survey to understand the audience of New Cui Pai. In addition to real fieldwork, I will also use "virtual fieldwork". When Luo Qin discussed the issue of urban fieldwork, he categorized the field as seven kinds of fields, and "virtual space" is one of them, which is referred to as "virtual field" in this paper. In this thesis, the specific medium of virtual field is new media such as "Shake" and "WeChat". Although the virtual field will play a certain role, it can not replace the real field work, but can only be a supplement and auxiliary to the real field. (Ajia, 1990)

2.3.4 Biographical Research Method

The biographical research method refers to the use of the biographical genre to describe and depict the experiences, roles and contributions of an individual musician's life in the context of his or her life course. Its purpose is to explore the relationship and connection between the musician's personal behavior and the family, social group, music or song genre, public music behavior, as well as the social environment and social change in which he lives; to explore what kind of role the individual plays and how he plays it in the musical life of the society; and to explore what kind of significance the musician has for the transmission and , development and creation of folk music. (Wang Xinhui,1999)

2.3.5 Singing Art Theory (from Britannica Encyclopedia)

Singing, the production of musical tones by means of the human voice. In its physical aspect, singing has a well-defined technique that depends on the use of the lungs, which act as an air supply, or bellows; on the larynx, which acts as a reed or vibrator; on the chest and head cavities, which have the function of an amplifier, as the tube in a wind instrument; and on the tongue, which together with the palate, teeth, and lips articulate and impose consonants and vowels on the amplified sound. Though these four mechanisms function independently, they are nevertheless coordinated in the establishment of a vocal technique and are made to interact upon one another.

Vocalization, any sound produced through the action of an animal's respiratory system and used in communication. Vocal sound, which is virtually limited to frogs, crocodilians and geckos, birds, and mammals, is sometimes the dominant form of communication. In many birds and nonhuman primates the adult work comprises a number of different calls, used to indicate territoriality, aggression, alarm, fright, contentment, hunger, the presence of food, or the need for companionship. Bird song (q.v.), the most intensively studied of animal vocalizations, consists primarily of territorial and mating calls.

The character of Western singing, Western singing is distinguished above all by its volume. Singers of other cultures may have a wider range, particularly a greater upward extension; but it is doubtful that they have sung louder. Western singing is also distinguished by its concern with pure sound, with the tone quality, or timbre, and with colour, with what is felt to be the sheer beauty of the voice itself. Both singers and their listeners, in Western music more than any other, have tended to lose sight of song's roots in language and to think of singing as a purely instrumental production.

2.3.6 The nature and scope of aesthetics (Britannica Encyclopedia)

Aesthetics is broader in scope than the philosophy of art, which comprises one of its branches. It deals not only with the nature and value of the arts but also with those responses to natural objects that find expression in the language of the beautiful and the ugly. A problem is encountered at the outset, however, for terms such as beautiful and ugly seem too vague in their application and too subjective in their meaning to divide the world successfully into those things that do, and those that do not, exemplify them. Almost anything might be seen as beautiful by someone or from some point of view, and different people apply the word to quite disparate objects for reasons that often seem to have little or nothing in common. It may be that there is some single underlying belief that motivates all of their judgments. It may also be, however, that the term beautiful has no sense except as the expression of an attitude, which is in turn attached by different people to quite different states of affairs.

Moreover, in spite of the emphasis laid by philosophers on the terms beautiful and ugly, it is far from evident that they are the most important or the most useful either in the discussion and criticism of art or in the description of that which appeals to us in nature. To convey what is significant in a poem, we might describe it as ironic, moving, expressive, balanced, and harmonious. Likewise, in characterizing a favourite stretch of countryside, we may prefer to describe it as peaceful, soft, atmospheric, harsh, and evocative, rather than beautiful. The least that should be said is that beautiful belongs to a class of terms from which it has been chosen as much for convenience' sake as for any sense that it captures what is distinctive of the class.

At the same time, there seems to be no clear way of delimiting the class in question—not at least in advance of theory. Aesthetics must therefore cast its net more widely than the study either of beauty or of other aesthetic concepts if it is to discover the principles whereby it is to be defined. We are at once returned, therefore, to the vexing question of our subject matter.

2.3.7 Aesthetics in Fine Arts (Encyclopedia Britannica)

In Literature, Literature is the art of written works, including novels, poetry, plays, essays, and more. It uses language to convey ideas, emotions, and narratives, allowing authors to paint vivid pictures with words. Literature explores themes, characters, and human experiences, transporting readers to different worlds and challenging their perspectives. It engages the imagination, stirs emotions, and provokes thought, making it an essential form of artistic expression.

In Music, Music is an art form that encompasses sound, rhythm, melody, and harmony. It transcends cultural boundaries and speaks directly to our emotions. Musicians create compositions, performances, and improvisations using instruments, voices, or electronic means. Music evokes moods, tells stories, and connects people across generations. It is a powerful form of artistic expression that brings joy, inspiration, and solace to our lives.

In Dance, Dance is a form of art that involves rhythmic body movements and expressions. Dancers use their bodies to communicate ideas, emotions, and stories. Dance is characterized by fluidity, grace, and precision. It can be rooted in cultural

traditions or explore contemporary styles. Through movement, dancers captivate audiences and convey narratives that words alone cannot express. Dance celebrates the beauty of the human body and the power of physical expression.

In Theatre, Theatre combines various art forms, including acting, stage design, music, and writing, to create live performances. It brings stories to life through the interaction of actors, sets, costumes, lighting, and sound. Theatre engages audiences in a shared experience, provoking emotions, and fostering empathy. It explores the human condition, challenges societal norms, and provides a platform for social commentary and self-reflection.

2.3.8 Social change theory (Britannica Encyclopedia)

Social change, in sociology, the alteration of mechanisms within the social structure, characterized by changes in cultural symbols, rules of behaviour, social organizations, or value systems.

Throughout the historical development of their discipline, sociologists have borrowed models of social change from other academic fields. In the late 19th century, when evolution became the predominant model for understanding biological change, ideas of social change took on an evolutionary cast, and, though other models have refined modern notions of social change, evolution persists as an underlying principle.

Other sociological models created analogies between social change and the West's technological progress. In the mid-20th century, anthropologists borrowed from the linguistic theory of structuralism to elaborate an approach to social change called structural functionalism. This theory postulated the existence of certain basic institutions (including kinship relations and division of labour) that determine social behaviour. Because of their interrelated nature, a change in one institution will affect other institutions.

Various theoretical schools have emphasized different aspects of change. Marxist theory suggests that changes in modes of production can lead to changes in class systems, which can prompt other new forms of change or incite class conflict. A different view is conflict theory, which operates on a broad base that includes all institutions. The focus is not only on the purely divisive aspects of

conflict, because conflict, while inevitable, also brings about changes that promote social integration. Taking yet another approach, structural-functional theory emphasizes the integrating forces in society that ultimately minimize instability.

Social change can evolve from a number of different sources, including contact with other societies (diffusion), changes in the ecosystem (which can cause the loss of natural resources or widespread disease), technological change (epitomized by the Industrial Revolution, which created a new social group, the urban proletariat), and population growth and other demographic variables. Social change is also spurred by ideological, economic, and political movements.

2.3.9 Basic Music Elements(From Encyclopedia Britannica)

1) Sound (overtone, timbre, pitch, amplitude, duration)

Overtone: A fundamental pitch with resultant pitches sounding above it according to the overtone series. Overtones are what give each note its unique sound.

Timbre: The tone color of a sound resulting from the overtones. Each voice has a unique tone color that is described using adjectives or metaphors such as “nasally,” “resonant,” “vibrant,” “strident,” “high,” “low,” “breathy,” “piercing,” “ringing,” “rounded,” “warm,” “mellow,” “dark,” “bright,” “heavy,” “light,” “vibrato.”

Pitch: The frequency of the note’s vibration (note names C, D, E, etc.).

Amplitude: How loud or soft a sound is.

Duration: How long or short the sound is.

2) Melody

A succession of musical notes; a series of pitches often organized into phrases.

3) Harmony

The simultaneous, vertical combination of notes, usually forming chords.

4) Rhythm

The organization of music in time. Also closely related to meter.

5) Texture

6) Structure/form

7) Expression (dynamics, tempo, articulation)

In order to teach something, we need a consensus on a basic list of elements and definitions. This list comprises the basic elements of music as we understand them in Western culture.

2.4 Research related

This article will review and analyze the literature related to Zhang Baoying's life and works from the following four aspects.

2.4.1 Research on Yu Opera Singing Art

The academic achievements of Chinese artists, theorists and educators engaged in the study of the art of Yu opera mainly include the work, music, performance, directing, choreography, history and biography. With our academic vision, there are three existing academic research works that specialize in the singing art of Yu opera:

One is the collection of essays on opera performance compiled by the art room of Henan Yu Opera, *Actor Talks about Singing*, published by Henan People's Publishing House in June 1959, with about 40,000 words. The book contains 5 essays, 4 texts were written by 4 Yu opera performing artists, namely Chang Xiangyu's "Talking about the evolution of the singing process of 'Cuffing the Red'", Gao Jie's "Learning Yu Opera and using it to express modern life", Wu Bibo's "A Few Experiences of Playing the Role of 'Able to be insufficient'", and Ma Lin's "A few experiences of playing 'Able to be insufficient'". Gao Jie's "Learning about Yu opera and using it to express modern life", Wu Bibo's "A Few Experiences of Playing 'Can't Be Enough'", and Ma Lin's "Some Experiences of Performing Modern Opera", which cover the design of the singing voice, role modeling, performance techniques, singing methods, and the transmission and innovation of the traditional art of Yu opera. The appendix is a speech on folk opera music by the musician Ma Ke, entitled "Our Red Lady is hard-hearted and sad when she sees him", which refutes the assertion that "Chinese opera music is poor, simple, and lacks expressive power" through the appreciation of the singing art of Chang Xiangyu's masterpiece "Torture the Red".(Guo Kejian,2005)

The second is "A Brief Discussion of Chang Xiangyu's Singing Art" written by Mr. Yu Linqing, an opera music theorist, published by the Music Press in February

1964, with 44,000 words, 55 sides of music scores, and 4 black-and-white photographs. The researcher of this work studied at the Henan Yu Theater and was helped by President Chang Xiangyu, and thus the work embodies a vivid practicality. The book contains two chapters, for the first time in the form of a special topic, from the two aspects of the singing voice and singing method of the Yu Opera performing artist Chang Xiangyu's singing art system for a more comprehensive and systematic combing and summarization. In the first chapter of Chang Xiangyu's singing, the researcher believes that the most important experience of Chang Xiangyu is to "understand" the character and thoughts and feelings. After that, the researcher analyzes Chang Xiangyu's artistic pursuit of inheriting the tradition, innovating the tradition and boldly absorbing and integrating the foreign factors to create her voice, as well as her artistic pursuit of refinement and perfection. In the second chapter of Chang Xiangyu's singing style, the researcher first discusses the artistic characteristics of Chang Xiangyu's combination of true and false singing style, then analyzes and dissects the technical aspects of her spitting and luck, and finally discusses the finesse of her vocal processing and emotional expression in her singing art, as well as her extraordinary ability to use her voice to shape the characters of the drama. The most notable feature of Yu's book is that it focuses on the combination of theory and singing practice, with vivid and convincing images.(Yu Linqing,1964)

The third is "Research on Chang Xiangyu's Singing Art" written by Ms. Chen Xiaoxiang, a senior lecturer of Henan Provincial Art School, published by People's Music Publishing House in December 1989 in Beijing, with 100,000 words. The work consists of six chapters, the first of which outlines the general characteristics of the Chang School singing style and singing method; the second discusses the technical characteristics of the Chang School singing style in six aspects, namely, spitting, vocalization, luck, resonance, timbre, and moistening; the third uses a comparative method to explore the similarities and differences between the Chang School singing style and Western singing style; the fourth answers the questions that should be paid attention to when learning the Chang School singing style in six aspects; and the fifth briefly describes the methods of practicing the voice and protecting the throat and the methods between practicing the voice and preserving the throat. Chapter 5 briefly describes the method of voice training and the dialectical relationship between voice

training and throat preservation: Chapter 6 summarizes the four "pillars" of Changpai singing. As Chen Xiaoxiang has a special family (daughter of Chang Xiangyu), education (studying Western vocal music under the guidance of Prof. Wu Xiuzhi, a vocal educator at Henan University), and work (teacher of opera voice) and other multiple backgrounds, this work emphasizes good theoretical foundations, rich sources of information, and vivid examples of analysis. This book comprehensively discusses the stylistic characteristics of Chang Xiangyu's singing art, singing methods, and some of the issues that should be noted in learning.(Chen Xiaoxiang,1989)

Academic essays on the art of singing like the opera, respectively, in the new period of the creation of the "Opera Art" (Henan edition, later changed to "Local Opera Art"), "Henan Drama" and some of the country's professional newspapers and magazines such as opera, music, etc., although most of the length of these essays is relatively small, but which discusses the characteristics of the singing of actors of different genres of the Yu opera, the role of the line, there is no lack of some very insightful and in-depth piece of work, in different historical periods of the like the opera's singing and teaching have played an important role in promoting.

2.4.2 Research on Runqiang

Regarding the study of embellishment, some of the more influential works are Yu Huayong's A Study of the Relationship between Cavities and Words and Shen Qia's A Treatise on Tone and Cavity. The Study on the Relationship between Cavities and Words deals with some of the functions and classification of embouchure. The Theory of Tone Cavity provides a reliable theoretical basis for the concept of embellishment, arguing that the establishment of the embellishment system should take the tone cavity as the basic structural unit, and that the theory of the tone cavity is the basic theory of embellishment, which can also be called applied tone cavity science. Relevant papers (listed below are only some of the contents) include Zhuang Yongping (1984) discussed the importance of the technique of running the tune in national singing in his paper on running the Tune, focusing on the relationship between running the tune and the function of speech and music expression. Zhou Hengfang's (1985) article "The Style of Songs and its Embellishing Techniques" mainly discusses the stylistic characteristics of songs and the role of embellishing techniques in them. This paper analyzes the characteristics of different song styles,

especially the stylistic differences in national songs, and emphasizes the importance of embellishing the tune technique in expressing the emotion and style of songs. Xi Qiang (1991) mainly discusses the basic concept, characteristics and application of this artistic technique in Chinese traditional music in his paper "A Preliminary Study on the Melody of Music". Zhao Hongrou (1995), in his article "Moistening and Polishing - The Aesthetic Taste of the Chinese Nation", mainly discusses the aesthetic significance and expression of the concept of moistening and polishing in traditional Chinese music. The article defines the two concepts of "embellishment" and "embellishment". The application of embellishment and embellishment in Chinese traditional music is analyzed, especially in opera and folk songs. The article also discusses the relationship between embellishment and embellishment in aesthetic taste. Dong Weisong (2000), in his article on Runqiang, mainly discusses the musical expression technique of Runqiang and its important role in Chinese traditional music. In this paper, the definition, nature and expression form of run-tune are deeply analyzed, and the application and significance of run-tune technique in music singing are expounded in combination with actual singing cases. Lan Xuefei (2002) in "Basket in Song, color in singing - Ma Xiang Satin (Mountain Precipitous) Nanyin Runqiang art temptation", mainly discusses the art of Nanyin, especially Ma Xiang Satin (mountain Precipitous) Nanyin Runqiang art features and forms of expression. Zhang Ping (2003) in "Yu Opera singing in the words and the embellishment of the voice", this article mainly discusses the performance and application of the two key skills of "enunciation" and "embellishment of the voice" in Henan Opera singing. By analyzing the singing characteristics of Henan Opera, this paper emphasizes the indispensable importance of enunciating and embellishing the voice in the art of Henan Opera, and expounds their functions in singing skills, emotional expression and artistic effect in detail.

2.4.3 Research on the Art of Zhang Baoying's Singing Voice

In the thesis category, the first is a single thesis, of which there are currently 13 through journal searches. They are Zhao Peiqiang's (2014)"The Development History and Present Situation of the Cui School". Shang Mingli's (2014)"An Appreciation of the Famous Cui School of Yu Opera's Famous Singing Sections". Yang Qi's(2009) "Sound and Feeling Excitement Overflowing Pure Green

- Zhang Baoying's Singing Art" . Zhang Shuxin(2009), "The Artistic Beauty of Yu Opera Master Zhang Baoying" . Cheng Haiyun(2007), "Zhang Baoying's Outstanding Contribution to the Performing Art of Yu Opera's "Cui School"" . Li Yongzhi(2006), "Zhang Baoying's Stage Art Discussion".Cao Jiazhen,Lei Guihua(1999), "The Poetry of Flowing - Interpretation of Zhang Baoying". Qu Yin(1996), "Zhang Baoying Leads Anyang Yu Opera Troupe to Perform in Taiwan" .Yang Qi(1993), "Sound and Feeling Stirring and Overflowing with Pure Green - Watching Zhang Baoying's Performance of The Story of Searching for Children" . Chen Rongxia(1992), "An Artist of Both Virtue and Art - Remembering the Famous Yu Opera Performer Zhang Baoying" .Bi Dingliang and Yang Qi(1987), "Zhang Baoying, the Outstanding Successor of Cui Pai's Art". Wang Zhenwei, Jingbo and Wang Yongxiao(1982), "A Famous Teacher Makes a Highly Qualified Student. A Master's Teacher Produces a Highly Qualified Disciple--Remembering the Teacher-Teacher Relationship between Cui Lantian and Zhang Baoying". Li Jihuai(1981), "Between Teacher and Disciple--Cui Lantian and Her Disciple Zhang Baoying" , etc. Most of these papers are about Zhang Baoying.

Most of these essays are about Zhang Baoying's artistic career and art criticism. In the dissertation category, according to the search system, the only master's thesis is Song Shaokun's(2022) "Research on Zhang Baoying's Yu Opera Performing Art", which briefly describes Henan's Henan Yu Opera Music, recounts Zhang Baoying's artistic career, and focuses on Zhang Baoying's Yu Opera Performing Art in terms of both the portrayal of character traits and the characterization of Zhang Baoying's singing, in addition to elaborating on Zhang Baoying's accomplishments in the art of Henan Yu Opera and on Zhang Baoying's transmission of the music of Henan Yu Opera.

In the monograph category, among the few published monographs on Zhang Baoying's research, the New Cui School Art Theory - Research on Zhang Baoying's Stage Art, published by Zhongzhou Ancient Books Publishing House in 2019, is a new achievement. The monograph establishes the new Cui school singing art of Zhang Baoying, the second generation of the Cui school. The book comprehensively elaborates the characteristics of the new Cui school art from the formation and development of Zhang Baoying's new Cui school art, the aesthetic qualities of Zhang

Baoying's new Cui school art, Zhang Baoying's art heirs, and the chronicle of Zhang Baoying's artistic activities, combs through the transmission paths and characteristics of Zhang Baoying's stage art, as well as the aesthetic scope and cultural connotations of the new Cui school art, and introduces the heirs of the new Cui school art.

By listing the above research results, it is not difficult to find that the previous research on Zhang Baoying's artistic life, performance, style, singing and other research is mostly on Zhang Baoying's singing music ontology is relatively weak, the research results are relatively scarce, and there is a lot of research space. Although the opera theory circles position Zhang Baoying's stage art as "new Cui school art", there is almost no in-depth and detailed analysis and research on Zhang Baoying's work and singing from the perspective of "new Cui school". This research is based on literature combing and field research. On the one hand, we combed through the above-mentioned literature and some previous research results; on the other hand, we conducted field research through several interviews with Zhang Baoying himself, researchers, biographers, and family members. From the perspective of the new Cui school, we analyzed Zhang Baoying's singing art in depth and in detail. In addition, the special and complex musical form phenomenon of Run Cavity is taken as a breakthrough, through the summary of Run Cavity's techniques and the summarization of Run Cavity's characteristics, to reveal the rules and characteristics of Zhang Baoying's singing art, and to provide a reference for the transmission and development of the traditional opera in the modern society.

2.5 Conclusion

According to the aforementioned academic papers and research monographs, it can be seen that over the years, scholars have made fruitful researches on Zhang Baoying's life and works from various angles, with rich academic achievements.

Yu Opera, as an important form of Chinese opera, is renowned for its unique local style. It blends elements from various vocal traditions such as Kunqu and Bangzi Opera, along with local music, resulting in an art style that is simple, direct, and rich in cultural flavor. Zhang Baoying, as a leading figure in the Cui School of Yu Opera, is famous for her outstanding contributions to the Cui style of singing. Two aspects that are less discussed in the literature are: the phases of Zhang Baoying's artistic

career and the investigation and classification of her works. These two aspects will be discussed in detail in Chapter IV of this paper.

As the country increasingly values traditional culture, Yu Opera, as an intangible cultural heritage, has garnered more and more attention. An increasing number of experts and scholars have joined the research of Yu Opera. Zhang Baoying, with her unique singing style, is not only loved by a wide audience, but more and more scholars are beginning to study the distinctive characteristics of her vocal technique. However, after reviewing the relevant literature, the researcher found that there is currently no literature on the study of Zhang Baoying's singing techniques and vocal embellishment techniques in Yu Opera. Therefore, this dissertation will focus on singing techniques as the entry point, presenting the media data collected during field research, and provide a detailed analysis in Chapter V.

Examining the same subject from different disciplinary perspectives allows for a deeper understanding of its other aspects. In recent years, the "interdisciplinary" research method has become increasingly favored by scholars. Through an interdisciplinary perspective, the behavior of the research object in the context of another discipline can be reflected, which contributes to a more profound interpretation of the overall picture of the research object. In a modern society with increasingly abundant material resources and diversified cultures, the dissemination of modern media, the intervention of external perspectives, and changes in the social environment have all had a profound impact on the preservation and development of Zhang Baoying's Yu Opera art. Therefore, this dissertation will explore Zhang Baoying's Yu Opera art from a sociological perspective in Chapter VI.



CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The overall methodology used in this project is qualitative research method. Data were collected through fieldwork. I went to the Anyang Cui Pai Art Research Institute, Zhang Baoying's home, and the Anyang Cultural Research Institute to conduct fieldwork and collect data. In addition to interviewing Zhang Baoying himself, I also found a key informant. I used the following methods:

3.1 Research scope

3.1.1 Scope of content

3.1.2 Scope of time

3.2 Research Process

3.2.1 Selection of the research site

3.2.2 Selection of the key informants

3.2.3 Selection of the music/songs (if have)

3.2.4 Research tools

3.2.5 Data collection

3.2.6 Data management

3.2.7 Data analysis

3.2.8 Data presentation

3.1 Research Scope

3.1.1 Scope of Content

- 1) Family life and educational background of Zhang Baoying.
- 2) Working experience of Zhang Baoying.
- 3) Singing technique of Zhang Baoying.

3.1.2 Scope of time

Interviews, audio recordings and video performances will be conducted between May 2023 and October 2024 with theater companies, artists and informants. During this period the thesis was written and revised.

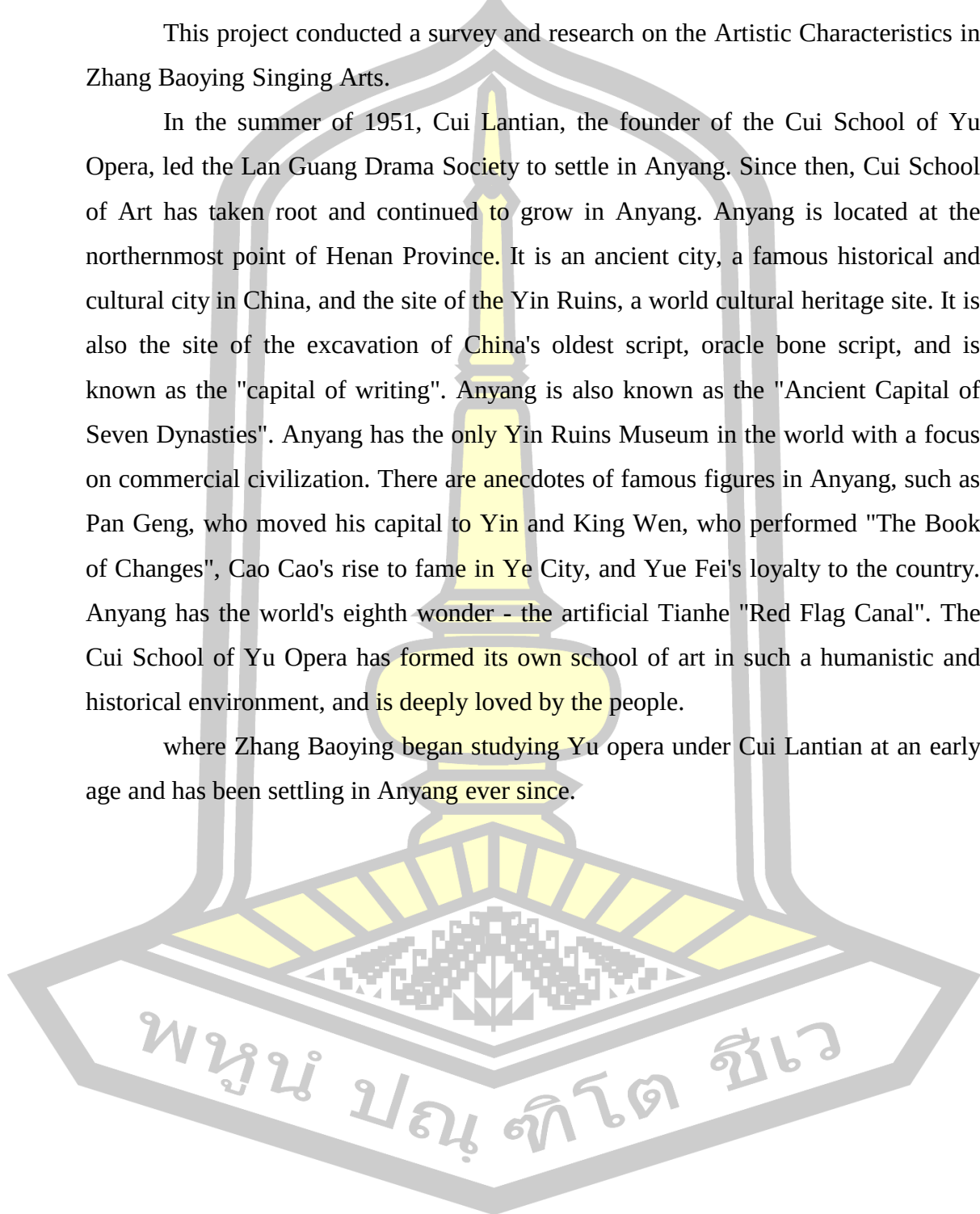
3.2 Research Process

3.2.1 Selection of the research site

This project conducted a survey and research on the Artistic Characteristics in Zhang Baoying Singing Arts.

In the summer of 1951, Cui Lantian, the founder of the Cui School of Yu Opera, led the Lan Guang Drama Society to settle in Anyang. Since then, Cui School of Art has taken root and continued to grow in Anyang. Anyang is located at the northernmost point of Henan Province. It is an ancient city, a famous historical and cultural city in China, and the site of the Yin Ruins, a world cultural heritage site. It is also the site of the excavation of China's oldest script, oracle bone script, and is known as the "capital of writing". Anyang is also known as the "Ancient Capital of Seven Dynasties". Anyang has the only Yin Ruins Museum in the world with a focus on commercial civilization. There are anecdotes of famous figures in Anyang, such as Pan Geng, who moved his capital to Yin and King Wen, who performed "The Book of Changes", Cao Cao's rise to fame in Ye City, and Yue Fei's loyalty to the country. Anyang has the world's eighth wonder - the artificial Tianhe "Red Flag Canal". The Cui School of Yu Opera has formed its own school of art in such a humanistic and historical environment, and is deeply loved by the people.

where Zhang Baoying began studying Yu opera under Cui Lantian at an early age and has been settling in Anyang ever since.



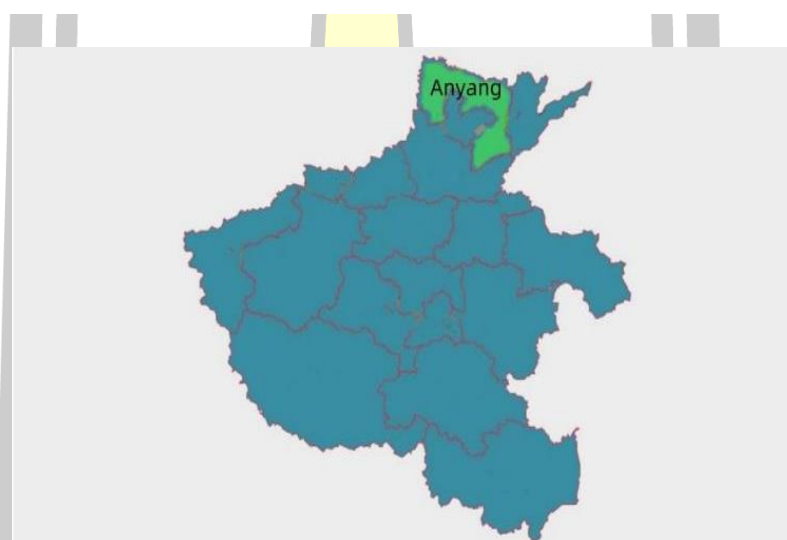
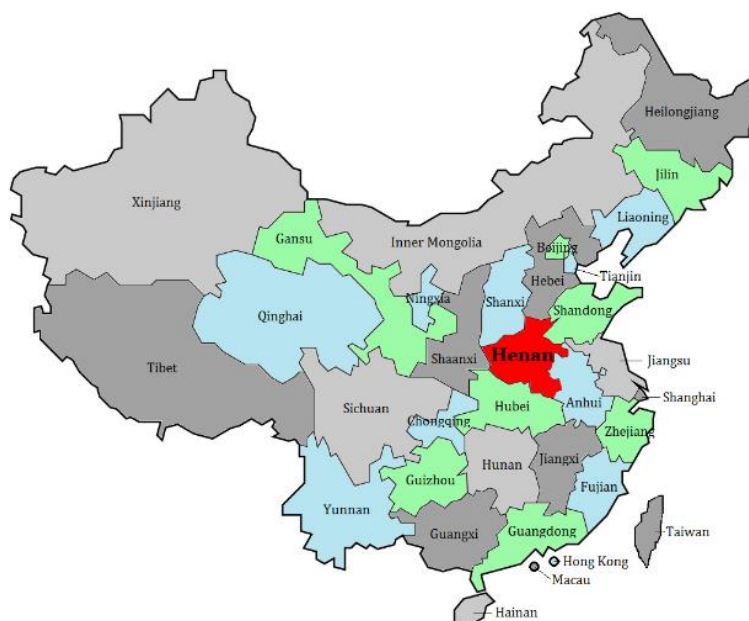


Figure 2. Map of Henan Province

Source: <https://chinafolio.com>

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Figure 3. Map of Anyang, Henan

Source: <https://chinafolio.com>

3.2.2 Selection of the key informants

The interviewees have been pre-grouped into three categories:

1) Key informant:

Qi Yang

Selection Criteria: Engaged in research on the art of the Cui School and the art of Zhang Baoying's singing for more than 30 years, knowledgeable, and has published academic papers and books on the art of the Cui School. He has served as a local cultural cadre and is the director of the Cultural Research Institute of Anyang City (retired) and the vice-chairman of the Anyang City Dramatists Association.

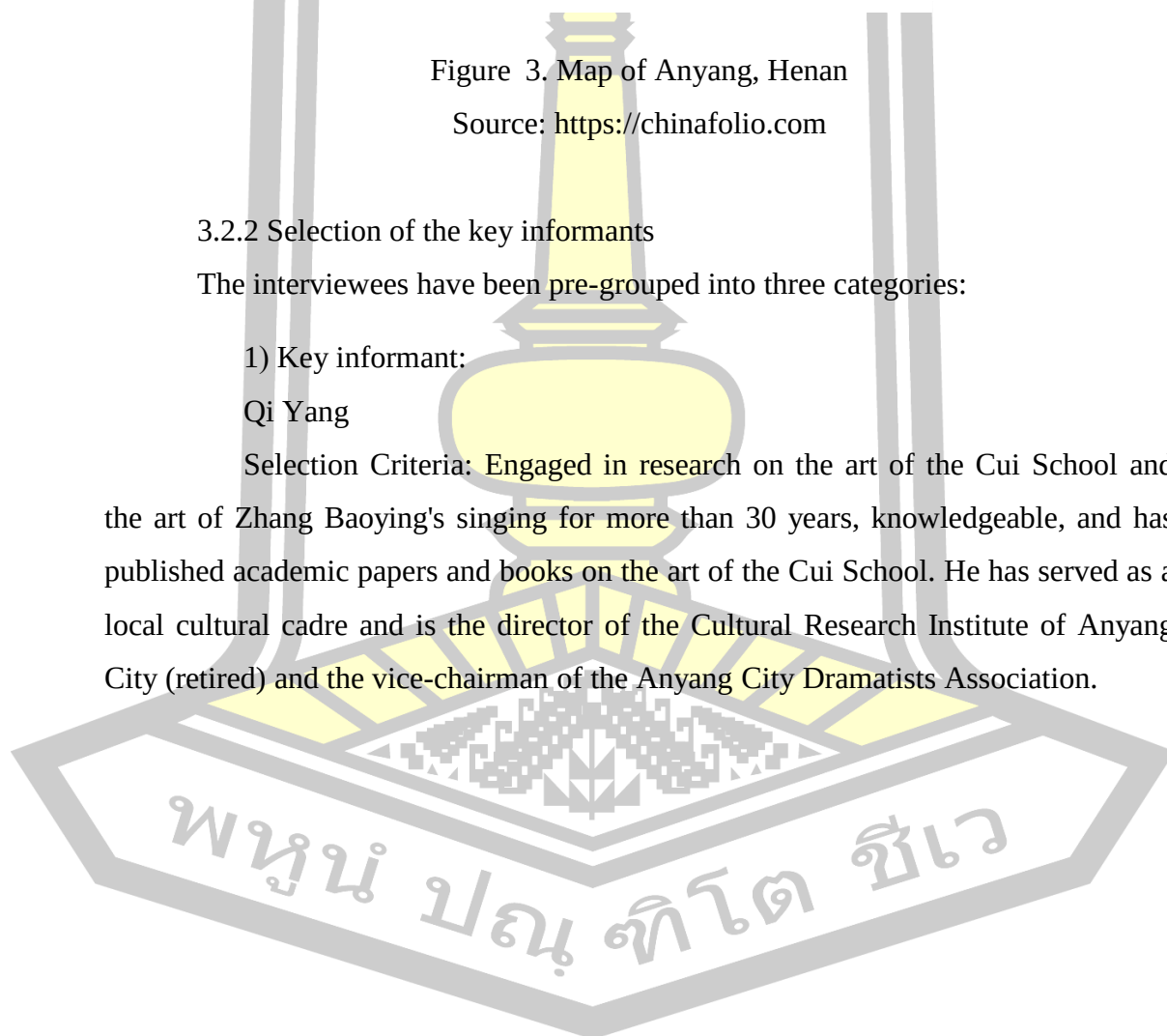




Figure 4. Cui Pai Art Researcher: Mr. Yang qi
Source: Xiaoying Gao (2023)

2) Casual informant:

Zhang Baoying:

Selection Criteria: The subject of this thesis, Zhang Baoying, studied Yu Opera from childhood, and at the age of nineteen, formally worshipped Cui Lantian as his master. He is not only an outstanding successor of Cui's school of art, but has also developed his own unique style of performance, and is known as the "First Great Qingyi of Yu Opera".

Musicians and singers in Zhang Baoying troupe Professional Actors:

Selection Criteria: Professional actors of the troupe who have been engaged in opera performance for more than 20 years.

students of Zhang Baoying:

Selection Criteria: The students who formally worship Zhang Baoying as their teacher through the apprenticeship ceremony.

3) General informants

Opera lover of Zhang Baoying troupe

Selection Criteria: A fan of Zhang Baoying's singing art.

3.2.3 Selection of the music/songs

The selected songs of this study are representative works from different periods of Zhang Baoying's artistic career.

3.2.4 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 different research objects.

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

- 1) Bring it to the advisor to examine.
- 2) Be altered in accordance with advisor editing.
- 3) Before using, have it inspected by an expert.
- 4) Modified in accordance with expert advice before being used in the fieldwork.

3.2.5 Data collection

1) Interview survey: Learn about issues directly from respondents through verbal conversations and other means. In October 2023, I began traveling to the Institute of Cultural Studies and other places to collect data, contact researchers of the Cui School, and conduct interviews with Zhang Baoying, the subject of my research. In addition to formal interviews, I would also communicate with her through the Internet and by phone, and during this period I would also conduct questionnaire surveys to learn about the audience of the new Cui School. When I am gradually accepted by the insiders, I will begin to shift the center of fieldwork to "asking", and I will carry out fieldwork on my research subjects through interviews and questionnaires. In addition to real fieldwork, I will also use "virtual fieldwork". When Luo Qin discussed the issue of urban fieldwork, he categorized the field as seven types, and "virtual space" is one of them, which is referred to as "virtual field" in this paper. In this project, specifically, new media such as "Shake" and "WeChat" play an important role in the whole field work. Firstly, through new media, we can meet more people who can provide information, and we can also get information about performances and conduct fieldwork. Secondly, through the platform of new media, the researcher can see some timely comments about the performance of the research subject. It is also possible to expand the field coverage through new media platforms,

and due to the relevance function of Jitterbug friends, the researcher can also learn something about Zhang Baoying's disciples. Although the virtual field will play a certain role, it can't replace the real field work, but can only be a supplement and auxiliary to the real field.

2) Observation method: Researchers use sensory and auxiliary tools to directly observe the research object based on a certain research purpose, research outline, or observation table, in order to obtain data. Following Zhang Baoying's performances and listening to his plays has been a constant companion throughout the fieldwork process, and is also an important channel for me to learn, observe, and communicate. Through "listening and watching", I gained a more comprehensive understanding of the research object, and then through "learning", I gradually integrated myself into the research object, trying to place myself inside the bureau to experience and realize.

3) Literature retrieval method: Literature search, analysis and organization according to the purpose and needs of the study.

3.2.6 Data management

Data will be managed by classification and validity testing. The data will be sorted based on location, and comparisons will be made regarding music functions and types to identify similarities and differences. The authenticity of the collected data will be verified. The triangulation method will be used to ensure data validity, combining field records, video observations, interviews, documentation, and qualitative questionnaires. The dissertation will investigate family life and educational background of Zhang Baoying, and investigate working experience of Zhang Baoying, and analyse Singing technique of Zhang Baoying. Through literature review, interviews, and surveys. Explore the reasons and background for the formation of Zhang Baoying's singing style characteristics.

3.2.7 Data analysis

Data will be analyzed with related theory, document, field data finding.

3.2.8 Data presentation

- 1) Chapter I: Introduction
- 2) Chapter II: Review Literature
- 3) Chapter III: Methods of Research

4) Chapter IV: To investigate family life and educational background of Zhang Baoying.

5) Chapter V: To investigate working experience of Zhang Baoying.

6) Chapter VI: To analyse singing technique of Zhang Baoying.

7) Chapter VII: Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions.



CHAPTER IV

FAMILY LIFE AND EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF ZHANG BAOYING

4.1 Family life of Zhang Baoying-Early Life and Family Background of Zhang Baoying (Before 1955)

4.2 Educational Background of Zhang Baoying

4.2.1 A Twist of Fate - The Beginning of a Professional Actor's Career

4.2.2 Succession period - 1959 to 1976

4.2.3 Beginning period - 1977 to 1984

4.2.4 Mature period - 1985 to 1995

4.2.5 Transmission period - 1996 to present

4.3 Conclusion

In its early stages, Yu Opera gradually established a distinctive role system, known in theatrical parlance as the "Four Sheng, Four Dan, and Four Hualian." With the increasing exchange between opera styles and the expansion of its repertoire, the role system rapidly evolved into the "Five Sheng, Five Dan, and Five Hualian."

By the 1930s, the status of the Dan role in Yu Opera began to rise, and the number of Dan-centered plays increased significantly. A key factor in this transformation was the flourishing of urban theaters, the growing number of female performers, and the surge in audience enthusiasm. These developments stimulated the advancement of Dan singing and performance artistry. As a result, the Dan roles expanded from the original "Five Dan" to "Eight Dan" (including Zhengdan, Xiaodan, Laodan, Yahuandan, Huadan, Caidan, Daomadan, and Shuaidan).

It was during this period that Cui Lantian rose to prominence as a renowned Dan performer. She inherited artistic traditions from predecessors such as Zhou Haishui and Zhang Qingguan, with particular influence from the male Dan performer Zhang Qingguan, whose signature nasal resonance was unmatched. Under his guidance, Cui Lantian mastered a deep and restrained singing style, which profoundly shaped the tragic aesthetic of her vocal artistry.

At the 1956 Henan Province's First Opera Observation Conference, Henan's Minister of Culture and Education, Zhang Baiyuan, officially stated: "Cui Lantian, known for her expertise in tragic performances, can be recognized as a distinct artistic school within Yu Opera." From then on, the Cui School of performance was formally established, alongside the Chen School founded by Chen Suzhen, the Chang School by Chang Xiangyu, the Ma School by Ma Jinfeng, and the Yan School by Yan Lipin. These five major schools of Dan performance became the pillars of Yu Opera, shaping a golden era for Dan artistry.

Among the rising Dan performers following this influential period was Zhang Baoying. In 1959, Zhang Baoying officially became a disciple of Cui Lantian. Beyond being an outstanding Dan performer, Cui Lantian was also a dedicated educator in Yu Opera. With an open-minded and adaptable teaching philosophy, she guided Zhang Baoying in developing new vocal styles and exploring innovative vocal techniques suited to her unique voice. Under Cui Lantian's mentorship, Zhang Baoying made significant contributions to the development of Dan performance in Yu Opera.

4.1 Family life of Zhang Baoying-early life and family background (Before 1955)

On November 3, 1940, Zhang Baoying was born in Fangcheng County, Henan Province. Her ancestral home was in Changge County, Henan Province. Her father, Zhang Wenyu, was a farmer who also ran a business printing woodblock New Year paintings of door gods by hand.

Zhang Wenyu had five children:

Eldest son: Zhang Baoheng

Eldest daughter: Zhang Baoying

Second son: Zhang Baoting

Third son: Zhang Baoshan

Second daughter: Zhang Baomei

After the surrender of the Japanese invasion army in 1945, five-year-old Zhang Baoying moved with her parents back to Chengguan Town, Changge County. It was during this time that she became fascinated with opera. At that time,

performances of Quju Opera, Yuediao Opera, Henan Zhuizi, Erjiaxian, and Yu Opera were frequently staged at Chenghuang Temple in Changge County. These performances gave Zhang Baoying abundant opportunities to experience opera firsthand, listen to its melodies, and immerse herself in the enchanting world of theatrical singing, planting the seeds of opera in her young heart.

However, her father strongly opposed her interest in watching opera. Every time he discovered Zhang Baoying sneaking off to watch a performance, he would try to stop her, sometimes scolding or even punishing her. Despite her father's disapproval, Zhang Baoying's passion for opera remained undeterred. The moment she heard the sound of gongs and drums, she would drop everything and rush toward the stage, feeling as though she had found her true calling. For her, opera was not just entertainment but a way to express herself, and this deep passion would eventually propel her toward becoming a shining star in the Yu Opera world.

Although her father strongly opposed her love for opera, the time and environment in which Zhang Baoying grew up served as her best teachers in traditional folk opera.

Zhang Baoying's birthplace—Chengguan Town, Changge County, Xuchang City, Henan Province—is located in central Henan, serving as a transitional zone between the western mountainous region and the eastern plains. The terrain slopes gently from northwest to southeast. This area is traditionally believed to be the hometown of Ge Tian Shi, a legendary figure mentioned alongside Shen Nong and Fu Xi. Fu Xi is credited with inventing fishing and hunting, Shen Nong with agriculture, You Chao Shi with building shelters, and Sui Ren Shi with discovering fire by drilling wood. Ge Tian Shi, in addition to creating music and dance, is said to have invented weaving and clothing. It was he who used fibers from the Ge plant to benefit his people, which later led to the name "Ge Tian Shi." A beautiful legend surrounds the Shuangji River, which flows through the entire Changge region. It is said that the Yellow Emperor named the section of the river formed by Xuānxiāo's gourd Zhen River and the section formed by Changyi's gourd Wei River. As the two rivers merged, the stretch passing through southern Xinzheng and the Guanting area of Changge became known as the Shuangbo River. This river boasts a shipping history of over 2,000 years, connecting to the tributaries of the Huai River and providing

direct access to major cities such as Wuxi, Changzhou, and Shanghai. As early as the Qin Dynasty, Changge was designated as part of Yingchuan Commandery. It has also been home to historical figures such as Zhong Yao, the revered founder of regular script (kaishu), and Zhong Rong, the renowned literary critic who authored *Shi Pin*, China's first dedicated work on poetry critique. In 1905, the Ping-Han Railway was completed, further enhancing Changge's central position in China with its well-developed transportation system. The region became a hub where eastern boats and western carriages converged, facilitating both water and land transport. In the early years after the founding of the People's Republic of China, a massive Ge vine grew along the southern city wall of Changge County, stretching over 20 to 30 zhang (approximately 66 to 99 meters) and covering a significant portion of the wall. During spring, its foliage thrived, and in summer and autumn, its pale yellow flowers filled the air with a rich fragrance. Changge has long been known for its craftsmanship, with numerous workshops specializing in velvet brushing, cigarette rolling, printing, brewing, and pickling, all of which exhibit unique artisanal skills. Additionally, it has been one of the most culturally vibrant regions for traditional opera.

On October 1, 1949, with the founding of the People's Republic of China, China underwent a profound social transformation, creating new opportunities for opera development. This marked the beginning of a prosperous era for Chinese opera, with Yu Opera evolving into one of the most influential regional opera forms in China. The artistic concepts were modernized, performance standards improved rapidly, and opera troupes flourished. In April 1950, Cui Lantian established her "Languang Opera Troupe" in Xi'an. With a talented ensemble, complete role categories, and refined artistry, Cui's style entered a period of maturity. Meanwhile, in 1951, at age 11, Zhang Baoying started working as a child laborer at the privately-run Sanxiang Cigarette Factory in Changge County. She was a talented singer and dancer, and soon joined the factory's propaganda team, where she performed yangge dances, skits, and patriotic plays promoting anti-American and national defense campaigns. Her performances were well-loved by the public.

Yu Opera Reform and Zhang Baoying's Formal Training

During the early 1950s, Yu Opera underwent a "troupe reform" movement, abolishing the old feudal apprentice system and establishing a new

egalitarian master-disciple structure. This reform led to the transformation of private opera troupes into collective-owned organizations, aligning them with New China's cultural policies. As a result, the number of opera troupes in Henan tripled from 1949 to 1952. In March 1956, the Henan Yu Opera Institute was established, marking a milestone in the institutionalization of Yu Opera. Private Yu Opera troupes also underwent reform. In August 1953, the Henan government selected nine outstanding reformed troupes for state funding and artistic development, including: Anyang People's Opera Troupe (formerly Cui Lantian's Languang Opera Troupe) Xuchang Mass Opera Troupe, the troupe from Zhang Baoying's hometown, one of the most influential Yu Opera regions. In 1953, the Sanxiang Cigarette Factory closed, and through an introduction, Zhang Baoying joined the Changge County Dazhong Yu Opera Troupe. Growing up in such a culturally rich environment, Zhang Baoying developed a deep connection with Yu Opera from a young age.

In 1955, at age 15, Zhang Baoying learned that Cui Lantian's Anyang Opera Troupe was recruiting students in Zhengzhou. Determined to pursue her dream, she left her hometown with travel expenses from her father, who had sold over 20 pounds of grain to support her journey. At this point, her father had finally accepted her passion for opera, shifting from opposition to support, marking the beginning of Zhang Baoying's formal opera training. (Qi Yang, 2019)

4.2 Educational Background of Zhang Baoying

Table 1. Educational background period of Zhang Baoying

The Beginning of a professional actor's career	Succession period	Beginning period	Mature period	Transmission period
1955—1958	1959—1976	1977—1984	1985—1995	1996—present

Source: Xiaoying Gao (2024)

4.2.1 A Twist of Fate - The Beginning of a Professional Actor's Career

In 1955, after a preliminary exam at the old Henan Theater, Zhang Baoying was accepted as a student by Cui Lantian, despite her vocal abilities not being exceptional. Cui recognized her dedication and hard work, believing she could become a unique talent with proper guidance. She joined the Anyang City Yu Opera Troupe's student team with a three-month probation period, where her basic needs were provided, allowing her to focus on her studies.

Over the next two years, Zhang improved both her performance skills and cultural knowledge. She began performing in minor roles, eventually earning a monthly allowance of 8 yuan, sending 5 yuan of it to her mother. Her perseverance led to her promotion as captain of the student team. During this time, her teacher gave her challenging roles, such as the White Lotus Fairy, Mu Guiying, and Bai Suzhen, to refine her voice and performance skills. She also participated in the modern play *Breakthrough*, which further developed her talents, marking significant progress in her career.(Qi Yang,2019)

In May 1958, Henan Province's Yu Opera Troupe No. 3 premiered Yang Lanchun's modern Yu opera *Chaoyang Gully* in Zhengzhou. The production quickly captivated audiences with its beautiful melodies, compelling plot, and outstanding performances, gaining rapid popularity across the Central Plains. Both the Anyang City Yu Opera Troupe and the student team quickly obtained the script and score to replicate the performance. During this time, Cui Lantian took a bold step by casting newcomer Zhang Baoying as the heroine, Yinluan. This marked the first time Zhang Baoying, a young actor, shared the stage with Cui Lantian in a modern theatrical production.

Zhang Baoying deeply valued the opportunity to perform alongside Cui Lantian. She practiced diligently, remained humble, and was always eager to ask questions. Cui Lantian recognized her hardworking attitude, and from that point, he took her under his wing, intending to nurture her talent. Under his guidance, Zhang Baoying developed a profound understanding of the Cui School of opera, embracing the ideal of dedicating herself fully to it.

It is no exaggeration to say that without Cui Lantian's mentorship, Zhang Baoying would not have achieved the success she enjoys today. From that moment,

she understood that mastering her teacher's art required more than just listening to lessons—it also meant performing and practicing alongside her teacher. Zhang Baoying cherished the rare opportunity to work directly with Cui Lantian, fully committing herself to opera and maintaining a strong work ethic, which laid the groundwork for her future success.

4.2.2 Succession Period - 1959 to 1976

Zhang Baoying, as the top ten famous dan of Yu opera, can occupy a pivotal position in the Yu opera world, to a large extent in the transmission of Cui Lantian on the basis of bold innovation, formed his own unique style, and the development of the art of dan role voice of the Yu opera has had a far-reaching impact.

In 1958, following the success of *Chaoyang Gully*, the modern Yu opera *Mu Guiying*, starring Ma Jinfeng, was staged, and by 1959, *Breaking Hongzhou* traveled to Beijing for the 10th anniversary of the People's Republic of China. During this period, Henan opera adopted the slogan "surpass Chang Xiangyu in one year, catch up with Mei Lanfang in three years," signaling ongoing reforms in personnel, systems, and the opera itself. This era also marked significant progress in Yu opera singing, with the Henan Provincial Opera Troupe leading the way since 1956.

The establishment of the Henan Opera School in 1956 helped nurture future talent through both school and troupe training. In 1959, Cui Lantian formally accepted Zhang Baoying as an apprentice, marking a key turning point in her career. Zhang's first role under Cui was *Touring Turtle Mountain*, where she quickly mastered the fundamentals of opera singing and movement, eventually earning recognition. During this time, Cui also mentored her in other operas like *Hidden Boat* and *Peach Blossom Nunnery*, guiding her development.

Though initially focused on imitating Cui's style, Cui encouraged Zhang to embrace her own vocal qualities and artistic individuality. To broaden her skills, Cui sent Zhang to study with the renowned Qin opera singer Ma Lanyu, where she learned advanced techniques such as acrobatics and perfected the Qin opera style. Zhang's

performance in *Red Plum Tale* (adapted from *Touring the West Lake*) marked her breakthrough, earning her a solid reputation.

In 1960, Zhang's first album was recorded, and her role in *The Red Guards of Honghu Lake* further propelled her fame. By 1962, Zhang had become a leading young actress under Cui's mentorship, praised by notable figures like Tian Han for her exceptional talent.(Qi Yang,2019)



Figure 5. Cui Lantian tutoring Zhang Baoying in acting (1960)

Source: Qi Yang (2024)

Throughout her career, every actor faces challenges and setbacks, and Zhang Baoying was no exception. One such instance occurred during a performance of *Cosmic Front* in Wuhan, where she portrayed Zhao Yanrong. On that particular day, many peers from the Hubei Han Theater were in the audience, and Zhang Baoying knew that the renowned Han Opera master, Chen Bohua, had made the play famous across the country. This knowledge made her especially nervous. During the "Acting Crazy" scene, she accidentally bumped into a chair. Thankfully, her fellow actor in the supporting role quickly improvised, allowing the performance to continue

smoothly. Though the mistake was corrected in the moment, it became a lesson that Zhang Baoying would carry with her for the rest of her life.

Another mishap happened during a performance of Honghu Red Guard, where Zhang Baoying played Han Ying, preparing to pull a gun to kill the traitor Wang Jinbiao. Just as she reached for the gun, her belt unexpectedly came undone, causing her pants to slip down to her knees and tangle around her feet. This nearly caused her to fall on stage.

It was these two mistakes that made Zhang Baoying develop the habit of preparing early and double-checking everything. For every performance, even if it is a familiar play, she will put on her make-up early, put on her box, find a quiet place, meditate on the play, and get ready to go on stage. The growth of an artist is in the constant failure, constantly learning lessons and constantly summarizing experience.(Qi Yang 2019)

During this phase of Zhang Baoying's artistic journey, she not only benefitted from Cui Lantian's teachings but also excelled at drawing inspiration from other related art forms. In 1962, following Cui Lantian's suggestion, Zhang Baoying sought out Chen Suzhen for guidance. At that time, Chen Suzhen was largely ignored by the public; even when she performed on stage, her name was rarely acknowledged, and many of her former colleagues and friends acted as if they did not know her, fearing the association. In such an atmosphere, Zhang Baoying made a point to approach her, specifically to learn Cosmic Front from her, which deeply moved Chen Suzhen.

Over the following period, Chen Suzhen personally guided Zhang Baoying through the play, and Zhang took her lessons seriously. The precision of Chen Suzhen's body movements and the emotional depth in her singing voice left a lasting impression on Zhang. Chen Suzhen's acting style was known for its richness and layered complexity. In Cosmic Front, she portrayed Zhao Yanrong, a character who is manipulated by her father, Zhao Gao, into accompanying the king to the palace. Chen Suzhen skillfully portrayed the progression of Zhao Yanrong's emotions—from suspicion to fear, from fear to panic, and finally, from panic to anger, all while maintaining an intricate and measured performance. This portrayal highlighted Zhao Yanrong's noble character, conveying the idea that "wealth cannot corrupt, power cannot subjugate."

Chen Suzhen shared her insights with Zhang Baoying without reservation, particularly emphasizing the importance of differentiating the portrayal of the "madness" scenes in *Cosmic Front*. While both scenes—"repairing the book" and "Golden Palace"—required the character to feign madness, Chen Suzhen explained that the emotional development of the character required distinct approaches to each scene. Finally, she advised Zhang Baoying to devote attention to cultural studies, enhancing her literary knowledge, and learning some Tang and Song poetry. This was especially important for portraying Zhao Yanrong, a character who was well-educated and cultured in the play.



Figure 6. Zhang Baoying with Chen Suzhen (1982)

Source: Qi Yang (2024)

Even now, whenever Zhang Baoying encounters the title *Cosmic Front*, she is reminded of the moment when Chen Suzhen shared her insights about the play. This memory stirs within her a deep sense of reverence and nostalgia for Chen Suzhen. What Chen Suzhen imparted to Zhang was not just the technique of performing a particular play or the characteristics of a specific style, but the very spirit of the genre itself. She taught Zhang the dedication of an artist and the perseverance of a master

who continued to strive despite facing adversity. This profound influence became an integral part of Zhang Baoying's own artistic ethos.

Alongside her study of Cosmic Front with Chen Suzhen, Zhang Baoying drew inspiration from other operatic traditions, including Qinqiang and Yueju. Her exposure to various forms of opera and guidance from different masters helped her refine her skills in singing, acting, reciting, and dancing. In the 1960s, Zhang Baoying toured extensively with Cui Lantian across Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Wuhan, Harbin, Shenyang, Guangzhou, Yinchuan, Hainan Island, and other regions throughout central, southern, northeastern, and northwestern China. This exposure to diverse local operatic traditions broadened her artistic perspective, enriching her performances and subtly influencing her later innovations in singing.

As a result, Zhang Baoying's artistic abilities matured significantly, enabling her to develop her own distinctive style in opera. She went on to star in numerous modern operas such as *The Spark of Ludang*, *The Tale of the Red Lantern*, *Wind and Cloud in the Hill Country*, *Three Sisters of Liu*, *Li Shuangshuang*, *Red Coral*, *The President's Daughter*, and *Hongyungang*. By embodying a wide array of characters, Zhang reached a new level of mastery in her stage performances. In 1965, as a standout young actress of Yu Opera, she was part of the Henan Provincial Delegation to perform in the Modern Opera Performance in the Central and Southern Region in Guangzhou. There, she collaborated with Ma Jinfeng in *The Great Brand*, which marked the emergence of Zhang as a rising star in Henan Opera. (Qi Yang, 2019)

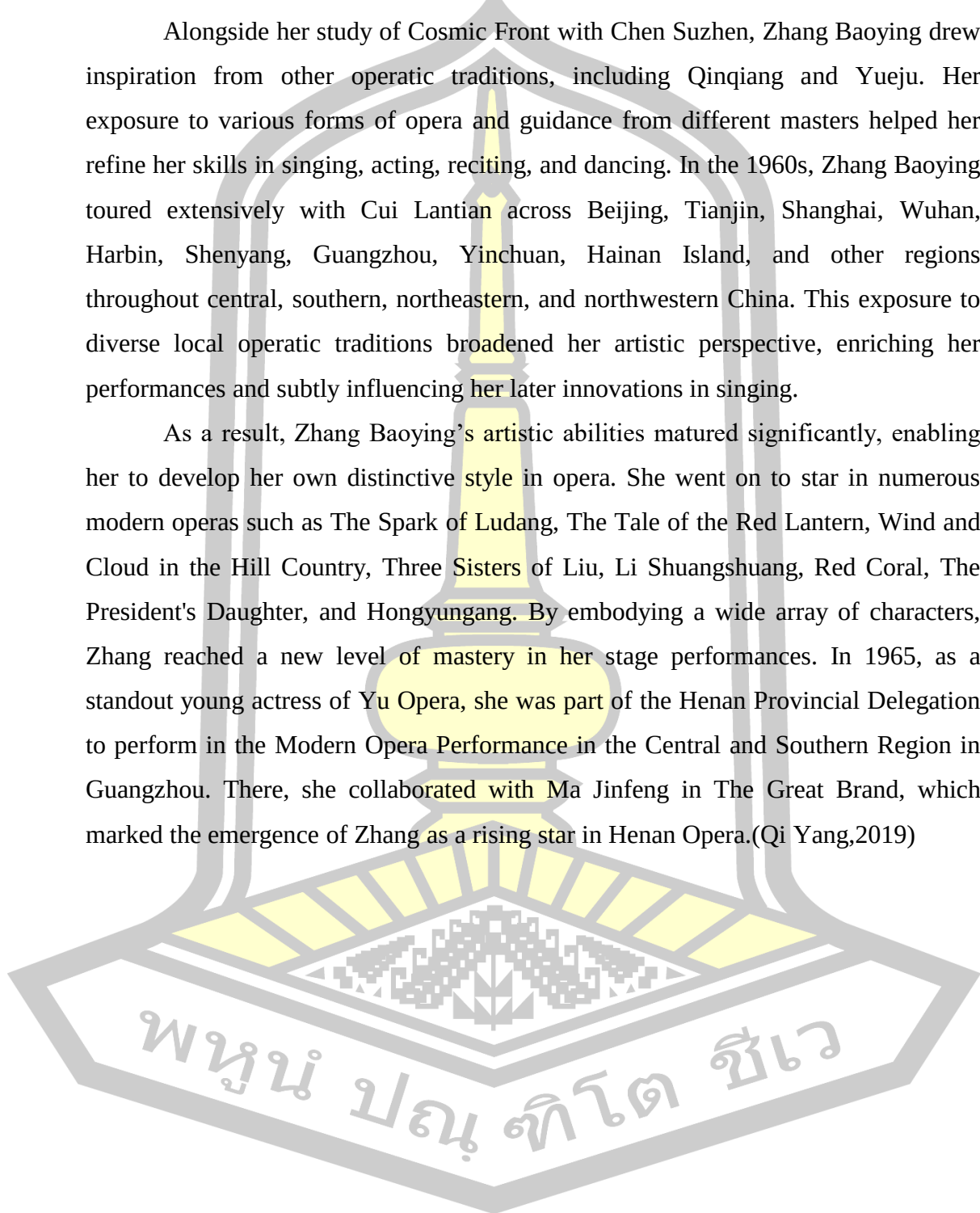




Figure 7. Stills from *Cosmic Frontier*, with Zhang Baoying as Zhao Yanrong, Qu Yongjie as Zhao Gao, and Pan Xuezhi as Mute Nu (1962)

Source: Qi Yang (2024)

The Cultural Revolution, beginning on May 15, 1966, brought chaos across China, and Zhang Baoying, a promising young actress, was caught in its turmoil. Her teachers were branded "anti-academic authorities," and her husband was accused of being a "capitalist road to power." Zhang herself was denounced as a "seedling of revisionism" and forced into isolation, with rebels demanding she divorce her husband and sever ties with him.

At a critical point in her career, Zhang was faced with the threat of losing everything. Despite considering leaving acting to escape the political struggles, she was trapped. Forced to participate in propaganda performances, she appeared in works like *The Tale of the Red Lantern* and *Shajiabang*, where she had to quickly learn Peking opera songs. Though the pressure was immense, with any mistake potentially leading to severe consequences, acting became her escape from the chaos.

Despite the turmoil, Zhang persevered, becoming a dedicated performer and the backbone of Anyang's literary and art stage. Over time, she grew to be a key

figure in the troupe, her fate forever intertwined with the political movements of the era.(Qi Yang,2019)



Figure 8. Stills from *The Winds of the Hill Country*, with Zhang Baoying as Liu Qin (1965)

Source: Qi Yang(2024)

As time passed and the fervor of the Cultural Revolution began to subside, Zhang Baoying sought to revive her career, hoping to sing her way back into the spring of her life. However, she faced an even greater challenge—her voice, strained by years of intense performances, suffered from vocal cord nodules, also known as "laryngeal muscle weakness." She could barely produce a sound, plunging her back into despair and forcing her to confront yet another major obstacle in her life.

Overcome with frustration, Zhang Baoying retreated to a corner of the stage, her tears mingling with her attempts to recover her voice. She was ready to quit, to abandon the stage and lead a quiet life as an ordinary woman. But ultimately, she found the strength to persevere. Determined not to be defeated, she traveled to Beijing and Xi'an in search of medical treatment. During this time, she reflected on the vocal techniques taught to her by Cui Lantian and began to listen closely to national songs on the radio. She also studied the vocal methods of folk music, seeking a new path for

her voice. In Zhengzhou, she approached vocal instructor Yu Lifang at the Provincial Theater School for guidance.

Through persistent effort, Zhang Baoying gradually developed a vocal technique suited to her needs. With a combination of physical therapy, medication, and rigorous vocal practice, she regained her ability to sing, her voice now flowing as smoothly and melodiously as clouds drifting across the sky.

4.2.3 Beginning period - 1977 to 1984

This was a golden period of Zhang Baoying's artistic development, a time when she gradually created her own artistic style. During this period, the movie "Pao Ching-Tian" and the adaptation of the traditional play "Selling Miao Lang" became her classic representative work.

In the adapted plays played by Zhang Baoying, novel singing styles were also created, while she implemented reforms in all aspects of Yu opera Qingyi performance, costumes and make-up, contributing to the development of the Danjiao Qingyi performing art. Through continuous innovation and practice, Zhang Baoying gradually formed her own unique artistic style, and the new Cui school of Yu opera was initially formed.

The innovation of Zhang Baoying's singing art, in addition to her courageous spirit of creativity, personal artistic accumulation to a certain degree of sublimation, there are other important factors.

In 1979, the film opera Bao Qing Tian marked a new chapter in Zhang Baoying's artistic journey, as she continued to innovate within the Cui School, gradually crafting her own unique artistic style.

During this period, Zhang Baoying starred in Bao Qing Tian, a groundbreaking movie opera that incorporated new ideas about literature and art. The Fourth National Congress of Literary and Artistic Workers held in October 1979 signified the full recovery of the arts, bringing new hope and vitality to Henan Yu Opera. The opera world saw the fair resolution of past injustices, restoring the reputations of artists like Cui Lantian, and reviving disbanded opera troupes. Classics such as Mulan, Qin Xianglian, Mu Guiying Hangs Up the Marshalship, Pair of Guns of Flowers, and Lower Chenzhou returned to the stage.

Literary and artistic circles were revitalized, and Henan opera took full advantage of the reform era, producing the first-ever opera film *Bao Qing Tian*. This film, created by Yang Lanchun as the screenwriter and director, Wang Jixiao as the musical designer, and Cui Lantian as the art director, was a reimagining of the traditional Yu opera *Qin Xianglian*. The script, music, stage direction, and performances were all reworked to suit modern tastes.

Through this project, Zhang Baoying's approach to artistic creation evolved significantly. She began to reevaluate her singing and acting based on new aesthetic standards, aiming to make traditional performances more engaging for contemporary audiences and highlight her artistic individuality. *Bao Qing Tian* was met with great success, not only across China but also in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia, becoming an influential work in the history of opera film.

In the early development of Yu Opera, regional distinctions defined the genre, with male performers dominating the stage. However, in the 1930s and 1940s, the rise of actresses in urban theaters shifted the focus, allowing female actors to shape a new style of Yu Opera singing. After the founding of New China, female performers solidified their central role in the genre, with their influence extending beyond acting to include vocal style development.

As regional schools collaborated and exchanged techniques, Yu Opera evolved, blending personal creativity with established traditions. The introduction of new music workers and performance exchanges facilitated this growth, helping artists develop unique vocal styles that shaped a new generation of Yu Opera.

In March-April 1980, the "Yu Opera Genre Reporting Performance" in Zhengzhou marked the shift from regional dominance to a focus on individual vocal styles. Leading artists such as Chang Xiangyu, Chen Suzhen, Cui Lantian, Ma Jinfeng, and Yan Lipin represented this new era. During the performance, Cui Lantian entrusted Zhang Baoying with the role of starring in *Peach Blossom Nun*, marking her rise in prominence.

Following the performance, a symposium focused on preserving traditions and nurturing new talent. Zhang Baoying emerged as a leading figure, with performances like *Chen Sanliang Crawling in the Hall*, *Peach Blossom Nunnery*, and *The Pair of Guns* solidifying her reputation as a top Yu Opera artist. (Qi Yang, 2019)

In the development of an actor's artistry, while personal talent and hard work play key roles, the support and guidance of others are also crucial. For Zhang Baoying, besides the help from her mentor, Cui Lantian, other opera professionals significantly influenced her growth. Key figures included playwright Yang Lanchun and composers Yang Kixiao and Xing Baojun, who made substantial contributions to her artistic journey.

The opera film *Bao Qing Tian* was a collaborative effort led by Yang Lanchun, a renowned scriptwriter and director, with Wang Jixiao, a distinguished composer, and Cui Lantian as the art director. This strong team revamped the traditional Yu opera *Qin Xianglian* for the film. They made substantial changes in the script, music, stage direction, and performance. For example, in the original, *Qin Xianglian* sings of meeting the imperial aunt with the line, "She is like a phoenix and I am like a chicken." Yang Lanchun revised it to: "She is as fresh and colorful as a peony in spring, and I am as frost-resistant as a plum blossom in the snow." This subtle metaphor enhanced the imagery and avoided the "feudal" tone, adding a layer of beauty to the scene.

Composer Wang Jixiao also made daring adjustments to the music, incorporating new melodies and adding the guzheng to intensify the tragic atmosphere. Zhang Baoying was encouraged by Cui Lantian and Wang Jixiao to innovate within the traditional framework, drawing from her own strengths while keeping up with the times. As a result, Zhang Baoying's artistic perspective evolved, focusing on how to make traditional opera more appealing in the modern era, all while preserving its core values. This shift marked the beginning of her own artistic style.

Another project in which Yang Lanchun and Wang Jixiao were involved was *Selling Miao Lang*. The original version of this opera had weak lyrics, a disjointed story structure, and underdeveloped characters. However, after the adaptation, the scenes were tightly structured, and the musical arrangements were both powerful and emotive. The use of a Chinese-Western mixed band, combined with Zhang Baoying's exceptional singing, revitalized the piece, giving it new life and deeper meaning. This adaptation not only rejuvenated a classic but also represented a significant step forward in the reform and innovation of Yu Opera. (Qi Yang, 2019)

4.2.4 Mature period - 1985 to 1995

4.2.4.1 Appointment as Director of the Yu Opera Troupe

In 1985, Zhang Baoying became the head of Anyang City Yu Opera Troupe. She held high the banner of Cui School art and was determined to inherit and develop the art of Cui School. She set up rules and regulations to make everyone develop a good working style and stage manners. She gave up a lot of opportunities to "go out" and single-mindedly led the troupe to rehearse a new costume drama "The Sequel of Qin Xianglian".



Figure 9. Stills from "The Sequel of Qin Xianglian", Zhang Baoying as Qin Xianglian (1986)

Source: Qi Yang(2024)

The play, written by Hou Shuqin, Fu Yusheng, and Gao Lianshan and directed by Li Bonyin, revolves around the story of Qin Xianglian and her family, who reunite with the Huanggu family after 18 years. The plot involves their children's marriage and the transformation of hatred into kinship. Zhang Baoying portrayed Qin Xianglian, bringing deep emotion into her singing, using techniques like sobbing, speaking-singing, whispering, and staccato. With guidance from Wang Jixiao and Xing Baojun, she incorporated Cui School's distinctive "loose board" technique, emphasizing the rise and fall of emotions in her performance. The play's success earned it the first prize at the first Henan Provincial Drama Competition, becoming

one of the few enduring pieces from the event. This achievement marked a significant step in Zhang Baoying's journey to innovate within the Cui school.

Yu Opera relies heavily on singing, with Cui School being renowned for its crying techniques. The "Crying Temple," born from Killing the Temple, is a masterpiece capturing Qin Xianglian's grief. Zhang Baoying skillfully used Cui Lantian's low, gentle, and profound singing style, employing staccato rhythms and dramatic variations in pitch to create a powerful emotional impact on the audience. Her performance showcased an evolution of Cui School's art, blending tradition with innovation, which was praised in the media. As noted by Guangming Daily on July 31, 1987, her portrayal tightened the audience's heartstrings, a testament to her mastery in blending lyricism with emotional depth.

In November 1986, after Zhang Baoying's performance in Peach Blossom Nun was showcased at the Symposium on Theater Creation for Central and South China's five provinces, Hu Ke, vice chairman of the Chinese Dramatists Association, and Chen Gang, secretary of the Secretariat, praised her with an inscription: "Following the past, unique."



Figure 10. Stills from The Peach Blossom Nunnery, with Zhang Baoying as Dou (1987)

Source: Qi Yang(2024)

Zhang Baoying led the Anyang City Yu Opera Troupe for ten years, performing across regions such as Hebei, Shandong, Anhui, Shaanxi, Shanxi, and Henan. Through these performances, she trained many young actors, strengthening the troupe and enhancing their performance level. Over this period, her artistic skills flourished, and her management abilities were sharpened through handling both performances and administrative duties. In May 1987, Zhang Baoying traveled to Beijing with the goal of winning the Plum Blossom Prize. She led the troupe's first Beijing performance, showcasing works like *Selling Miao Lang*, *Peach Blossom Anne – Pan Nun*, *Cosmic Frontier – Pretending to be Crazy*, and *Qin Xianglian – Weeping at the Temple*. These performances highlighted her exceptional stage presence. During her visit, the Chinese Theatre Association held a high-level artistic symposium, where experts praised the Anyang troupe for its vitality and commitment to opera. Zhang Baoying was recognized as an outstanding talent in Yu Opera, and her leadership of young actors demonstrated impressive qualities.

That same year, in a contest for young and middle-aged Yu Opera actors, Zhang Baoying won first place based on listener votes. The shift in audience sentiment from "watching Cui Lantian's opera" to "watching Zhang Baoying's opera" reflected her growing influence and distinctive style. She became a leading actress in Cui School after Cui Lantian and won the Best Actor Award in the 1988 National Yu Opera Young and Middle-aged Actors Television Competition. Critics noted her ability to integrate the essence of Cui School with contemporary flair, describing her singing as "wide-open" and praising her extraordinary artistic accomplishments (Drama Newspaper, 1987).

If Yang Lanchun and Wang Jixiao played a crucial role in shaping her singing art, then the play *The Story of Finding a Child*, adapted by Shi Lei from the traditional *Eight Precious Soups*, marked a new milestone in her career. Known for her mastery in Qingyi roles, such as *Qin Xianglian* and *Chen Sanliang*, Zhang Baoying was also adept at playing other types of characters. In 1979, she portrayed the old Dan role of *Jiang Guizhi* in *The Pair of Flower Guns*, and later, in *The Story of Finding a Child*, she successfully took on the challenging role of *Sun Shulin*, an old Dan. Zhang Baoying worked closely with the director, adhering strictly to their instructions and putting aside her fame to give a genuine, detailed performance.

Yu Opera's old Dan roles do not follow the same conventions as Beijing Opera, allowing actors more freedom to create their characters. Zhang Baoying took inspiration from both Peking Opera's standardized style and Yu Opera's authentic traditions to develop her portrayal of Sun Shulin. The Story of Finding a Child resonated strongly with audiences, especially after being made into a TV opera series, The Three Advancements, on CCTV. The play's famous chorus, "All Yamen Sang Sang Please," became a favorite among viewers.

Critics have highlighted that the longevity and influence of a school depend on whether its heirs can create unique and memorable characters. Zhang Baoying understood this deeply. While she preserved traditional work, she also contributed new, original performances that showcased her strengths. The Story of Finding a Child became a signature piece, and her innovative interpretations contributed to the continued development and revitalization of Cui Pai art (Chinese Drama, 1993).

4.2.4.2 Honored as one of the Ten Famous Girls

In April 1994, the "93 Today's Top Ten Chinese Yu Opera Talent Selection Contest" was held, featuring a highly competitive lineup of top players and renowned artists. Zhang Baoying ultimately won the gold medal, claiming first place with her pure singing technique and refined cultural depth. While many performances in the competition showed limited innovation, Zhang Baoying stood out for her creative approach. Her performance was praised for bringing a fresh interpretation to traditional Yu opera. Through her artistic practice, she advanced Henan Opera Dan vocal art, inheriting and developing the Cui School's traditions while establishing her own distinctive style, which became recognized as the new Cui School.

4.2.4.3 Visit and exchange to Taiwan

At the invitation of Liu Haiyan, director of the Jieyin Yu Opera Troupe in Taipei, Taiwan, Zhang Baoying led a 20-member group from Anyang City Yu Opera Troupe for a 34-day visit and exchange from November 16 to December 20, 1995. They performed a range of Cui School Yu Opera classics, including "Peach Blossom Ann," "Bao Qing Tian," "Selling Miao Lang," "The Sequel of Qin Xianglian," and "The Story of Searching for My Son," across nine cities in Taiwan, including Taipei, Taichung, Tainan, and Kaohsiung, with 21 performances in total. The troupe was

warmly received, and their performances were widely covered by media on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. The pure sound and rhythms of Yu Opera, along with the familiar Henan dialect, earned applause and admiration from local audiences, creating a "Yu Opera whirlwind" in Taiwan.

Zhang Baoying's visit marked the first time a truly representative Yu Opera troupe from Henan, with a full work, performed in Taiwan. Taiwan's "China Mainland" magazine published a review highlighting the troupe's success, describing it as a powerful display of Central Plains culture and praising the performances for their warm reception across the island. (Qi Yang, 2019)



Figure 11. Anyang City Yu Opera Troupe arrives at Taiwan Taoyuan Airport and receives a warm welcome from Taiwan compatriots (1995)

Source: Qi Yang (2024)

4.2.5 The Transmission Period of Zhang Baoying in Yu Opera (1996-present)

4.2.5.1 As Vice-Principal of the School of Arts

In 1996, Zhang Baoying left the Anyang City Yu Opera Troupe and became the vice principal of the Anyang School of Culture and Art in Henan Province, focusing on training the next generation of Yu Opera performers. Following her departure, the Anyang City Yu Opera Troupe split into several smaller groups, but eventually, five troupes—including the First and Third Yu Opera Troupes of Anyang City—were merged to reestablish the Anyang City Yu Opera Troupe.

When Zhang Baoying first arrived at the school, it was still in its early stages, operating out of rented private houses. Despite her celebrity status, she focused on the school's development, often working hard to secure funding from government departments. Within a few years, she successfully acquired land, built a teaching building, constructed faculty housing, and provided students with proper classrooms and practice spaces. As the school grew, its students excelled, winning second place in the province's art secondary school competition.

4.2.5.2 Loss of loved ones

The year 2003 was a period of immense pain for Zhang Baoying, marked by a series of personal tragedies. After retiring, she had hoped to spend her later years with her mother, but unexpectedly, her mother—who had always been her pillar—passed away. Her mother, a hardworking and kind-hearted woman, had dedicated her life to supporting Zhang, often advising her to be loyal to the country and righteous to the people.

In addition to this loss, Zhang's husband, Wang Shijie, a mentor, friend, and crucial support in her life and career, fell ill. Despite battling the disease for five months, he ultimately succumbed to it. Throughout his life, he had always been her greatest supporter, and even in his final days, his eyes would twitch when he heard her sing. His death left Zhang feeling as though she had lost a vital part of herself, akin to a blind person losing their guide.

In the same year, the death of her master, Cui Lantian, added further sorrow. Zhang and Cui shared a deep connection, both on and off the stage, understanding each other with just a glance or gesture. As the Qingming rains fell, Zhang felt as though she could hear her master's voice again, urging her to persevere and carry on the legacy of Cui school, a responsibility he had entrusted to her.

4.2.5.3 Approved as a National Intangible Cultural Heritage Bearer

After enduring the painful losses of her loved ones, Zhang Baoying wiped away her tears and turned her grief into strength, continuing her journey to transmit, develop, and innovate the Cui school of art. She traveled extensively to places like Zhengzhou, Beijing, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Yunnan, and Hainan, as well as the Xinjiang Construction Corps and the Chinese Academy of Opera. In these locations, she taught the new Cui school work, including "Selling Miao Lang" and "The Story of

Searching for My Son." Through these efforts, Zhang made significant contributions to the preservation and advancement of Cui school.

As the leader of the new Cui school, she earned recognition for her exceptional work, ranking at the top of the "Fans' Favorite Opera Performers List" on China Drama Network and Daily Ranking Network for 10 consecutive years. In February 2008, in acknowledgment of her achievements, the Ministry of Culture designated her as the "Representative Inheritor of the National Intangible Cultural Heritage of Yu Opera."(Qi Yang,2019)

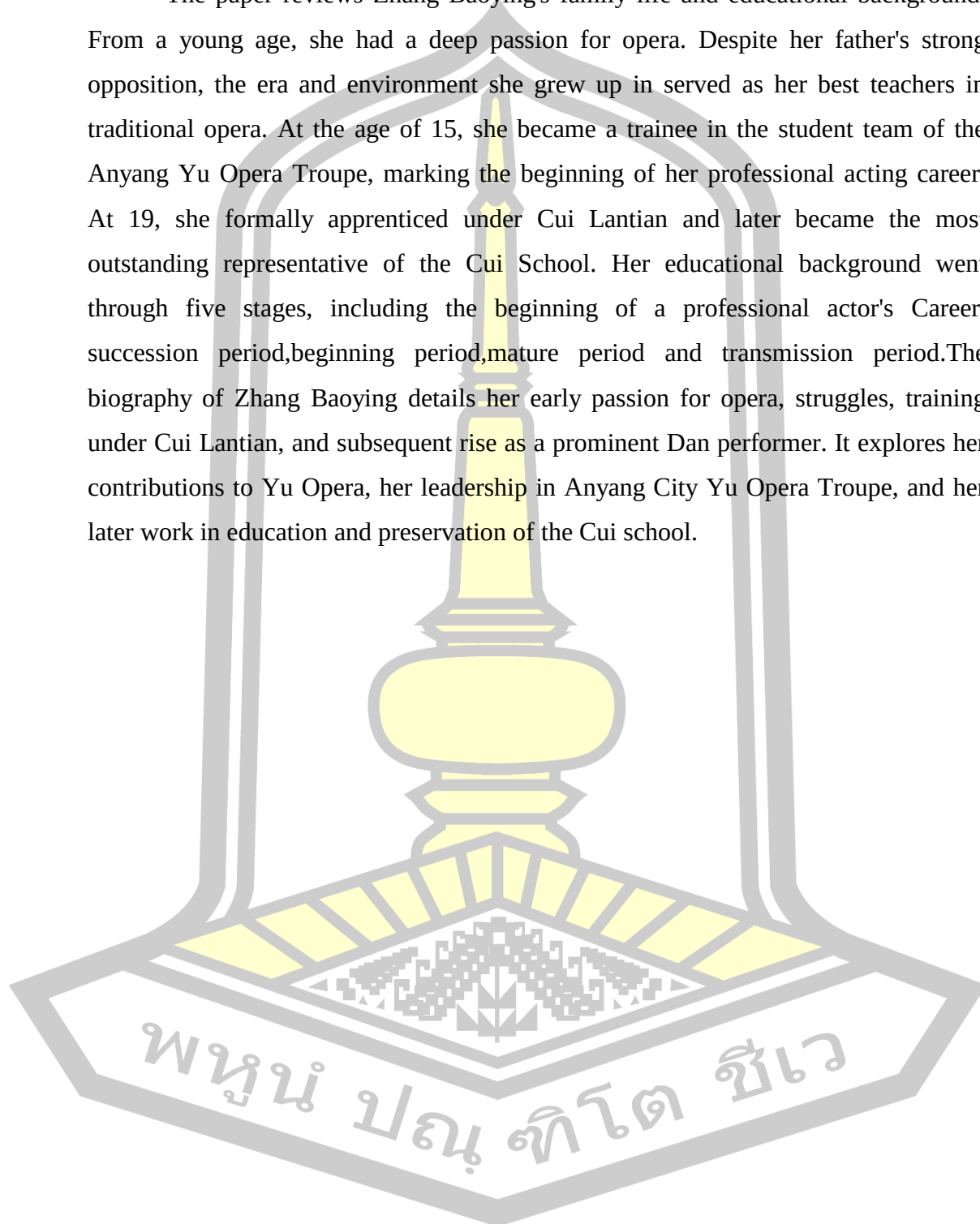
4.2.5.4 A Teacher Whose Students are Spread Far and Wide

Among Zhang Baoying's many disciples, Wang Xiumei stands out as her first student. Zhang Baoying nurtured Wang Xiumei in much the same way Cui Lantian mentored her, using the method of "teaching on and off the stage." By regularly pairing Wang with roles in various productions, Zhang's consistent guidance helped Wang grow as an artist. In 2000, Wang Xiumei was honored as a "representative inheritor of the national intangible cultural heritage of Yu opera." Later that year, she starred in the small opera "An Umbrella," which was showcased in Beijing as part of a rural small plays competition. The performance was a great success, earning praise from experts and audiences alike, as well as several prestigious awards, including Henan Province's "Five A Project Award."

Between 1986 and 2017, Zhang Baoying took on 65 formal apprentices. In 2016, as part of the Ministry of Culture's "Famous Opera Masters" apprentice project, she selected Zhang Xiuli and Wu Huixia, young actresses from Henan Yu Theater II and Dengfeng Yu Opera Troupe, for special training. Zhang Baoying taught them classic excerpts from "Selling Miao Lang" and "Bao Qingtian," with support from national funding. After more than six months of intensive training and practice performances, both students showed impressive progress. Their results were showcased in a closing performance on December 31, 2018, at the Anyang Cultural Stage, which was met with an enthusiastic audience, demonstrating the influence of Zhang Baoying and her disciples in popularizing the "new Cui school of art." The continued transmission of Cui School singing ensures the enduring legacy of this art form for future generations.(Qi Yang,2019)

4.3 Conclusion

The paper reviews Zhang Baoying's family life and educational background. From a young age, she had a deep passion for opera. Despite her father's strong opposition, the era and environment she grew up in served as her best teachers in traditional opera. At the age of 15, she became a trainee in the student team of the Anyang Yu Opera Troupe, marking the beginning of her professional acting career. At 19, she formally apprenticed under Cui Lantian and later became the most outstanding representative of the Cui School. Her educational background went through five stages, including the beginning of a professional actor's Career, succession period, beginning period, mature period and transmission period. The biography of Zhang Baoying details her early passion for opera, struggles, training under Cui Lantian, and subsequent rise as a prominent Dan performer. It explores her contributions to Yu Opera, her leadership in Anyang City Yu Opera Troupe, and her later work in education and preservation of the Cui school.



CHAPTER V

WORKING EXPERIENCE OF ZHANG BAOYING

This chapter discusses working experience of Zhang Baoying from three aspects: her works, transmission, and promotion.

5.1 The works of Zhang Baoying.

5.1.1 Modern works

5.1.2 Traditional works

5.1.3 Transplanting works

5.2 The Transmission of Zhang Baoying.

5.2.1 Transmission from Teacher

5.2.2 Teaching and Training

5.2.3 Opera School

5.2.4 Participate in local Opera Troupes

5.3 The Promotion of Zhang Baoying.

5.3.1 The Use of Modern Media

5.3.2 The Use of Online Platforms in the Self-Media Era

5.3.3 The Organize Cultural Activities and Performances

5.4 Conclusion

5.1 The Works of Zhang Baoying

The core task of this part is to classify and sort out all the works performed by Zhang Baoying, and to analyze and elaborate on the characteristics of each type of work.

According to the traditional classification of Yu opera works, combined with Zhang Baoying's personal characteristics, the author divides the work performed by Zhang Baoying into modern work, traditional work and transplanted work, and analyzes and elaborates on the characteristics of each of them.

As the largest local opera in China, Yu Opera has a strong transmission and wide-ranging work of colorful plays with a wide range of themes covering history, myths, legends, real life and other aspects, which not only show the historical changes

of the Chinese nation, but also reflect the reality of contemporary society. According to the Ministry of Culture's "three parallels" policy on opera works in 1960, "modern opera, traditional opera, and new historical dramas should be promoted simultaneously. The Ministry of Culture put forward the "three parallels" policy of opera works in 1960, stating that "modern operas, traditional operas, and new historical operas are to be developed simultaneously.

Checking the Encyclopedia of China (Theater and Opera) does not provide an exhaustive definition of modern theater, but only uses the phrase "the art of opera from the May Fourth Movement in 1919 to the founding of the People's Republic of China." Such a definition summarizes it. The traditional works of Yu opera generally refers to the work written and performed before the May Fourth Movement (Tan Jingbo, 2015). Some say that some new historical plays or adaptations of traditional plays also belong to the traditional works in a broad sense. According to Mr. Han Deying, a researcher of Henan Academy of Arts, there are more than 4000 traditional plays in Henan Yu opera. The themes are widely drawn from historical stories, folk legends, and family anecdotes, and "their stories are often about loyalty, filial piety, temperance, and righteousness, which are enough to move people; their words are so straightforward that even women and children can understand them, and their voices are so generous that the blood is stirred up" (Zhang Daxin, 2014).

5.1.1 Modern Works

5.1.1.1 The Development History of Yu opera's Modern Works

"The development of modern works of Yu opera can be divided into four periods: the initial period before the founding of New China, the golden period from the founding of New China to the Cultural Revolution, the suppression period during the decade of the Cultural Revolution and the development period since the reform and opening up" (Feng Hui Feng Dong, 2017). the development period since the reform and opening up" (Feng Hui Feng Dong, 2017).

In fact, the practice of creating and performing the early prototype of modern theater in Henan Province began as early as the end of the Qing Dynasty and the beginning of the Civil War. “At that time, most of the 'fashion plays' were related to current events, and plays such as 'The Fire in the Yuanmingyuan', 'The Soul of China', 'The Fetish Exorcism Formula', 'The Divorce of Li Kouzi', 'Yuan Shikai's Dream of the Emperor', and 'The Tragedy of the Five-Thirtieth Century' all appeared in this period; the 'September 18th After the 'September 18th Incident' and the 'July 7th Incident', there was a climax of anti-Japanese salvation plays performed all over the province. Plays such as 'Chasing Red' written by Wang Feiting and reflecting the deeds of Gu Zhenghong, and 'Playing the Land' written by Wang Zhennan and starring Chang Xiangyu were aimed at propagandizing patriotic ideology, eulogizing the war of resistance against the Japanese invasion, and they had distinctive epoch-making features! “ (Local History Compilation Committee of Henan Province, 1994).

During the period from the founding of New China to the Cultural Revolution, under the guidance of Chairman Mao's “Speech at the Yan'an Literary and Artistic Symposium”, Yu opera's modern theater developed rapidly, and the Steinway system had a profound influence on the creation and performance of Yu opera's modern theater. 1958, the Yu opera “Chaoyang Gully”, which was written and directed by Yang Lanchun, and composed by Wang Jixiao, became an instant hit. In 1958, the Yu opera Chaoyanggou, written and directed by Yang Lanchun and composed by Wang Jixiao, became a milestone in the creation of modern opera in Yu opera and even national opera. Its appearance marked the golden stage of the development of Yu opera modern theater. This works has become a classic of modern opera with its simple presentation, true interpretation of the life scene of that era and great breakthrough in Yu opera singing music, which is still active on the opera stage and in the Central Plains, and has become a business card of Henan Yu opera. The creative concept, artistic style and even the spirit of the creative team of the play have profoundly influenced the creation of modern plays of Henan Yu opera. In addition, a large number of modern Yu opera productions such as “Li Shuang Shuang”, “Horses and Men”, “Winter and Spring”, “Apricot Camp”, “New Conditions”, “Liu Hulan”, “Marriage of Xiaoyihei” and so on, by the three troupes of Henan Yu Theater, have caused a strong reaction in the country. Local troupes were also actively involved in

the creation of modern operas, such as “The President's Daughter” rehearsed by the Yu Opera Troupe of Shangqiu Prefecture in 1963, “Golden Seeds” rehearsed by the Yu Opera Troupe of Yanshi County in 1963, and “Inside and Outside of the Counter” in the 1970s, all of which had a great influence. At this stage, the pace of Yu Opera's modern play creation was in the forefront of the country, and it became a model for the whole country to observe and learn from. During the period of “Cultural Revolution”, model operas were dominant, and Yu opera was no exception. At this stage, the modern works of Yu opera include “Harbor”, “Ode to the Dragon River”, “Cuckoo Mountain”, “Strange Attack on the White Tiger Regiment”, “Combat on the Plain”, etc. Both provincial troupes and local and provincial troupes are transplanting and imitating the works of Peking Opera. One of the most influential and longest-running productions was The Tale of Red Lanterns, which was transplanted and performed by the Zhengzhou Yu Opera Troupe in 1974. Yu Opera itself had almost no original works, and during this period, “Chaoyanggou” was nearly changed beyond recognition.

“After the end of the Cultural Revolution, reform and opening up ushered in a spring for all walks of life, and the modern opera of Yu opera had a relatively rapid development. 1979, the Cultural Bureau of Henan Province held a symposium on literature and art to popularize the experience of staging modern operas by the three troupes of Henan Yu Opera; 1980, Henan Province held a meeting on the creation of modern operas; 1981 and 1983, two general performances of modern operas were held throughout the province; 1983, Henan Province hosted the National Modern Opera Annual Meeting, which gave a great impetus to the development of modern operas in Henan. In 1980, Henan Province held a modern opera creation meeting; in 1981 and 1983, two provincial modern opera congresses were held; in 1983, Henan Province hosted the annual meeting of the national modern opera, which played a very big role in promoting the development of the modern opera in Henan Province. 1985, the Yu opera “The Marriage of the Unlucky Uncle” was staged, and then it went to Beijing for performance, which aroused a great response, and it became a representative works of the modern opera in the new period of the Yu opera and marked that the modern opera of the Yu opera in the new period had developed into a mature and unique style. In 2000, Yu opera “Fragrant Soul Girl” won the

Wenhua Grand Prize at the Sixth China Arts Festival, which made Henan drama, especially Yu opera modern drama, realize the zero breakthrough of the highest national award in the new period, and marked that the creation of Yu opera modern drama in the new period has entered a new stage.

Reform and opening up has not only brought about sweeping changes in the social and economic fields, but also greatly liberated people's thoughts and culture. The great changes in society provided a wealth of new materials for literary creation, and the great emancipation of thought made the literary creation expressing new contents a reality. "The return of 'human' literature since the May Fourth and the gradual arrival of the market

The gradual arrival of the age of consumerization constitutes the two major driving forces for the development of literature in the new period, and has also had a great impact on opera literature" (Wei Hongqiu, 2018). Recording and portraying the new face of society, and reviewing and reflecting on the special historical period of the Cultural Revolution were the two main themes of literary creation in this period.

5.1.1.2 Modern Works Played by Zhang Baoying

1) Modern Works

In Zhang Baoying's artistic career, playing a large number of modern plays played an important role in the improvement of her singing skills and had a profound influence on her singing art. It is worth noting that during the succession period of Zhang Baoying's artistic career, that is, from 1959 to 1976, she was in the second historical period of Yu opera's modern theater, which, as mentioned earlier in the article, saw the rapid development of modern theater. Zhang Baoying also performed a large number of modern plays during this period. For example, she rehearsed modern plays such as "Chaoyang Gully", "Red Guard of Honghu Lake", "Li Shuangshuang", "The President's Daughter", "Spark of the Ludang", and "Red Lanterns", etc. Among them, "The Red Guard of Honghu Lake" was the most popular. Among them, Honghu Red Guard is the most representative. In 1960, Zhang Baoying appeared in Honghu Red Guard, in which she played the female protagonist Han Ying, and Cui Lantian played Han's mother. The play was performed in Zhengzhou for 20 consecutive performances, with full houses, and was a great

success, thus making it Zhang Baoying's most famous works. The play tells the story of how in 1930, the county committee of Shinyang in Hubei temporarily evacuated the Red Guard from Pengjiadun in order to cooperate with the actions of the Red Army. Peng Batian, the head of the local White Polar Society, takes the opportunity to come back to take revenge. The Red Guard, led by Han Ying, secretary of the township Party branch, and Liu Gang, captain of the Red Guard, continued to attack the enemy. Peng Batian was alarmed and sent spies to look for the Red Guard. Liu Geng was trapped and shot the spies, exposing the target. Han Ying immediately covered the retreat of the team, but was arrested with Wang Jinbiao, the sub-captain. After Wang Jinbiao's defection, Han Ying remained steadfast in prison, and was at home in death, thinking of her Red Guard members and the Party organization. The enemy forced her mother to persuade her to surrender, but Han Ying's mother and daughter inspired each other and preferred to die. The enemy released the traitor Wang Jinbiao and ordered him to lure the guerrillas into an ambush. Han Ying escaped from danger under the cover of Peng Batian's adjutant (a member of the underground party), rushed back to the Red Guard in time, shot the traitor, and cooperated with the army in the battle, eliminating Peng Batian and removing the harm for the people. In “Honghu Red Guard”, the female protagonist, Han Ying, is a female character who is loved by the people and is courageous and resourceful.



Figure 12. Stills from The Red Guard of Honghu Lake, with Jang Bo-young as Han Ying (1960)

Source: Qi Yang(2024)

2) Sample Works

Among the large number of modern dramas played by Zhang Baoying, some of them belong to model plays. The model theater is a special product of a special era. During the period of China's Great Leap Forward, Mao Zedong put forward the instruction of “never forget the class struggle”, and against this background, revolutionary modern operas reflecting the themes of “class struggle” and “raising nothing and destroying capital” became popular. In 1968, under the pressure of the “revolution”, opera groups resumed performing “model operas” one after another. How to not overstep the norms of the “Model Opera” and at the same time combine the aesthetics of Yu Opera performance, Yu Opera artists made painstaking efforts and gave effective grafting. During this period, Zhang Baoying rehearsed the Peking Opera “Shajiabang”, “Taking Tiger Mountain”, “Cuckoo Mountain”, “The White-haired Girl”, “Ode to the Dragon River”, etc. In 1974, she rehearsed a modernized version of the opera “Shajiabang”. In 1974, she rehearsed the modern opera Hongyungang as Sister-in-law Hong, which was performed in Henan, Hebei and other provinces and cities for three consecutive years in only one play.



Figure 13. Stills from “Shajiabang”, with Zhang Baoying as Mrs. Aqing

Source: Qi Yang (2024)

3) Analysis of Female Image in Zhang Baoying's Modern Works

On the stage of traditional opera, female characterization occupies a considerable proportion. There is a jargon in the opera world: “a nest of dan, eat a full meal”, which refers to the fact that a class society (troupe) must have a larger number of excellent dan talents, so as to satisfy the needs of the majority of the audience and to win a higher box office income. The creators of modern opera know this well. Divided from the perspective of dramatic plots and thematic ideas, the women portrayed by Zhang Baoying include female intellectuals, young women in new China, laboring women, and revolutionary women. These women are all awakened and rebellious, their sense of independence and rights to autonomy are protected and supported by the state, and their roles are the biggest rebellion against the old concepts. By participating in social labor to break the traditional gender division of labor, women gain the right to economic independence, establish their subjectivity, and get rid of the male standard of scrutiny, so as to realize emancipation.



Figure 14. Styling of the model theater stage color car “The Red Lantern” (1969)

Source: Qi Yang (2024)

The Yu opera *Li Shuang Shuang*, based on the novel, is one of the most influential and outstanding plays in this category. Zhang Baoying plays the lead

role of Li Shuangshuang, a female member of the commune who loves the collective and is brave enough to fight against selfish and backward behavior. In the play, Li Shuangshuang, faced with problems such as Sun Youwu stealing pigs and arching over sweet potato fields, and the unfairness of the production team's labor credits, fights against these unhealthy practices relentlessly and changes her husband, Sun Xiwang, through her actions, so that he also courageously exposes the problems.

Li Shuangshuang was originally a housewife, but with the advancement of socialist construction, she put aside family affairs and devoted her energies to the collective interests. Her behavior, from her initial argument with Sun Youwu to her later opinions and posting of big-character posters to reflect the problem, reflects her spirit of giving up her personal feelings completely to the collective interests.

In the process of adaptation, the creators changed some episodes from stealing planks in the movie to releasing pigs to arch the sweet potato seedlings in order to enhance the dramatic conflict. This kind of adaptation not only allows the conflict to take place in the collective production, but also provides the actors with rich acting space, so that the audience can feel the life scene at that time better.

Zhang Baoying sang a large number of modern and model operas in the early stage of her artistic career, which is inseparable from the background of the times and the country's cultural and artistic policies. During the Cultural Revolution, although there was no lack of some good works and classic operas, out of the constraints of the standard of "taking the class struggle as a rigidity", the new dramas that appeared in that period were all characterized by formulaic and conceptualized teaching and learning, and the new dramas were all characterized by a formulaic and conceptualized teaching. However, due to the constraints of the "class struggle" standard, the new plays that appeared during that period were all marked by the dogmatism of formulaization and conceptualization, and their artistic quality could not be imagined. In practical terms, however, she had many opportunities to perform on stage, and without realizing it, she became the mainstay of the troupe and an influential and well-known actress in society.

5.1.2 Traditional Works

5.1.2.1 Classification of Traditional Works

The values of loyalty, filial piety and righteousness as the core of traditional society are reflected in many classic plays of Yu opera. From the content and theme point of view, the classic traditional works of Yu opera has the following sources (1) promote patriotism and praise the national heroes, such as "Hua Mulan", "Breaking Hongzhou", "Mu Guiying Hanging on to Commander-in-Chief", "Regulus", etc. These plays portray a flesh and blood heroes, celebrating the spirit of sacrificing one's personal interests for the interests of the country and the nation and spreading the value of patriotism; (2) perform the struggle between loyalty and treachery, and praise the good officials and righteous people; (3) perform the traditional works of Yu opera, which is a kind of traditional drama. (2) perform the struggle between loyalty and treachery, and sing the praises of good officials and righteous people, such as "Guillotine Case", "Eight Righteous Figures", "Yao Gang Conquering the South", "Fire Burning Zidu", etc. These operas highlight the image of a good official who pleads for the people and redresses their grievances through the interpretation of the encounter between the forces of justice and evil, and disseminate the values of fairness and righteousness; (3) tell the story of folk life, and praise the loyalty of the people, such as "The Great Sacrificial Pile", "Catching the Flower Boat", "Wang Lin Repudiates His Wife", "Mai Miaolang", etc., which reflect family ethics, human life, and the spirit of the family and the people's life. These plays reflect family ethics and human affection, spreading the values of goodwill, filial piety and love for the elderly; (4) In addition, there are a small number of mythological plays, such as The Mountain of Flowers and Fruits, White Lotus Flower, Rescuing Mother by Splitting the Mountain and Drowning in Surabaya, etc., which express the desire of people in traditional societies to pursue a better life and to conquer the nature. Most of these classic plays focus on the ethical evaluation of the characters, such as Hua Mulan, Mu Guiying, Chen Shimei and other characters, all of which are not the embodiment of specific value symbols in the positive or negative, and through the contrast between good and evil of the characters, the play spreads to the audience of the traditional society the simple concepts of loyalty, filial piety, righteousness, chastity and martyrdom.

5.1.2.2 Traditional Works

The traditional Work is the main part of the Yu opera work, occupying the majority of the weight. Traditional work is loved by the audience for its deep historical and cultural heritage and unique artistic style. Faced with a vast sea of traditional work, the founders of the school in order to give full play to their own skills, they are often based on the work as well as the understanding and knowledge of the characters in the play, the traditional work of the strict screening, and then after the finishing and processing and re-creation, so that it is renewed with a new flavor and luster, in order to perform their distinctive personality, marked with their own style of performance. With the increase of work, it eventually formed its own genre-specific work series to differentiate itself from the performances of other actors. Therefore, even if the works is the same, different genres can still show their own unique styles in their performances. The works of the genres is more colorful with the distinctive personalities of the actors. That is, inherited by professional actors, but also for the majority of theatergoers to enjoy. Therefore, the work of the school is not only the main content of the school's transmission, but also an important carrier of the school's transmission.

Zhang Baoying inherits the art of Cui School, specializing in Qingyi, mainly singing, mostly playing married, decent middle-aged women, with serenity and dignity, sensible and virtuous as the main features. The Cui School, as one of the performing art schools of Yu opera, is renowned for its singing and has accumulated a series of representative works such as "Peach Blossom Nunnery", "Pao Ching-Tian" and "Selling Miao Lang" with its unique artistic personality. " and a series of representative works. Zhang Baoying processed and adapted these representative works according to his own characteristics, forming his own representative work. The following is a summary of Zhang Baoying's work from three periods of her singing art.

1) Succession Period

The traditional works performed by Zhang Baoying seem to be in the transmission period in terms of their contents and themes. The traditional works performed by Zhang Baoying and Cui Lantian include Peach Blossom Nunnery, The Three Weeping Temples, and The Story of the Fragrant Pouch. Among them, The

Tale of the Fragrant Pouch is a traditional work with both singing and acting, and a strong local color. Zhou Fenglian, the heroine of the work, is a "crazy girl" who is not bound by feudal rituals, is straight-talking, and has a straightforward, kind and lively character. The Cui School's portrayal of the heroine is not as exaggerated as that of other schools, but rather portrays the character's inner self in a delicate and subtle way. Zhang Baoying took this work to Beijing, Tianjin, Guangzhou and Hainan. During this period, Zhang Baoying was still in the stage of inheriting the tradition, practicing many works in the Dan character line over and over again, accumulating a wealth of stage experience, laying a solid foundation for her future creation and development, and this work became one of the masterpieces of her youth.

During this period, there were also several transplanted works in Zhang Baoying's work. In the process of the formation of her singing art, she learned from the old artists and other sister arts, and performed the transplanted dramas "Red Plum Tale", "Yang Suo Xing Lu", and "Cosmic Front" successively. Among them, "The Red Plum Tale" is a transplant of the original Qin opera play "Traveling to the West Lake", which is a representative play of the famous Qin opera artist Ma Lanyu, who is famous in the opera world for his wonderful body performance in this work. In order to cultivate Zhang Baoying, Cui Lantian sent Zhang Baoying to Xi'an Northwest Opera Research Institute to study "Touring the West Lake" with Ma Lanyu. After diligent study and hard practice, Zhang Baoying mastered the body performances of the work, such as lying fish, water sleeves and other stunts such as lifting up and fire-breathing, as well as learned the singing style of the work. After returning to Henan, Cui Lantian personally gave her the design of the singing voice for rehearsals, renamed "Red Plum Tale", through the rehearsals and performances of the play, Zhang Baoying made great progress in the performance, and learned to use the Cui school singing voice in the singing voice of the new play "moving" skills. The Red Plum Tale tells the story of the late Southern Song Dynasty, in which the Yuan soldiers are coming south, and the traitorous minister Jia Sidao is traveling to the lake with a kabuki, Li Huiniang, to have fun. When Pei Shunqing, a young scholar, stops the boat to denounce Jia Sidao's crimes, Li Huiniang is killed by Jia Sidao because she praises Pei Shunqing as "a beautiful young man". Li Huiniang, full of grief and indignation, died without giving in, and finally burned down the Half-exile Hall,

composing an ode to a great woman. The play unfolds from Li Huiniang's point of view, showing her love and hatred and her pursuit of justice. In the plot, Li Huiniang and Pei Shunqing fall in love with each other due to their shared love for their family and country, but due to Jia Sidao's jealousy and evil behavior, Li Huiniang is eventually brutally murdered. Her death does not end there, but is transformed into a vengeance against Jia Sidao and a fond farewell to Pei Shunqing. In the climax of the story, Li Huiniang breaks into the hell and complains about her grievances, and finally, with the help of the Judge, she burns down the Half-Idle Hall to punish the evil and eliminate the treachery. The Story of the Red Plum is not only a product of artistic processing of the historical background of the late Southern Song Dynasty, but also, through the character of Li Huiniang, demonstrates women's resistance and spirit of sacrifice under oppression, as well as their dedication to justice and love, and her persistent pursuit of justice and love. The plot is full of twists and turns, rich in emotion and tragedy, and at the same time reflects the complexity and diversity of human nature.

These transplanted works were all rehearsed during the period of transmission, which played an important role in enriching Zhang Baoying's singing art and promoting the formation of her artistic style.

2) The Formative Period

The period of the formation of the new cavity is dominated by the traditional work. As mentioned earlier in this paper, Zhang Baoying's nascent period was during 1978-1985. During this period, Zhang Baoying's singing voice gradually matured, and in terms of work, she fully inherited the classic work of the Cui School. The main plays performed during this period include Peach Blossom Nunnery, Chen Sanliang Climbing to the Hall, Selling Miao Lang, Bao Qingtian, and The Sequel of Qin Xianglian. Among them, the script of "The Sequel of Qin Xianglian" was processed and adapted on the basis of "Qin Xianglian", which tells the story of the two families of Qin Xianglian and Huanggu who met again in 18 years, married their children, and transformed enmity into kinship. It is worth mentioning several traditional plays performed by Zhang Baoying during this period, including "Peach Blossom Nunnery", "Selling Miao Lang", "Bao Qingtian", and "The Sequel of Qin Xianglian".



Figure 15. Stills from the opera film *Bao Qing Tian*, with Zhang Baoying as Qin Xianglian, Cui Shaoqui as Wang Yanling, and Ruan Jing as Chen Shimei (1979)

Source: Qi Yang(2024)

Zhang Baoying formed her representative works in the work during this period, and gradually developed her own artistic style in singing, which was related to the historical background and national policy at that time. In the early period of reform and opening up, with the "lifting of the ban" on costume dramas, the audience's long-suppressed demand for appreciation was released, and traditional dramas ushered in a historic "comeback". A large number of Yu opera's excellent traditional work was reworked and reorganized, and the spring breeze of the lifting of the ban on costume dramas and the people's strong psychological thirst for costume dramas produced an extraordinary social impact. These plays were successively brought to the screen, and with the help of movie distribution, they produced a national influence that transcended regions. Among them, the Yu opera film "Pao Qingtian" starring Zhang Baoying, which was based on the traditional play "Qin Xianglian", was widely popular after being reworked and reorganized. Prompted by this situation, the Ministry of Culture of the central government issued the Report of

the Party Group of the Ministry of Culture on the Gradual Resumption of the Staging of Outstanding Traditional Plays to the Central Propaganda Department in May 1978, which affirmed the importance of the establishment of the Ministry of Culture in the 17th century. The report affirmed the achievements made by the opera circles during the seventeen years after the founding of the PRC in the preparation and staging of modern plays and the organization of traditional work, and affirmed the literary and artistic policy of "let a hundred flowers bloom and push out the old and the new", and then gave the following instructions for the resumption of the staging of traditional work: the criteria for selecting the work should be in accordance with the principles set forth by Chairman Mao "...". The criteria for selecting work should be based on Chairman Mao's policy of "let a hundred flowers blossom, push out the old and bring in the new," the principle of "eliminating the dregs of feudalism and absorbing the essence of democracy," the six political criteria for identifying fragrant flowers and poisonous herbs set forth in the Question of Correctly Dealing with Internal Conflicts among the People, and the "State Council Report on the Reform of the Opera," signed by Premier Zhou on May 5, 1951, which stated that "The State Council should make the following recommendations on the reform of the theater. Instructions of the State Council on the Reform of the Opera", the basic spirit of the State Council, to be measured and appraised cautiously. Where the spirit of patriotism is carried forward; where the struggle of the Chinese people against class oppression is glorified; where the excellent qualities of the Chinese people such as industriousness, bravery, wisdom, etc., and the essence of democracy and revolution such as self-sacrifice and optimism are expressed; where "the past is for the present" and where there is a certain degree of educational significance, inspiration and reference, the excellent traditional opera work should be systematically rewritten, and the work should be rewritten. The work should be organized in a planned manner and submitted for approval for resumption of performances. Considering that the whole country was still in a period of wandering after the end of the Cultural Revolution, the Ministry of Culture was still relatively cautious about opening up the traditional work, because what it allowed to be staged was only "excellent traditional work". However, the report provided a clear policy basis for troupes to stage traditional work, and allowed traditional work, which had been extinct since the beginning of the Cultural

Revolution, to reappear in the audience's view. Under the impetus of this policy, Zhang Baoying starred in "Peach Blossom Nun", the movie "Bao Qingtian", and restaged Cui Pai's famous dramas "Selling Miao Lang" and "The Sequel of Qin Xianglian" in the past few years. These plays, together with the later "The Story of Finding a Child", have become her representative works, and are still the model for Cui Pai students to study.

3) Mature Period

As mentioned earlier, some new historical plays or adaptations of traditional works also belong to the traditional work in a broad sense, thus Zhang Baoying's new costume works in the maturity period, such as "The Sequel of Qin Xianglian", "Hap Mirror Hatred", and "King Wen of Zhou and King Zhou of Yin", and her adaptations of the traditional work "The Search for a Child", belong to the traditional work.

5.1.2.3 Female Spiritual Qualities in Zhang Baoying's Traditional Works

There are a large number of works praising virtuous wives, good mothers, filial women and chaste women in Yu opera. To a large extent, they show the importance and recognition of women. Women married early in feudal society, often marrying at the age of maturity to become wives and mothers, so becoming a "good wife and mother" is the main way for them to gain social recognition and realize the value of their lives, and this tendency has gained wider acceptance with the help of a patriarchal society, gradually internalizing women's self-value positioning. Zhang Baoying's role as a "virtuous wife and mother" in the plays is rich in connotations. In her representative traditional plays, "Peach Blossom Nunnery," "Bao Qingtian," "Selling Miao Lang," "Qin Xianglian," and "The Story of Searching for My Son," she plays the role of a virtuous mother who is not only loving to her calf, but also virtuous in her teaching of her children, and who, in the absence of her father, assumes the heavy responsibility of raising her children and providing them with a good education. In the absence of the father, they take up the important responsibility of raising their children, dedicating their lives to their children and families, highlighting their ethical qualities and moral consciousness, and demonstrating their unique national psychology. The image of virtuous wives in the play scrupulously abides by the rites and teachings, and is loyal and faithful. To the country, they are loyal and

patriotic; to their elders, they are filial and respectful; to their husbands, they are chaste and considerate. The image of virtuous wives and mothers in the play is not only an artistic generalization of reality, but also an echo of the playwright's ideals of edification and Confucian ethics.

1) Maternal Glory

Zhang Baoying works the role of the mother image portrayed in the traditional drama have a fist of love for the child, treat the child is a noble character and loving heart to teach the child, by the playwrights set up as a model of motherhood. In the Yu opera movie "Bao Qing Tian", Qin Xianglian's husband Chen Shimei went to Beijing to take the examination, and was gone for three years without any news. Qin Xianglian had a hard time raising her children at home. When she hears that her husband Chen Shimei has won the Scholarship, she leads her children to travel thousands of miles to Bianliang, the capital, to look for her husband. After encountering her husband's refusal to recognize her, she had no choice but to lead her children back to her hometown, where she was chased by her husband Chen Shimei's assassins. Qin Xianglian fought to protect her children, and the assassin, Han Qi, who is a good and loyal man, knew that after knowing the real situation, she was unwilling to disobey Chen Shimei's will and could not bear to kill innocent Qin Xianglian and her children, and she had no choice but to cut her own throat and died. In the play, Qin Xianglian traveled a long way to the capital to look for her husband in order to have a complete family for her children. Even in the most desperate time, she did not give up to protect her children, which reflects the greatness and selflessness of a mother's love. This kind of mother's love is not only great but also long-lasting, and is an important part of the traditional Chinese family concept. In "Selling Miao Lang", Liu Yingchun had to sell her own son Miao Lang in order to cure her father-in-law's illness. Although Liu Yingchun's heart is filled with longing for her son and guilt, she still insists on doing so, which reflects the depth and greatness of a mother's love. In The Search for a Son, Sun Shulin fled from Pingyang, Shanxi Province to Luoyang, Henan Province, traveling thousands of miles and braving difficulties just to find her long-lost son. Her behavior of searching for her son is based on her deep maternal love for her son. In the process of searching for her son, Sun Shulin experienced many difficulties and setbacks, but she never gave up, and this kind of persistence and

perseverance is the best interpretation of a mother's love. Qin Xianglian's motherly glory is shown to the fullest extent in "The Sequel of Qin Xianglian". Since Chen Shimei abandoned his wife and son, Qin Xianglian took on the heavy responsibility of raising her children alone, bringing up a pair of children to adulthood. She not only gave her children material nourishment, but also gave them endless love and teaching spiritually. Her son, Chen Yingge, was loyal and filial, and practiced martial arts; her daughter, Dongmei, was industrious and kind, all of which could not have been achieved without Qin Xianglian's careful teaching and selfless dedication. At the time of the border crisis, Ying is eager to serve the country, although Hsianglian is reluctant to give up, but still resolutely support the son's choice, and instructed to only be allowed to make a success, not to become an official, which reflects her deep understanding of justice, the overall situation of the mother's wisdom.

Whether or not they are related by blood, mothers have a mother's heart for their children. While the love of a biological mother for her child is a proper thing, the love of a mother who is not related to her child as if she were her own is even more touching. Zhang Baoying plays Dou in the play "Peach Blossom Nunnery". Dou's husband, Zhang Cai, went out to play and has not been heard from for twelve years. Dou misses her husband day and night, and later learns that her husband fell in love at first sight with Chen Miaoshan, a nun at the Peach Blossom Nunnery, and that Miaoshan gave birth to a son after Zhang Cai died of an illness. Dou's original to take away their husbands, destroyed their own family rivals Chen Miaoshan hate to the bone, the two sides, but she learned that the child was sent to the Suzhou governor Sukun, that is, when the recognition of the godchildren of the Su Baoyu, the Zhang family there is a heir to the person, turned from sadness to joy, see the hatred for the good. And Chen Miaoshan and united to the Minglun Hall and the Su family to fight for the son. The Su family's master agreed to recognize Su Baoyu's ancestor, but the Su family's wife insisted on refusing to give up and lose her son. The two families quarreled in Minglun Hall. Su Baoyu understand the reasoning in the hall vow: filial piety relatives to support the body of a person to bear. The whole family is reunited, and all are happy. In this play, Dou's maternal feelings are reflected in her care for Su Baoyu. Although Su Baoyu is not her son, she treats him as her own. This care is not only manifested in the blue shirt she sewed for her husband and gave to Su

Baoyu, but also in the meticulous care she gave to Su Baoyu. Her love for her "righteous son" is not only a continuation of her love for Zhang Cai, but also a maternal care for the child.



Figure 16. Stills from the traditional work “The Story of Searching for My Son”

Source: Qi Yang (2024)

2) Resilience

Zhang Baoying plays the role of a virtuous wife and mother in the classic traditional dramas "Peach Blossom Nunnery", "Bao Qingtian", "Selling Miao Lang", "Qin Xianglian", and "The Story of Searching for My Son", all of which feature husbands who have left home, either for pleasure trips with no news, or for years to catch the examination in the capital and do not return. The heroines in the play all choose to carry the burden of the family and fulfill the task of raising children for their husbands, showing their tough and loyal character. Dou's fidelity to her husband Zhang Cai in "Peach Blossom Nunnery" deeply reflects her tenacity and persistence. Even though Zhang Cai left home during the Hongwu period and had no news of him, she remained faithful and waited for him for twelve years. This fidelity not only reflects her love for her husband, but also her strong will in the face of adversity. She watched spring go by and fall come by on the street crossing, and every

time she waited, she was adhering to her husband's feelings. In the Yu opera "Selling Miao Lang", her husband Zhou Wenxuan, who has been going to Beijing to take the examination for many years but does not return, takes on the heavy responsibility of taking care of her in-laws alone. When Taikang is hit by a drought that leads to a grain harvest, Liu Yingchun's mother-in-law dies of starvation, and her father-in-law, Zhou Yuntai, is seriously ill. Under these circumstances, Liu Yingchun makes a difficult decision to sell her son Miao Lang in exchange for money to support her father-in-law. When her father-in-law Zhou Yuntai learns that his grandson Miao Lang has been sold by his daughter-in-law, he is furious and scolds her. When Liu Yingchun learns that her husband, Zhou Wenxuan, was detained by the master of the Xiangfu government after he won the election, and that the master sent someone to intercept and kill them, Liu Yingchun does not choose to run away, but bravely carries her father-in-law on her back and flees for her life. In the drama, Liu Yingchun faces the scolding of her father-in-law Zhou Yuntai, the pressure of the society and the hardships of life, and endures all the difficulties in silence. She does not give up due to adversity, but through patience and persistence, she eventually wins the understanding and support of her father-in-law, Zhou Yuntai. Her inner fortitude enables her to maintain her dignity in the face of adversity and ultimately ushers in family harmony and reunion. Liu Yingchun's fidelity is not only reflected in her waiting for and support of her husband, but also in her dedication and sacrifice to her family. Her fidelity to her husband and her sacrifices to her family reflect the high level of marital fidelity demanded by traditional Chinese women. In the play Bao Qing Tian, Qin Xianglian always maintains deep affection and loyalty to her husband Chen Shimei, and even after he has become successful and wealthy, she still wishes to reunite and share the joy of family. Her loyalty is not only embodied in her waiting and searching for her husband, but also in her maintenance of her family and her nurturing of her children, and she interprets with her actions what true loyalty and deep affection are.

3) Wisdom and Tolerance

In the play Pao Ching Tin, after Qin Xianglian encounters Chen Shimei's ruthless rejection and pursuit, Qin Xianglian does not choose to remain silent or despair, but seeks for justice with her wisdom and courage. Taking advantage of

Prime Minister Wang's sympathy and support, she skillfully approaches Chen Shimei in an attempt to awaken his conscience. With no way to file a complaint or seek help, she is even brave enough to come forward and expose Chen Shimei's crimes, demonstrating extraordinary courage and wisdom. As a sequel to *Qin Xianglian*, *Qin Xianglian After Story* not only continues the previous work's image of Qin Xianglian as a resilient and loyal woman, but also deepens the character's spiritual qualities in the subsequent storyline. Qin Xianglian's wisdom and tolerance are fully realized in the play. When she learns that Princess Ziyun is the daughter of the imperial aunt and Marshal Zhang, she is initially unable to accept her enemy's daughter as her son's daughter-in-law, but under Pao Zheng's persuasion, she gradually realizes that personal grudges should not affect the stability and harmony of the country. Thus, she chose to put aside her old grudges and resolved the feud with the imperial aunt with wisdom and tolerance. She not only convinces herself to accept Princess Ziyun as her daughter-in-law, but also impresses Princess Ziyun and the imperial aunt with her sincerity and kindness, ultimately making the two feuding families become in-laws. This transformation not only reflects Qin Xianglian's wisdom and tolerance, but also highlights her high art in dealing with complex interpersonal relationships.



Figure 17. Stills from the traditional work “Selling Miao Lang”.

Source: Qi Yang(2024)

3) Family and National Sentiments

In the Sequel of Qin Xianglian, Qin Xianglian's sense of family and country is deeply reflected in the work. In the face of the Liao soldiers' invasion and the critical situation at the border, although she is a woman, she is concerned about the safety of the country and encourages and supports her son to join the army to kill the enemy. In her view, personal happiness and safety should be subordinated to the interests and peace of the country. When Princess Ziyun wanted to marry Ying, Qin Xianglian had a grudge because of old grudges, but under the persuasion of Pao, she finally chose to put the country's interests first and resolved her grudge with the royal aunt, and the two feuding families became in-laws. This change not only reflects Qin Xianglian's deep sense of justice, but also highlights her sense of family and country, which puts the interests of the country first.

To summarize, the female character played by Zhang Baoying plays multiple roles in the family - mother, wife and daughter-in-law. She interprets the true meaning of family ethics with her actions, being loving to her children, faithful to her husband, and filial and respectful to her in-laws. She maintains the harmony and stability of the family with her own actions and has become the guardian of family ethics. She is considerate of the overall situation and has a deep sense of justice, encouraging her son to join the army to kill the enemy, reflecting a woman's sense of family and country.

5.1.3 Transplanting Works

5.1.3.1 Inevitability of Works Transplantation

Transplanting work has always been an important aspect of the work performed by opera troupes. The transplantation of work is not only a tradition of opera, but also a law of the development of opera art. In September 2010, at a seminar on the transplantation of works for modern Chinese opera, experts agreed that "in the history of the development of Chinese opera, the transplantation of works has always been accompanied by its footsteps. The transplantation of the work of Yuan miscellaneous operas by the Ming and Qing sagas, and the transplantation of classical works by various local opera genres and works among various opera genres after the Qing Dynasty have never been interrupted." The whole history of the development of

Chinese opera can be regarded as the history of mutual learning and exchanges between various styles and the transplantation of works.

In the process of its formation and development, Yu Opera has transplanted a large number of classic works from Beijing Opera, Yue Opera, Kun Opera, Qin Opera and many other styles. Many of these works have gradually become the common work of all troupes and groups in the Yu opera world. The transplantation and transmission of the work are indispensable to the richness and breadth of the work and the beauty and splendor of the art of Yu opera.

5.1.3.2 Advantages of Works Transplantation

Transplanting work can avoid all the difficulties that original work may encounter, such as insufficient funds for creation and low audience acceptance. By introducing classic work, it can make full use of high-quality resources and raise the level of the work itself, thus promoting the development of local opera art. This approach can not only alleviate the plight of the loss of traditional work, but also stimulate the vitality of new artistic creation.

Transplanting outstanding works not only makes up for the lack of creative power, but also provides local opera genres with the opportunity to absorb and integrate, learn and improve. Yuan Xuefen, a famous master of Yueju Opera, once mentioned that the transplantation of works is an effective way to realize the sharing of script resources and to solve the problem of lack of new works for troupes. In fact, borrowing and transplanting is also a kind of re-creation, challenging the height of one's own art. Theatre troupes learn from the experience of other types of theatre, borrowing and integrating with each other, which is not only in line with the law of theatrical development, but also promotes the promotion of excellent theatrical works and the development of theatrical career.

Mr. Mei Lanfang, the master of Peking Opera, loved the Yu Opera “Mu Guiying Takes Command” so much that he transplanted this local opera performed by a young actress Ma Jinfeng into Peking Opera and made great efforts to grind it into a masterpiece of his own theatrical performance art. Mr. Mei's approach is worth pondering over, and his temperament and breadth of mind are even more worthy of learning from today's people.

5.1.3.3 Transplanted Works

During the succession period of Zhang Baoying's artistic formation, there were several transplanted works in her works. She learned from the old artists and other sister arts, and performed the transplanted work of “The Red Plum Tale”, “Yang Suo Xing Lu”, and “Cosmic Front”. Among them, “The Red Plum Tale” was transplanted from the original Qin opera “Touring the West Lake”, and these transplanted works were all rehearsed during the period of transmission, which enriched Zhang Baoying's singing art and played an important role in promoting the formation of her artistic style.

“Touring the West Lake” is the representative play of Ma Lanyu, a famous Qin opera singer, in which Ma Lanyu is famous in the opera world for her wonderful body performance. Mei Lanfang once commented on Ma Lanyu: “Bringing the image of Huiniang to the pinnacle of valor and purity, Huiniang, the vengeful female ghost, is truly magnificent and brave” (Mei Lanfang, 1959). In order to cultivate Zhang Baoying, Cui Lantian sent Zhang Baoying to the Xi'an Northwest Opera Research Institute to study “Touring the West Lake” with Ma Lanyu. After diligent study and hard practice, Zhang Baoying mastered the body performances of the works such as the lying fish and the water sleeves, as well as stunts such as lifting up and fire-breathing, and she also learned the singing voice of the works. After returning to Henan, Cui Lantian personally gave her the design of the singing voice for rehearsals, renamed “Red Plum Tale”, through the rehearsals and performances of the play, Zhang Baoying made great progress in the performance, and learned to use the Cui school singing voice in the singing voice of the new play “moving” skills. The Red Plum Tale tells the story of the late Southern Song Dynasty, in which the Yuan soldiers are coming south, and the traitorous minister Jia Sidao is traveling to the lake with a kabuki, Li Huiniang, to have fun. When Pei Shunqing, a young scholar, stops the boat to denounce Jia Sidao's crimes, Li Huiniang is killed by Jia Sidao because she praises Pei Shunqing as “a beautiful young man”. Li Huiniang, full of grief and indignation, died without giving in, and finally burned down the Half-exile Hall, composing an ode to a great woman. The play unfolds from Li Huiniang's point of view, showing her love and hatred and her pursuit of justice. In the plot, Li Huiniang and Pei Shunqing fall in love with each other due to their shared love for their family

and country, but due to Jia Sidao's jealousy and evil behavior, Li Huiniang is eventually brutally murdered. Her death does not end there, but is transformed into a vengeance against Jia Sidao and a fond farewell to Pei Shunqing. In the climax of the story, Li Huiniang breaks into the hell and complains about her grievances, and finally, with the help of the Judge, she burns down the Half-Idle Hall to punish the evil and eliminate the treachery. The Story of the Red Plum is not only a product of artistic processing of the historical background of the late Southern Song Dynasty, but also, through the character of Li Huiniang, demonstrates women's resistance and spirit of sacrifice under oppression, as well as their dedication to justice and love. and her persistent pursuit of justice and love. The plot is full of twists and turns, rich in emotions, full of tragic colors, and at the same time reflects the complexity and diversity of human nature.



Figure 18. Stills from the Chronicle of the Red Plum, with Jang Bo Young as Li Huiniang

Source: Qi Yang (2024)

The rehearsal of the transplanted works not only expanded Zhang Baoying's work, but also greatly enriched her performing art. Transplantation is a process of cross-genre promotion of works. Changes in lyrics, melody, and even storyline are permeated with the re-creation of the adapter, reflecting a second degree

of innovation. Mr. Mei Lanfang, a Peking Opera artist, said when transplanting Yu Opera's "Mu Guiying Takes Command", "When transplanting a sister opera, ... should be changed and modified according to the characteristics and styles of Peking Opera, and should never be imitated in a rigid way without melting into itself. I'm going to try to use the program and performance method of Beijing Opera to express Mu Guiying's heroic posture and learn from Yu Opera with a humble heart." The essence of works transplantation is transmission and development, and such transmission is neither mere copying nor wild variation, but needs to be inherited and developed under the constraints of the artistic qualities of the works. How to learn the strengths of the transplanted works without losing the cultural characteristics of the genre and give full play to its own strengths as much as possible, it is necessary to grasp the beauty of the transplanted works between the changes and constants.

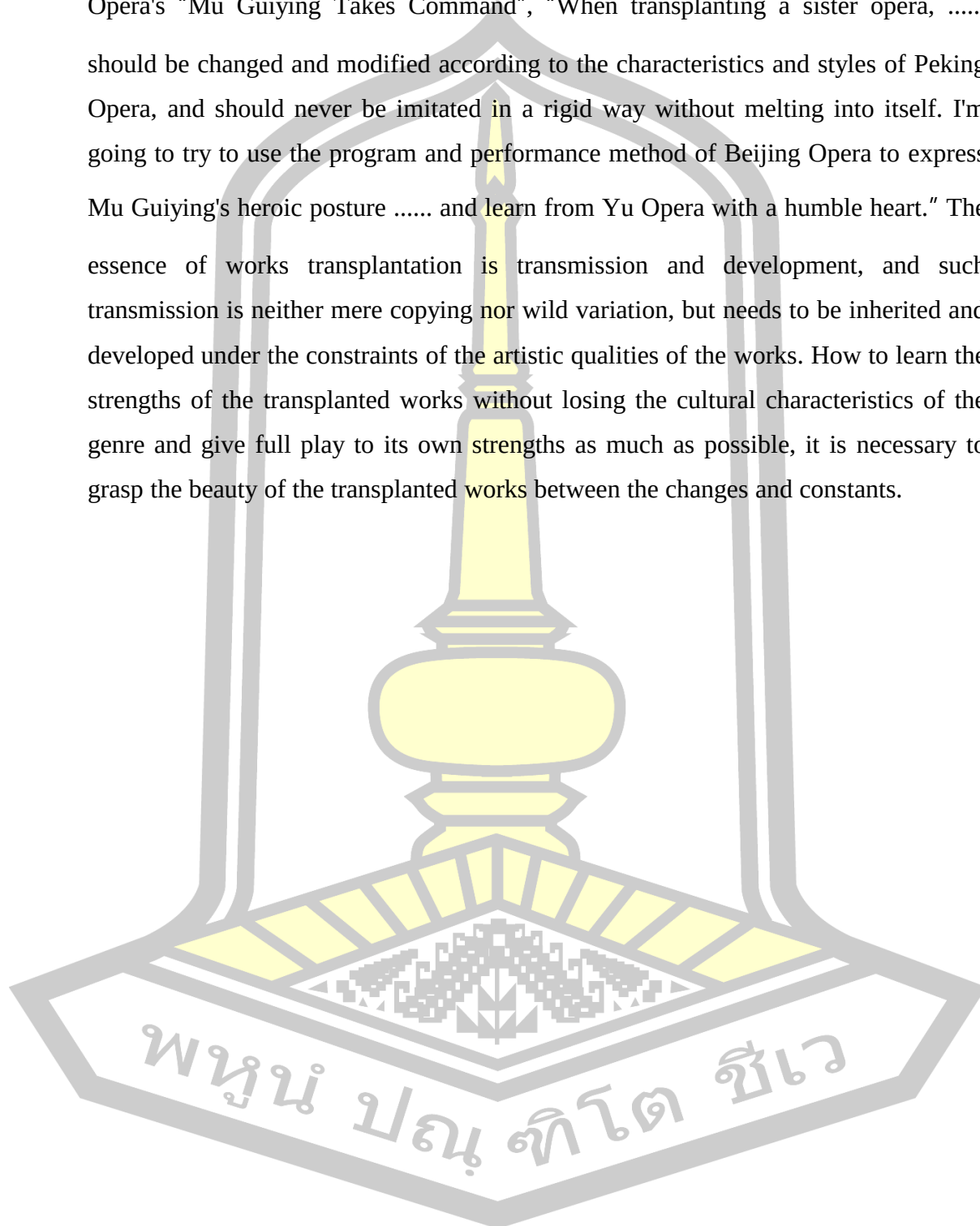


Table 2. Representative works of various types of works in various periods

Period	Representative works
Succession Period - 1959 to 1976	Modern Works: "Red Detachment of the Honghe Lake" Traditional Works: "The Red Plum Blossom", "Cosmic Front", "The Fragrant Pouch" Transplanting works : "The Legend of Red Plum", "Yang Gao's Journey", "The Cosmic Blade".
Beginning Period - 1977 to 1984	Traditional Works: "Judge Bao Qingtian", "Chen Sanliang climbed the courthouse", "Peach Blossom Nunnery."
Mature period - 1985 to 1995	Traditional Works: "The Story of Qin Xianglian", "Selling Miao Lang". "The Story of Searching for My Son"
The Inheritance Period - 1996 to present	Modern Works: "Dusty military medals", "White-haired Mother", "son-in-law" Traditional Works: "On the Qingfeng Pavilion"

Source: Xiaoying Gao (2024)

5.2 The Transmission of Zhang Baoying

5.2.1 Transmission from Teacher

As one of the most important ways of passing on the art of Yu opera, the teacher-teacher relationship has had a profound impact on Zhang Baoying's artistic growth and the passing on of the art of Zhang Baoying's Yu opera. Through her mentorship, Zhang Baoying not only mastered the essence of Cui School, but also

developed and innovated in the process of inheritance, forming her own unique style of performance. At the same time, she has also trained a number of excellent Yu opera performers through her mentorship, injecting new vitality into the inheritance and development of the Cui School of Yu Opera.

5.2.1.1 The Direct Disciples of Cui Lantian

Zhang Baoying, as the disciple of Cui Lan'an, received careful instruction and selfless transmission from her mentor in the art of Yuxi Opera. Cui Lan'an, the founder of the Cui School of Yuxi Opera, has an artistic style characterized by deep and profound emotions and true feelings, which has had a profound impact on Zhang Baoying's artistic growth.

Zhang Baoying learned Yuxi Opera through the traditional method of oral transmission and heartfelt instruction. The book "New Cui School Art - Research on Zhang Baoying's Stage Art" published by Zhongzhou Ancient Books Publishing House in 2019 provides a detailed account of Zhang Baoying's apprenticeship when she was young, including daily warm-up exercises, hanging her voice, practicing body movements, learning singing segments, and memorizing singing lyrics. According to the traditional teaching model, Cui Lan'an, the master, demonstrated the basic elements of hand gestures, footwork, and sleeves through one move and one gesture, and the method of learning singing styles was also the same.

5.2.1.2 The transmission and Development of the Cui School of Art

As the inheritor of Cui School of Art, Zhang Baoying is well aware of the responsibilities and missions she shoulders. Not only does she strive to perform on stage herself, but she also actively cultivates a batch of young actors, making significant contributions to the inheritance and development of Cui School of Art.

In the process of inheriting Cui School of Art, Zhang Baoying pays attention to individualized teaching based on the characteristics and potential of each apprentice. She not only imparts skills but also pays more attention to cultivating the artistic accomplishment and moral quality of her apprentices, so that they can grow and progress in practice. Under her careful guidance, a batch of outstanding Yi Opera actors have emerged, becoming the new force of Cui School of Yi Opera. Currently, Zhang Baoying has 82 disciples, most of whom are active on their respective stages, but some actors have stopped performing opera.

In teaching her disciples, Zhang Baoying not only adopts the traditional method of oral teaching and heart transmission, but also encourages her disciples to maintain an open and inclusive attitude towards learning the strengths of other schools, absorb and integrate the knowledge they have learned, and use it for their own purposes. Zhang Baoying has no prejudice against the background of her disciples, and many of her disciples have learned Yu Opera from other schools before becoming disciples of Cui School. Zhang Baoying encourages them to learn and use more.

5.2.2 Teaching and Training

Teaching and training is one of the important ways to pass on the art of the Cui School of Yu Opera. Through teaching and training, Zhang Baoying not only teaches the skills, but also cultivates the artistic and moral qualities of the students. At the same time, she also provides an important platform for the inheritance of the art of Yu opera through teaching and training, so that more young people have the opportunity to get in touch with and understand the art of the Cui School, injecting new vitality into the future development of the art of Yu opera.

5.2.2.1 Organization of training courses on Cui Yu opera

In order to better pass on the art of Cui School of Yu Opera, Zhang Baoying devoted herself to the teaching of the training course. She not only taught at the guest lectures of the China Academy of Opera and dedicated herself to the transmission of the Cui School, but also participated in the planning and implementation of the Yu opera training courses.²⁰ In the summer of 2024, the “Training of Performance Talents for the Cui School of Yu Opera” project supported by the National Art Fund was officially launched at the Anyang Normal College, with Wang Yafei of the An Yang Normal College in charge of the project. Wang Yafei of the Anyang Normal College was in charge of the program. The training brought together 40 excellent trainees of the Cui School from all over the country. As the core instructor of the program, 84-year-old Zhang Baoying was present in the classroom every day, both teaching and demonstrating, in spite of the summer heat. She patiently taught each trainee, demonstrating everything from the singing style to the stance. After a month of careful cultivation, the trainees have made remarkable progress, and at the end of the performance through the folded drama and Cui classic play " Selling

Miao Lang ", fully demonstrated the results of learning, deeply appreciate the unique charm of the art of Yu opera Cui school. In this training, Zhang Baoying not only taught the performing skills, but also focused on cultivating the students' artistic cultivation and moral character. She deepened the trainees' understanding and knowledge of the art of Cui School of Yu Opera by elaborating the historical background, performance techniques and artistic characteristics of the art. At the same time, she also combined practical guidance and encouraged the participants to hone their acting skills and realize self-improvement in the real world. The success of this training course has played a positive role in promoting the development of the Cui School of Yu Opera.



Figure 19. The performance to report the conclusion of the training program for talents of the Cui School of Yu Opera Art

Source: Ran Lin (2024)

5.2.2.2 Developing Young Actors

Zhang Baoying not only pays attention to current training, but also pays more attention to the long-term cultivation of younger actors. She knows that the future of Cui School of Yi Opera lies in the growth of young actors, so she always emphasizes her attention and support for younger actors in her teaching.

In the process of cultivating young actors, Zhang Baoying helps them better understand the essence of stage performance by sharing her own performance experience. She often invites her disciples or young actors to rehearse and perform together, guiding them through hands-on demonstrations and coaching to help them gradually find confidence and develop stage awareness. She also actively creates various performance opportunities for her disciples or young actors. By participating in local performances, cultural activities, etc., young actors can exercise and improve their performance skills in practice. She knows that only by constantly trying on the stage can young actors truly grow.



Figure 20. Zhang Baoying is telling Meng Wenqing about opera.

Source: Qi Yang (2022)

5.2.3 Teaching and Training

Today, the main opera school that inherits the Cui School is the Anyang City Secondary Vocational and Technical School. The predecessor of Anyang Middle Vocational and Technical School was Anyang Culture and Art School, which was founded by Cui Lantian to cultivate opera talents, and Zhang Baoying was the vice principal of the school. This school on the Cui school of theater teaching is to follow the original play as much as possible without modification, in which the singing is to try to save the original unchanged. The author was also a teacher at the school and is familiar with the school's opera program. There are three-year and six-year academic

systems for opera majors. Three-year students are generally admitted by junior high school graduates, and six-year students are generally admitted by elementary school level students, who are younger. For six-year students, the lower grades are the stage for laying the foundation, and the study does not distinguish between factions, but focuses on the comprehensive training of basic skills. In the upper grades, teachers will advise students to study mainly a particular school according to their conditions and characteristics. Theater school students are relatively young in art, in the genre art they mostly learn as they are, and usually do not form breakthroughs and innovations.

5.2.4 Participation in Local Opera Troupes

In order to better pass on the art of the Cui School of Yu Opera, Zhang Baoying often returns to the Anyang Cui School Art Research Institute to participate in the troupe's performances and teaching work. The Anyang Cui School Art Research Institute is a professional performing arts group founded by Yu Opera master Cui Lantian and inherited and developed by Zhang Baoying, focusing on the performance of classic Yu Opera Cui School work, and it is one of the most important carriers for the inheritance of the Yu Opera Cui School art. Although Zhang Baoying has been away from the troupe for nearly thirty years, she has always been concerned about the development of the troupe, and often returns to the troupe to tutor the young actors, and by teaching skills and experience, she allows young actors to continuously improve their singing level. 2024 August, she allowed nine actors to participate in the training program for Cui School of Yu Opera performing talents, which has further aroused the determination and confidence of the young actors to learn the art of Cui School, and to improve their business level. At present, four actors from the Cui School Art Research Institute have become her personal disciples. She also actively participates in the creation and rehearsal of work. For example, in 1999, she tutored and rehearsed "The Story of Searching for My Son" for Wang Xiumei, a young actor of the Yu Opera Troupe of Anyang City. In addition to training young actors, Zhang Baoying also emphasizes the training of young choreographers and directors. In the National Art Fund project "Yu Opera Cui School Art Performance Talent Training", as a young director Lin Zeng of the two folds of the play report performance, through the re-release of the classic plays to get exercise and growth, for his future creation of new Cui School art plays to accumulate experience.

As the head of Cui school art, Zhang Baoying has had a profound influence on the development of the troupe. She has not only improved the overall level of the troupe through her own performances and teaching, but also provided the troupe with more opportunities for display and learning platforms by organizing various Yu opera art activities. Through her efforts, the troupe has been able to grow and develop, and has made significant contributions to the heritage and development of the Cui School of Yu Opera.

5.3 The Promotion of Zhang Baoying

Zhang Baoying has not only played an important role in the transmission of the Cui School of Yu Opera, but she has also been committed to the promotion of the Cui School. In this chapter, we will discuss the ways of spreading the art of Zhang Baoying's Yu opera from the aspects of modern media utilization, communication and cultural activities, in order to fully demonstrate her important role in the spreading of the art of Yu opera.

5.3.1 The Use of Modern Media

5.3.1.1 Promotion of Film and Television Productions

With the rapid development of film and television technology, film and television works have become one of the most important ways to spread the art of Yu opera. Zhang Baoying is no exception. She utilizes this platform to show the charm of the art of Yu opera Cui Pai to a wider group of viewers through her participation in film and television productions on the subject of Yu opera. 1979 saw the release of the film opera "Pao Ching Tien" by Hong Kong's Golden Horse Pictures, in which Zhang Baoying played the role of Qin Xianglian. In this work, Zhang Baoying, through the interpretation of the plot, allowed the audience to appreciate the story while enjoying the unique charm of the art of Yu opera. It not only achieved good ratings in China, but also gained wide attention and praise in Hong Kong and Southeast Asian countries, opening a new window for the promotion of the art of Yu opera Cui Pai. In 1990, the opera drama series "The Story of Searching for My Son" was broadcasted on the CCTV, with enthusiastic response from the audience and favorable comments from the experts, and it was a great success. In this work, Zhang Baoying changed the image of the former Qingyi and played an old Dan role. In this

work, Zhang Baoying changed her image of Qingyi and played the role of an old Dan, absorbing the performance techniques of Peking Opera and Jin Opera, and she deliberately rendered the characteristics of Cui Pai's art in the art of voice, which received a better artistic effect.

During the decade from 2008 to 2018, Zhang Baoying participated in the filming of a number of film and television works. For example, the 16-episode opera drama "Hanzi in the Mountain" began filming in 2008 and premiered on CCTV's Opera Channel in 2009, in which Zhang Baoying played the role of Fu Shuhuan, the mother of the main character Wang Shunchang. By adapting modern themes, the art of Yu opera has been brought closer to the aesthetic needs of contemporary audiences. These efforts not only enriched the connotation and extension of the art of Yu opera, but also provided more possibilities for the future development of the art of Yu opera Cui Pai. After that, six more films were made successively. Compared with the traditional opera stage, the opera films express more of a visual presentation effect, combining opera and film, realizing a combination of traditional art and modern technological development, and providing experience for the promotion and creation of opera.

5.3.1.2 Record Promotion

Records, as an important medium of music and art promotion, played a crucial role in the promotion of the art of Zhang Baoying's Yu Opera, as reflected in the following aspects:

1) Record and Preservation Role

As a music recording medium, the record can show the rhythm of the sound, the pulse of the music and the structure of the singing, and the skillful combination of music and singing creates a realistic scene atmosphere, realizing the artistic effect of touching the heart with the "sound" and moving the people with the "feelings". The sound rhythms, musical pulsations and unique singing structure of Zhang Baoying's Yu opera are precisely recorded. The preservation of these sound elements through the recordings has enabled Zhang Baoying's artistic essence to be retained for a long time, and has become a valuable material for future generations to study and research. For example, Zhang Baoying's recordings of "The Red Plum Tale" and "The Red Guard of Honghu Lake" in 1960, the cassette recordings she

made three times between 1980 and 1988, and the “Zhang Baoying's Singing Selections” recorded later are all important milestones in her artistic career, and through these recordings, we can clearly feel her unique artistic style and superb skills.

2) Wide promotion

Records have a wide range of promotion and are not limited by geography and time. Through the release of records, Zhang Baoying's Yu Opera art can be quickly spread to all parts of the country and even all over the world, so that more people have the opportunity to enjoy her singing. This wide promotion greatly enhances the popularity and influence of Zhang Baoying's Yu opera art, making her artistic charm recognized and accepted by more people.

3) Cultivating new audience groups

The convenience and accessibility of the recordings have given more audiences the opportunity to contact and understand Zhang Baoying's Yu opera art. Through the promotion of records, Zhang Baoying's Yu opera can be presented to the audience in a more modern and convenient way, thus attracting their attention and love for this traditional art form. This kind of promotion helps to cultivate new audience groups and injects new vitality into the transmission and development of the art of Yu opera.

4) Enhancement of artistic value

The release and promotion of records can enhance the artistic value of Zhang Baoying's Yu opera art. Through the sale and promotion of records, Zhang Baoying's Yu opera art can gain more attention and recognition. At the same time, the promotion of the record also helps to enhance Zhang Baoying's status and influence in the Yu opera world and even the entire opera world, laying a solid foundation for her subsequent artistic development.

5.3.2 The Use of Online Platforms in the Self-Media Era

With the popularization of the Internet and the development of social media, online platforms have become a new position for spreading the art of Yu opera. Li Shujian, chairman of Henan Provincial Dramatists Association, once said, “The audience of one of my live broadcasts can reach 1,570,000 people, topping the plays I've performed for more than ten years. Shake live broadcasting, which opens a door

for us, only by embracing the Internet can our opera be popularized, developed, inherited, prospered, and go further and further.” Therefore, utilizing new media and social platforms for publicity and promotion is an important strategy to enhance the popularity of Yu opera.

In spreading the art of Cui Pai, some official media create and maintain official social media accounts for Cui Pai art, such as Weibo, WeChat, Jitterbug and Shutterbug, etc., and regularly release information related to Cui Pai art, including previews of events, highlights, historical backgrounds and artist introductions. Through these platforms, the charm of Cui Pai art is demonstrated to a wider group of viewers. Secondly, online activities, such as live performances and online quizzes, are carried out to enhance audience participation. Through interaction with the audience, the distance between each other is brought closer, and the audience's sense of identity and love for Cui School art is increased.

Zhang Baoying personally also makes full use of online platforms to spread and promote the art of the Cui School of Yu Opera. By opening her personal social media account, she regularly releases information about her performances, rehearsal highlights, artistic insights, etc., and interacts and communicates with her fans. These contents not only let fans know more about Zhang Baoying's artistic career and the charm of Yu opera Cui school art, but also stimulate their interest and love for Yu opera art.

Self-media can close the psychological distance and aesthetic distance with the user, in the past in the theater performance is the one-way communication way of what the actors play what the audience see, and the self-media changed this one-way communication way, through the live broadcast and short video communication and interaction, in the subtle influence and change the user, especially the young user cognition, in the interaction to complete the increase in the young audience, and to promote the young user group of the opera culture to produce Identity. Zhang Baoying actively participates in the production of live broadcasts and short videos on the Internet, presenting the wonderful moments and behind-the-scenes stories of the art of Yu opera Cui Pai to the audience through the forms of live broadcasts and short videos. These live broadcasts and short videos not only let the audience feel the unique charm of the art of Yu opera in appreciation, but also enhance the audience's

sense of participation and sense of belonging through interactive methods such as pop-ups and comments. In addition, Zhang Baoying has also established her own fan group, expressing her willingness to further communicate and interact with her fans. Currently, Zhang Baoying has self-media accounts in both Shake and Quick Hands, with 103,000 Shake fans, 141 short videos, and 353,000 likes.

5.3.3 Organize Cultural Activities and Performances

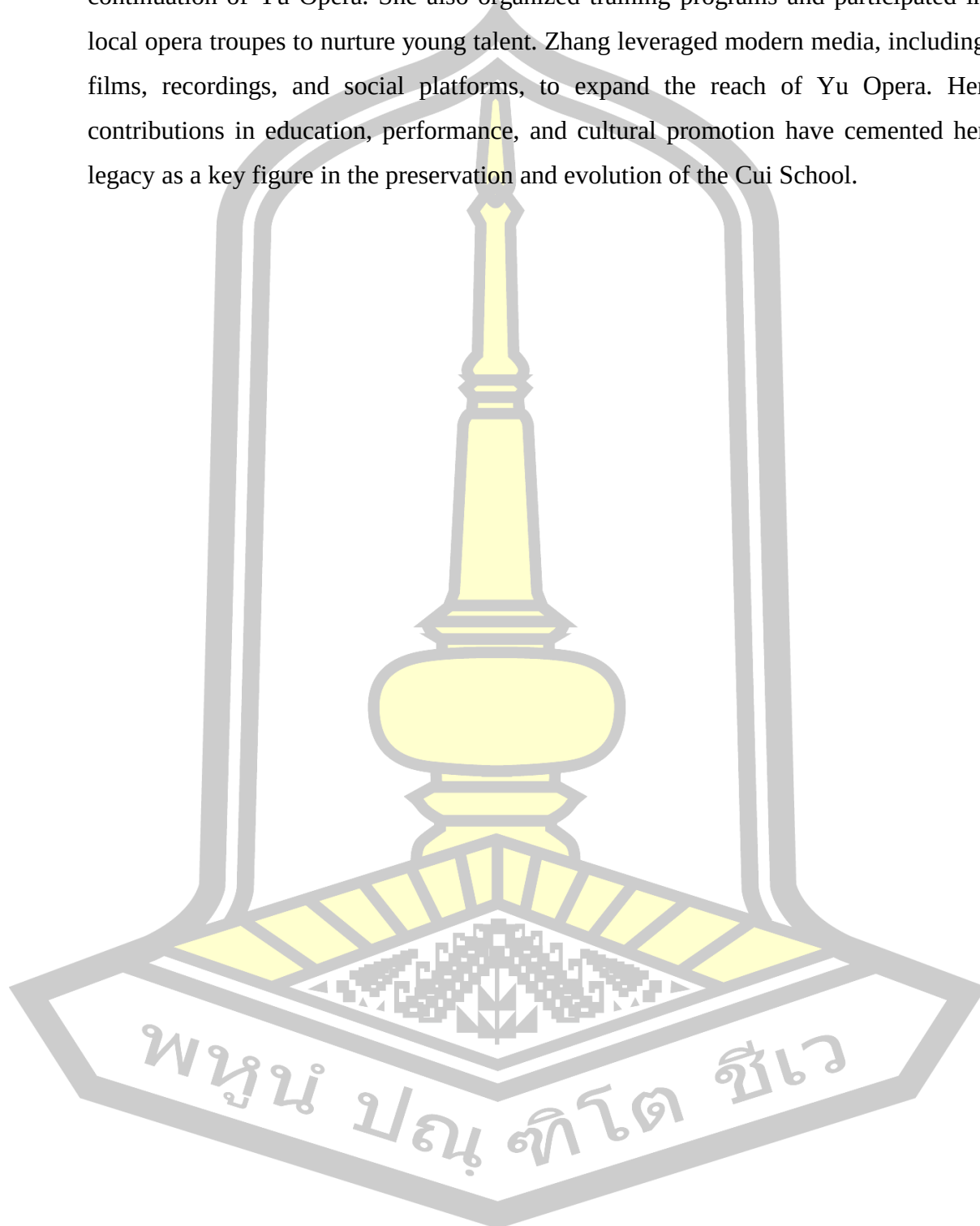
In addition to the use of new media, regular cultural activities and performances organized by the relevant departments have also enhanced the influence of Cui Pai art. By organizing Yu opera festivals and art weeks, the presence of Cui school art in cultural life is enhanced. For example, a regular week of Yu opera performances is organized, in which well-known actors and troupes are invited to participate, attracting more audiences to come and watch. In addition, activities such as lectures on knowledge of Yu opera, interpretation of work, and book launches on Cui school art have been carried out to improve the cultural literacy of the audience and enhance their understanding and recognition of Cui school art.

5.4 Conclusion

Zhang Baoying's artistic career in Yu Opera is explored through her performances in modern, traditional, and transplanted works. Her modern plays, including *Honghu Red Guard* and *Li Shuang Shuang*, reflect social transformation, female empowerment, and patriotic themes. Traditional works, such as *Peach Blossom Nunnery* and *The Sequel of Qin Xianglian*, emphasize virtues like loyalty and filial piety, portraying resilient and wise female figures. Additionally, she played a key role in adapting and performing transplanted works from other opera genres, enriching Yu Opera's artistic landscape. Zhang Baoying's legacy extends beyond performance; she significantly contributed to the development, preservation, and innovation of Yu Opera. Through her dedication to education and artistic refinement, she ensured the survival and evolution of the Cui School, influencing future generations and solidifying her status as a leading figure in Yu Opera history.

Zhang Baoying played a crucial role in preserving and promoting the Cui School of Yu Opera through performance, education, and media engagement. She inherited the Cui School style from her mentor, Cui Lantian, mastering and innovating

its techniques. Committed to education, she mentored over 80 students, ensuring the continuation of Yu Opera. She also organized training programs and participated in local opera troupes to nurture young talent. Zhang leveraged modern media, including films, recordings, and social platforms, to expand the reach of Yu Opera. Her contributions in education, performance, and cultural promotion have cemented her legacy as a key figure in the preservation and evolution of the Cui School.



CHAPTER VI

THE SINGING TECHNIQUE OF ZHANG BAOYING

In this chapter, we will select representative singing segments and analyse the art of Zhang Baoying's Yu opera in terms of singing technique.

6.1 The Singing Technique of Zhang Baoying.

6.1.1 Use of Voice

6.1.2 Singing breath

6.1.3 Vocal Production

6.1.4 Resonance

6.1.5 Vocal ornamentation

6.1.6 Dynamic Ornamentation

6.1.7 Tempo Ornamentation

6.1.8 Pitch ornamentation

6.2 Conclusion

6.1 The Singing Technique of Zhang Baoying

In traditional folk art, the of skills between masters and disciples mostly relies on oral , and traditional opera is no exception. In the transmission process of traditional opera, the masters teach their pupils more about performance and diction, but seldom teach them vocal methods and luck techniques, and the pupils lack systematic and scientific vocal guidance and luck methods, so they can only grope and practice in their daily shouting and hanging voices. Many opera masters had long been aware of this problem, and they actively drew on the scientific vocal methods in order to make a breakthrough. For example, in 1932, Cheng Yanqiu, a master of Peking Opera, went to Europe to study, and he absorbed some of the strengths of vocal music in the art of opera, which made the art of Cheng School more expressive; in the 1950s, the Shanghai Opera School introduced the Western pharyngeal voice training method, which cultivated a lot of outstanding talents. In fact, the theory of singing in China has long been recorded in ancient literature. Through the exploration

and practice of generations of opera singers, a set of systematic and comprehensive singing techniques and methods have been gradually constructed and perfected.

Cui School, as an important school of Yu Opera, whether it is Cui Lantian, the founder of Cui School, or Zhang Baoying, the outstanding successor and innovator of Cui School, they drew on scientific vocal methods, absorbed the advantages of other types of theatre and opera schools, combined with their own voice characteristics, and after a long period of practice and innovation, they gradually formed a vocal method with a unique flavour, which made the art of Cui School unique on the stage of Yu Opera. The theory of traditional opera is rich in content and covers a wide range of areas, but this paper mainly discusses the unique use of voice and breathing method in Zhang Baoying's singing art.

Zhang Baoying, as an outstanding heir of the Cui School of Yu Opera, is known as the 'First Great Blue Coat of Yu Opera'. When she first learnt from Cui Lantian, she mainly imitated Cui's singing style and flavour. However, Zhang Baoying's voice conditions were different from Cui Lantian's, and the former's voice was not as thick as the latter's. In the opera world, Zhang Baoying was known as the 'First Great Qingyi of Yu Opera'. In the opera world, Cui Lantian's voice was known as 'big voice', while Zhang Baoying's voice belonged to 'small voice'. Cui Lantian once told Zhang Baoying, 'Don't imitate me in such a rigid way. You and I have different voice conditions. I have a big voice, but you have a small voice, and you don't have that voice. You have to use the method I taught you and sing according to your own voice conditions. How to sing comfortably, how to sing well and pleasant to the ear, how you sing, do not blindly work in the aspect of like not like me! (Anyang Art Research Institute, 2019) Since then, Zhang Baoying, on the basis of inheriting the typical characteristics of the Cui School of Art, combined with her own voice conditions, through continuous exploration and practice, she worked out a set of singing methods and techniques suitable for herself, so that her singing art not only has the flavour of the Cui School of Art, but also has her own unique characteristics, and her singing art has been called 'New Cui School of Art'. Her singing art has been called 'New Cui School Art'. From this, we can see that it is more crucial to master singing skills than just having a good voice. Kunqu performer Yu Zhenfei also

emphasised: 'A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step', without laying a good foundation brick by brick, how can you build a seven-tiered building? How can one perform a good opera without practising one move at a time? Similarly, it is impossible to sing a good tune without rigorous training, word by word and panel by panel. Therefore, we should never despise all kinds of techniques, but on the contrary, we should make painstaking efforts to learn it well and familiarise ourselves with it, so as to master and apply it correctly.'(Yu Zhengfei,1985)It can be seen that only through hard practice and constant exploration can an actor truly grasp his or her own singing style and interpret the most moving singing voice.

6.1.1 Use of Voice

In the long-term stage singing practice of Yu Opera, due to the differences in the regional genres of singing, the voice conditions of the actors, as well as the different styles of roles and work, the actors' habits of using their voices have varied, resulting in the formation of various singing methods of using the voice. However, with the improvement of actors' artistic cultivation and the increase of communication among actors, these methods of using the voice in the Yu opera have gradually become standardised.

The basic voice methods of Yu Opera can be summarised into seven types: "Daben, Erben, Yan, Yin-Yang, Pian, Bao, Pian, and Pianban."(Guo Kejian, 2005)From the viewpoint of Zhang Baoying's singing art, she adopts the singing method of 'mixing true and false voices' by combining Da Benqiang, Er Benqiang and Jia Benyin. The "Da Ben Cavity" is the true voice, which is also known as "Da Ben Voice" and "Yang Tone". The "Da Ben Voice" is mostly used to sing the western Yu tune, which is sung with the original voice' (Zhang Pufu,1988). Zhang Baoying's teacher, Cui Lantian, sang more in his original voice. The 'Erben accent' is a falsetto voice, which is traditionally called 'Erben voice' or "small voice". Among actresses, the Erben accent is usually the method used by actors in the Yu Dong tune. The 'Pin Ben Yin' is a method of using the voice by mixing the true and false voices, but this mixing is mainly applied between the high and middle voice ranges. In order to get a better resonance effect, Zhang Baoying combines the "pin-ben-voice" with the 'daben-voice' and the "er-ben-voice" and matches them reasonably in proportion, which the

author refers to as the ‘true/false half-voice’ mixing method. This kind of mixed voice is not only strong and bright, but also flexible and free, with a wide range of sound and a unified sound area. Specifically, in the middle and lower registers, Zhang Baoying's voice is dominated by her DaBen voice, which means that the proportion of her DaBen voice is more, combined with her chest resonance, so that her voice will not be false. In the middle register, the proportion of Da Ben voice, Er Ben voice, and the clip Ben voice is more balanced. Combined with the oral resonance and nasal resonance, this register is the most comfortable one for the actor to sing. In the middle and high registers, Zhang Baoying sings with a predominantly Erben voice and Pinben voice, combined with head resonance, in order to achieve a high-pitched and bright tone.

6.1.2 Singing Breath

6.1.2.1 The Importance of Breath

The core driving force of singing comes from the breath, a principle that is highly valued in the art of singing by all peoples of the world. In China, the record of vocal breath technique has a long history. In the Tang Dynasty, Duan Anjie's *Miscellaneous Records of Music* mentions, “A good singer must first adjust his breath. Having obtained its technique, one can achieve the wonderfulness of curbing the clouds and ringing the valleys.” Many theatre artists have also discussed the breath. Yu opera master Chang Xiangyu once said, “If you can't change your breath, you can't sing well.” The famous Peking Opera performer Chen Yanheng mentioned in *Saying Tan*: “The breath is the commander of the sound.” It can be seen that the use of breath is very important in opera singing. In the art of Cui School of Yu Opera, the use of breath is also valued. Cui Lantian's singing voice has the characteristics of low and gentle, cool and deep, which is inextricably linked with her correct use of breath. Zhang Baoying learnt her first opera after studying under Cui Lantian, which was *Travelling to Turtle Mountain - Submitting to the Yamen*. Cui Lantian not only taught her how to perform and spit out the words, but also how to pronounce the sound and use the breath. Through the study of this opera, Zhang Baoying laid a solid foundation for the art of singing.

6.1.2.2 The Science of Breath

In the art of singing, there are usually three types of breathing methods, namely, chest breathing, abdominal breathing and combined chest and abdominal breathing. Practice has shown that the third breathing method, “Chest-abdominal combined breathing” is more practical and scientific. This method regulates the breath through the joint control of the chest, abdominal muscles, and diaphragm. From Zhang Baoying's practical experience, the advantages of this thoracic-abdominal joint breathing method include: strong breath control, the ability to achieve deep inhalation, providing obvious breath support points, coordinating the effective coordination of the resonance chambers, and at the same time, reducing the excessive impact of the airflow on the vocal cords and the pharynx. This is also an important reason why she is able to maintain a good singing condition. Opera singing emphasizes the importance of “sinking the qi into the dantian,” and Xun Huisheng stresses: “When shouting, you should be careful not to shout with a dead force, tilting your head or sticking your neck out. When shouting, you should be natural, let your whole body relax, and use the strength of the dantian, the sound behind the head.” (Xun Huisheng, 1980) The term “Dantian” refers specifically to the area where the abdominal muscles are located, and it depicts the synergy between the lower Dantian and the diaphragm in the regulation of breathing. During inhalation, if you can feel a clear sinking sensation in the waist and abdomen, it means that the breath has been fully inhaled. By using the “Dantian Breath” technique, the inhalation can be fast and deep, while keeping the throat loose. During the performance, i.e., the exhalation process, the diaphragm moves upwards, while the lower dantian contracts, causing the breath to flow upwards. At this point, the respiratory muscles of the abdomen exert appropriate pressure, ensuring effective control of the breath. With this breathing style, the singer's posture is natural and elegant, and her voice becomes more rounded, relaxed, and long-lasting, with a bright and penetrating tone. Although Zhang Baoying is 84 years old, her tone is still bright and strong, which is closely related to her use of the scientific breathing method mentioned above. It is indeed regrettable that many actors and actresses in the opera world, despite having good vocal conditions, are forced to leave the stage due to damage to their vocal cords caused by the lack of scientific breathing and vocal methods. Zhang Baoying also suffered from vocal cord nodules

and laryngeal muscle weakness during her acting career, but she did not give up and eventually worked out a scientific breathing and vocal method suitable for her by seeking medical help and consulting her vocal teacher.

6.1.2.3 The Importance of Breathing Techniques

The music sung in opera is ever-changing and the emotions expressed are colourful, which requires actors to have flexible and varied luck methods. In the Yuan Dynasty, Yan Nan Zhian pointed out in *Singing Theory*: “There is stealing air, taking air, changing air, resting air, on air, and the lover has a breath.” The various singing styles of opera are designed to express emotions more effectively, and the proper use of breath techniques not only makes the voice smoother and rounder, but is also a key means of conveying emotions. The following analyses Zhang Baoying's specific breath techniques in terms of stealing, sinking, lifting, bouncing, resting, kneading, pushing and closing.

1) Stealing Breath

Stealing breath is a clever breath supplementation technique that takes place in a very short period of time, with the aim of completing the process without leaving any trace. During singing, the singer steals breath by quietly inhaling at the end of a word or syllable while maintaining a constant facial expression. This stealing breath process must be completed without the audience noticing. The breath used in this technique is relatively shallow and mainly concentrated in the upper part of the chest, not involving deep breathing, so this method is only used as a brief supplementary means of breath. Zhang Baoying uses this breathing technique to enhance the atmosphere and create a seamless artistic effect in terms of musical style. In the singing segment of the opera "Duofaqiang" (The Flower-Gun Match), for example, Zhang Baoying used the stealing breath technique before the lines "Doesn't your own grandchildren deserve your love?" "I don't know why you blame Guizhi" and "What kind of reputation will I leave behind?" to express Guizhi's anger towards forgetful Lao Liyi. The singing tempo increased, showing Guizhi's anger towards Lao Liyi who forgot his feelings, and then it decreased as Guizhi calmed down after being persuaded by others and reconciled with Lao Liyi, pushing Guizhi's emotions to a climax.

For example, in the singing segment of "Hongyungang" (Red Cloud Peak), where Zhang Baoying sings "Today, I am happily boiling chicken soup for my loved ones" and "Bury the reactionaries completely to usher in a new China," she used the stealing breath technique before the word "迎" (meet)(before the second beat of bar 9), to express Ying's deep affection for the revolutionary soldiers and her expectation of revolutionary victory.



Figure 21. Yu Opera Music 'HongYunGang'

Source: Xiaoying Gao (2024)

It is worth emphasizing that stealing breath is not the same as grabbing breath. Grabbing breath can easily cause muscle tension, while stealing breath requires great stealth in singing and involves almost no noticeable changes in facial or body movements. It is completed in a composed manner, giving the listener the impression that the sound is interrupted but the breath is continuous, which can showcase the actor's profound basic skills.

2) Take a Deep Breath.

The use of breath control is similar to the "sigh" effect in singing, which is often used to transition from high notes to low notes. This technique allows the resonance cavity to smoothly transition from the head and pharynx to the chest, thereby enhancing the thickness and volume of the voice and creating a depressing and melancholic tone. It is worth noting that the "breath control" technique is not

limited to high notes, but is used throughout the singing process. The only difference is that, due to differences in rhythm, melody, tempo, emotion, and tone, the degree of use of "breath control" in low notes, middle notes, and high notes is different. For example, Zhang Baoying used the breath control technique in her rendition of "The Search for My Son""I Have Waited for My Son for Seventeen Years", specifically in the lyrics "I have waited for my son for seventeen years, my son my son," where the word "year"(bar 4) reaches the highest note. Her powerful voice suddenly pours out Sun Shulin's hardships and bitterness, and then the melody line meanders downward, with the resonance cavity transitioning from the head and pharynx to the chest, enhancing the thickness and volume of the voice and creating a depressing and melancholic tone. The entire melody moves the audience to tears.

整整盼了十七年
zheng zheng pan liao shi qi nian

我的儿啊
wo de er a

25

Figure 22. Yu Opera Music "The Story of Searching for My Son"

Source: Xiaoying Gao (2024)

3) Raising the Breath

The "qi" referred to here does not mean that the fulcrum of the breath is moved upwards, but that the fulcrum of her self-perceived "breath" is lowered, thus increasing the confrontational force between the breath and the voice. As Shen Xiang, a vocal educator, said: "Lift your lower abdomen and hips a little. When you sing, you have to find the up-and-down confrontation force between your waist and abdomen." From another point of view, "lifting the breath" also means "lifting the energy" and "lifting the spirit", the purpose of which is to open up the breath channels and prepare for the singing of high notes and strong tones. Therefore, Zhang Baoying often uses the technique of "lifting the breath" when she expresses high-pitched and passionate emotions as well as agitated and exuberant emotions, especially in the soprano area or the lyrical climax of the singing section. When she sings, she raises the "power" of the belly and integrates it with her inner emotions, driving the voice with her emotions. For example, in "Selling Miao Lang", Liu Yingchun sings "Husband Father, take it easy", and the first line of her singing starts with the word "old"(bar 2), using the word "lifting", which expresses Liu Yingchun's impatience to declare her grievances to her father-in-law, and her desire to express her feelings. The use of the word "old" in the first line expresses Liu Yingchun's impatience to tell her father-in-law her grievances and to avoid misunderstandings.



Figure 23. Yu Opera Music "Selling Miao Lang "

Source: Xiaoying Gao (2024)

For example, in the paragraph of "The Story of Searching for My Son", "I knelt in front of the little enemy", the word "cold" in the last sentence, "The mothers of the world sighed longingly in the sky, and their hearts were cold", also uses the luck technique of lifting up the breath.



Figure 24. Yu Opera Music "The Story of Searching for My Son"

Source: Xiaoying Gao (2024)

4) Bouncing Breath

As the name suggests, the technique of "bouncing the air" is to make the voice and airflow feel bouncy. This refers to the short bouncing of the diaphragm and the lower dantian during singing. Specifically, the diaphragm and lower dantian should contract quickly after inhalation to make the column of air thinner, and at the same time ensure that the pivot point of the breath is stable and does not waver. This luck technique needs to be closely coordinated with the biting strength, "spout" technique, and vocal folds to block the air, otherwise the artistic expression of the singing voice will be affected. The technique of "playing the air" is mainly used for

singing with fewer words and faster tempo, and is generally used to express excited emotions and make the voice full of elasticity. For example, Zhang Baoying used the air-bouncing technique for the word "gust"(bar 3) in the phrase "no tears, no sadness" in Han Ying's stanza "Autumn Wind Gusts" in the play "Red Guard of the Honghu Lake", which shows Han Ying's firm faith and revolutionary beliefs. It shows Han Ying's firm belief and revolutionary optimism.

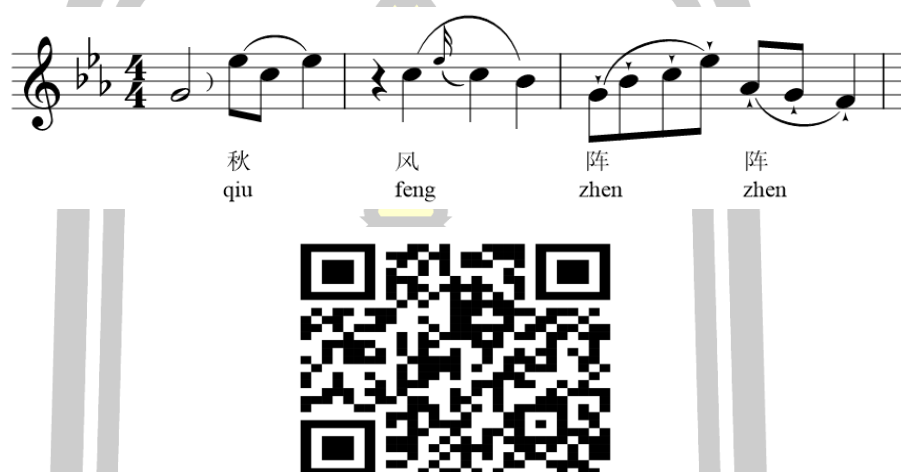


Figure 25. Yu Opera Music "The Red Guards of Honghu Lake"

Source: Xiaoying Gao (2024)

5) Pausing for Breath

"Pause" means an interruption or a pause, so "pausing for breath" is also called "gasping for breath" or "stopping for breath." "Pausing for breath" is a common expression and breathing technique in Zhang Baoying's singing, specifically referring to the pause in the singing melody. During this pause, the breathing muscle groups will temporarily stop working, creating a brief pause sensation. Then the singer will continue to adjust their breath. This brief pause is called "pausing for breath." Through this sudden interruption, the audience will feel a sense of anticipation. Then, the singer will continue to sing the subsequent melody. When using this technique, although the voice is temporarily stopped, the breathing and vocal muscles remain in a tense state, and emotions continue to accumulate. For example, in Zhang Baoying's performance of The Sequel of Qin Xianglian during the aria "Entering Han Temple, waves surge in my heart," the word "qin" (亲) in the line

"Defying my mother's orders, resenting my foe, and grieving my kin—how can I face the righteous Han?" (bar 9) is sung with a deliberate pause for breath, conveying Qin Xianglian's deep sense of guilt toward Han Qi.

The image displays a musical score for a Yu Opera piece. It consists of three staves of music in 2/4 time, written in G major (one sharp). The lyrics are in Chinese characters with pinyin below them. The first two staves are identical and end with a fermata over the final note. The third staff continues the melody and includes a trill (tr) on the note for 'han'.

小 奴 才 违 母 命 仇 欢 亲 痛 怎 对
 xiao nu cai wei mu ming chou huan qin tong zen dui

起 韩 义 士
 qi han yi shi

Figure 26. Yu Opera Music "The Sequel of Qin Xianglian"

Source: Xiaoying Gao (2024)

6) Kneading Breath

Vibrato is the inhalation of breath that is realised through the confrontation of the strength of the waist and abdomen. Usually, when the singer uses the kneading breath, he/she will feel the natural expansion around the waist and the stretching of the chest, as if there is a force of squeezing toothpaste in pushing the breath. Vibrato is mainly used for singing with a slower tempo, a wide range of tones, and fewer words and more accents. Soft Qi is a luck technique that Zhang Baoying

specialises in, and many of her singing passages cleverly incorporate this technique. This technique is suitable for expressing beautiful emotions or expressing feelings of longing, and is a way to demonstrate her luck power. In the aria "Peach Blossom Nunnery" from Peach Blossom Retreat, performed by Dou, the technique of "breath vibration" is employed multiple times. For instance, in the first musical phrase, the word "bloom" (开) in "Spring returns, apricot blossoms bloom" and the subsequent melisma (bar10-17) utilize this technique. Similarly, in the second phrase, the word "husband" (公) in "My husband Zhang Cai" (bar 35) also incorporates breath vibration. In Peach Blossom Retreat, Dou's husband Zhang Cai has been away from home for twelve years, and she has been faithfully awaiting his return. This aria portrays Dou gazing into the distance from the overhead passageway, longing for her husband's return. At this moment, Dou's emotions are complex—she is filled with longing for her husband while harboring hopes for the future of her family.





Figure 27. Yu Opera Music "Peach Blossom Nunnery"

Source: Xiaoying Gao (2024)

7) Pushing Breath

The common luck technique in opera - "pushing the breath," also known as "sending the breath," is a common breath technique used by Zhang Baoying when he sings a bold and exciting cantata. When using this technique, the actor usually thickens the breath pipe to ensure that the breath flows smoothly up and down, and at the same time makes the resonance chamber slightly larger, speeding up the airflow and increasing the flow, giving the impression of a great momentum. For example, in Zhang Baoying's classic play, "The Story of Searching for My Son," there are a number of places to use the technique of pushing the breath, singing "the yamen's voices please sound like a thunderbolt" in the word "today," from the second group of small words c jumped upward to the extension of the second group of small words g, as well as the back of the dragging cavity needs to be sent to send the breath to fully bring the momentum of the melody, to ensure the momentum of the melody is smooth. In order to fully express the momentum of the melody.

พหุ ประถมศึกษา



Figure 28. Yu Opera Music "The Story of Searching for My Son"

Source: Xiaoying Gao (2024)

8) Controlled Breathing

Controlled breathing is often used when the emotional content of the music is gradually winding down. It is mainly used for gradual effects such as volume decreasing from strong to weak or intensity decreasing from heavy to light. It is a conscious and controlled inward breathing technique. In this case, the sound column gradually becomes thinner, requiring the performer to relax the muscles in the mouth and throat, and regulate the pressure, flow, and speed of the breath to achieve a smooth transition of sound. This conscious breath control not only applies to the end of singing but also cleverly integrates into sliding notes and other techniques, greatly enriching delicate emotional expression. For example, in the song "The Mountain Man," the "ah" in the lyrics "listen to the old slave telling you about the ancient people" uses the technique of controlled breathing to showcase Zhang Baoying's outstanding singing artistry.

6.1.3 Vocal Production

6.1.3.1 Vocal Function State

The "big voice" and "small voice" mentioned in the opera world correspond to the "true voice" and "false voice" in vocal terminology. As mentioned earlier, Zhang Baoying's voice is the same as her falsetto voice in vocal terminology. As mentioned in the previous section, Zhang Baoying adopts a mixture of true and

false voices. When she sings in the lower register, her vocal function is similar to that of a dabon (large voice), in which the cricothyroid muscle dominates the voice, and the voice is thick and powerful. When the pitch rises, her vocal function is similar to that of a small voice, with the philtrum muscle group gradually playing a leading role, prompting the movement between the cricoarytenoid and philtrum muscle groups to reach a balance, so that her voice has the characteristics of both the dabengjang and the dabengjang, which is not only thick and powerful, but also bright and dexterous, and exhibits a rich and round sound quality. Overall, Zhang Baoying's singing is a mixture of true and false voices, with more use of the small voice in the high notes and the large voice in the middle and low notes, and at the same time, the transition between true and false voices is smooth and natural, with no obvious cracks. To meet the singing requirements of the Dan line in Yu Opera, she needs to use bright, natural falsetto in the middle and high registers with full vocal folds, while in the very high registers, she pays special attention to the purity and stability of the voice.

In the Sequel of Qin Xianglian (Figure 27), during the aria "Entering Han Temple, My Heart Surges Like Waves," the word "name" (名) in the phrase "Virtuous heroes, respected by all, renowned through the ages" (bar 5), and in Figure 28, the words "death" (死) and "after" (后) in the phrase "While alive, I ask for no care from an unfilial son; after my death" (bar 9), reach the pitch of B in the second octave. Singing purely in falsetto at this range can be challenging, even for female performers. At these moments, Zhang Baoying employs the "head voice" technique to achieve the desired effect. In the bass, Zhang Baoying will cleverly use the big voice, because the falsetto singing in too low a tone would make the tone weak, powerless, and lack fullness. In "The ruthless thief Chen Shimei got his comeuppance," the "comeuppance" sound area is as low as the B of the small character group, and Zhang Baoying mixes in some chest voice to form a "mixed voice," which prevents the bass from sounding "weak." This prevents the bass voice from sounding "weak." However, it took more than a day to achieve a seamless transition of the big and small voices. During the Cultural Revolution, Zhang Baoying's habitual shouting for a long period of time, because she did not know how to mix her voice, triggered her vocal cord nodules and laryngeal muscle weakness. Later, she looked for a voice teacher to teach

her how to make her voice, and she studied hard to find out a set of scientific vocal methods that suited her voice.

贤义士 万民敬 千古 名
xian yi shi wan min jing qian gu zuo ming

Figure 29. Yu Opera Music "The Sequel of Qin Xianglian "

Source: Xiaoying Gao (2024)

活着 不图 逆子 养 到 死 后
huo zhe bu tu ni zi yang dao si hou

Figure 30. Yu Opera Music "The Sequel of Qin Xianglian "

Source: Xiaoying Gao (2024)

6.1.3.2 Breath and Voice Operation

Breath and voice are the two basic elements of singing, in which breath is dominant and voice is the foundation. No matter which form of singing, it involves the direction of breath and voice movement, i.e., the "upward" and "downward" direction of breath, and the "forward" and "backward" direction of voice. In this paper, we try to discuss the relationship between breath and voice operation in Zhang Baoying's singing from the perspective of vocal singing.¹⁾ The upward and downward movement of breath

From the point of view of physiological science of singing, the sound is produced by the breath impacting the vocal folds upwards to make them vibrate, and then issued through the resonating cavity. From the psychological point of view of singing, when the singer inhales, he/she feels the breath sinking downward and "sighing" into the diaphragm, which opposes the force of the breath impacting the vocal folds upward. In the study and training of Yu Opera singing, there are often practice misunderstandings due to the wrong understanding of vocal principles. For example, some Yu opera singers over-emphasise the sinking of the breath, such as the sinking of the qi into the dantian and the expansion of the abdomen, while neglecting the concentration of the voice and the natural and full closure of the vocal folds. This approach focuses only on the breath "sinking" and ignores the "rise" of the voice, the result may be back because of the strong breath impact on the vocal folds, the tone appears dark and dull, although the volume may be larger, but the health of the vocal folds is extremely harmful. Regardless of the art of singing, the correct use of breath should be learnt to breath and the vocal folds of a good match. Zhang Baoying is able to use this relationship reasonably in her singing.

2) The front and back of the voice

Domestic vocal circles used to think that "the front is ethnic (Chinese) singing, and the back is American (Western) singing", but this view is now outdated. In the opera world, there still exists the saying that "the voice that leans forward is bright, and the voice that leans back is boring". From the point of view of physiological science of singing, the direction of singing voice should be "forward", only in this way, the voice can be transmitted farther, and the audience can clearly hear the actor's voice. However, from Zhang Baoying's psychological point of view,

the singing voice should be perceived as "backward". In fact, the voice flows upwards along the posterior pharyngeal wall, eventually reaches the head cavity and is thrown forward. Therefore, it is not accurate to discuss whether the voice is forward or backward. When voicing, the opening of the back of the mouth and the tightening of the posterior pharyngeal wall represents the "backward" part of the voice, while the voice is thrown forward after reaching a high position represents the "forward" part of the voice. In the teaching of folk vocal music, many teachers advise their students to "lean back" when they sing high notes. This is actually a way of creating an expansion of the laryngopharyngeal wall to counteract the expanding force of the front chest. However, this is sometimes misinterpreted by students as pushing the voice to the back, which can result in a tone that appears to be nestled in the mouth, a tone that is sometimes described as a "phony foreign devil" tone. In contrast, opera singing requires the voice to be kept forward at all times, with the qi sinking into the dantian, and the tone must be crisp and bright, supported by the breath, regardless of the pitch. Therefore, opera singers will not have their voices fall back when they sing high notes.

It can be seen through the above analysis that in singing, whether it is the upward and downward movement of the breath or the forward and backward movement of the voice, their relationship is not mutually exclusive, but dialectically unified. Zhang Baoying's singing practice shows that only by organically unifying these two can the desired vocal effect be trained.

6.1.4 Resonance

Resonance refers to "the phenomenon that when another sounding body of the same frequency is placed in the sound field of a sounding body, the latter also vibrates and articulates." (Yang Hejun, 1985) Resonance is the common goal of all singing arts. Although the word "resonance" is seldom mentioned directly in the traditional vocal theory of opera, such as "laryngeal," "dental," "nasal," "cranial," concepts such as "laryngeal tone," "dental tone," "nasal tone," and "back of the head tone" are essentially discussing the issue of "resonance." In fact, the opera world has always attached great importance to resonance. Chang Xiangyu, a famous Yu Opera artist, once pointed out, "We have always attached great importance to resonance in opera, because it can make the actor's voice rich in colour, and make the singing sound good

and durable." Based on this, the author tries to discuss the issue of "resonance" in Zhang Baoying's singing from the perspective of vocal terminology and concepts, such as resonance characteristics and vocal fulcrum.

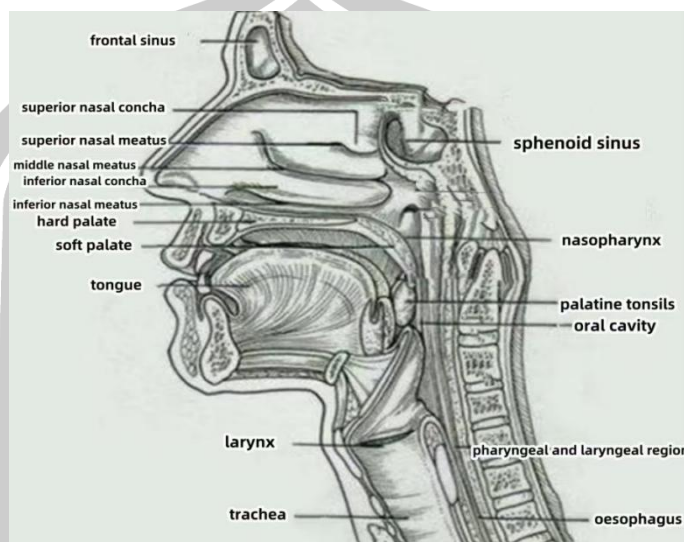


Figure 31. A diagram of the vocal organs

Source: Xiaoying Gao(2024)

6.1.4.1 Resonance Characteristics

The resonant cavities in singing mainly include the head cavity (including the nasal cavity and sinuses), the oropharyngeal cavity and the chest cavity. As mentioned earlier, Zhang Baoying adopts a half-true and half-false type of vocal method, which is often referred to as "mixed voice". This kind of "mixed voice" focuses on the use of different resonance cavities in different vocal ranges, but these cavities are connected up and down, serving the singing together to form a unified whole. Specifically, in the bass register, Zhang Baoying focuses on the chest resonance, which contributes to the thickness and power of the voice, and combines it with the high resonance of the oropharyngeal and head cavities to increase the richness and layering of the voice. In the middle register, she relies heavily on the resonance of the oropharyngeal cavity, which adds fullness and clarity to the voice, but also utilises the resonance of the thoracic and head cavities to enhance the overall expression of the voice. In the upper register, Zhang Baoying relies on head cavity resonance, which contributes to the brightness and penetration of the voice, while still incorporating oral and thoracic resonance to maintain the stability and fullness of the

voice. It can be seen that the resonance of the three cavities should not simply be split into different applications in the low, middle and high registers, but should be reasonably matched in each register to form an organic and unified whole.

6.1.4.2 Vocal Pivot Point

The fulcrum is the core focus of vocal resonance, and its role in singing is crucial. The fulcrum not only ensures the resonance of the voice, but also helps to realise the unity of the vocal range, so that the transition between the daboncello and the diboncello becomes smooth, thus realising the effective mixing of true and false voices. Therefore, no matter how the timbre changes or how the resonant cavity is chosen, the position of the sound pivot point must remain stable. If the position of the fulcrum is not stable, the actor may feel the effort when vocalising, thus affecting the singing effect.

1) Zhang Baoying's Vocal Pivot Point

For Zhang Baoying, the vocal fulcrum is mainly concentrated in two key positions: one in the chest cavity and the other in the oral cavity. The thoracic pivot point is located at the intersection of the collarbones, and its main function is to control the timbre of the voice. During singing, if the chest cavity does not have enough breath support, the voice will lose its fulcrum, which can lead to pitch problems. The fulcrum of the oral cavity is mainly concentrated in the laryngopharyngeal wall, which is reflected in the expansion of the laryngeal wall at the point of gravity, and moves with the change of pitch: the higher the pitch, the higher the position of the fulcrum, and vice versa. Therefore, when singing, the laryngopharyngeal wall needs to maintain a moderate state of expansion and contraction, neither overly relaxed nor overly tense, otherwise it will affect the vocal effect.

2) The role of the fulcrum

The correct position of the fulcrum has a crucial effect on the vocalisation, which not only makes the vocalisation more stable, but also improves the efficiency of the vocalisation. The oral pivot point will move up and down with the change of pitch, while the thoracic pivot point will move up and down with the degree of consumption of breath pressure. In the process of vocalisation, the movement of the fulcrum has a certain regularity, and it must move vertically up and

down along the breath centre line, avoiding left-right or back-and-forth deviation. In opera, the phrase “the voice should follow the vocal line” actually means that the voice, supported by the breath, concentrates on the fulcrum and spreads along the parabola.

This principle is consistent with the principle of “opposite direction” mentioned by vocal teachers, i.e., the higher the pitch, the more attention should be paid to the sinking of the breath. In Zhang Baoying's singing, her vocal method is largely the same as the principle of folk vocal music, but there are some subtle differences. Especially in the degree of “concentration” of resonance power, Zhang Baoying's adjustment is more delicate, which makes her pharyngeal cavity different in length and size, thus affecting the effect of "overtone resonance" of the voice. The reason why Zhang Baoying's voice remains bright and strong, and has a long life span, is closely related to her solid foundation of breathing, resonance and biting. Therefore, rather than saying that there is something special about her vocal method, it is more important to say that she is more skilful and excellent in its application. This fine adjustment and skilful application makes her singing both traditional and full of personal artistic style. Zhang Baoying's success in the art of singing reflects both her in-depth mastery of the principles of vocal music and her virtuosity in actual singing.

6.1.4.3 Nasal Resonance

The nasal cavity not only plays an important role in breathing, but also has significant resonance effects in singing. The front part of the nasal cavity is the nasal vestibule, which mainly functions in air circulation. The resonance effect of the nasal vestibule is not obvious. The resonance effect is actually produced by the posterior part of the nasal cavity, which has a narrow top and a wide bottom. The nasal mucosa in the left and right nasal passages is covered with spongy tissue, which covers the bony structure of the nasal cavity and forms the upper, middle, and lower turbinates. The channels between the turbinates act as air filters and inlets and outlets. The sphincter muscles of the nasal mucosa have the function of expanding and contracting, which is particularly important in nasal resonance and articulatory tone. To achieve effective nasal resonance, firstly, the nasal wings should be expanded to ensure a clear nasal passage, thus creating a good resonance environment. Secondly, the soft palate should be lowered to guide the airflow and open the "switch" of the nasopharynx,

allowing the airflow to pass through the nasal cavity smoothly, causing the sound to resonate in the nasal cavity and producing the ideal nasal resonance effect.

It is worth mentioning that Zhang Baoying is very skilled at using nasal resonance in her singing. That is, she pushes the sound slightly forward in the nasopharynx to produce resonance in the front of the nasal cavity, and then uses vibrato, sliding notes, etc. to refine it before sending it to the audience. This technique adds a touch of charm and style to her singing. For example, in the lyrics of "The Peach Blossom Pavilion," "I see that you are not truly devoted to Buddha," the "Listen" in the phrase "My Zhang Cai'e, your soul listen," and the "middle" in the phrase "Into the Han Temple, my heart rises in waves," from "The Later Story of Xianglian," all use nasal resonance, and usually follow a long drawn-out cadence, often expressing sorrow, anger, and resentment.



Figure 32. Yu Opera Music "The Sequel of Qin Xianglian"

Source: Xiaoying Gao (2024)

6.1.4.4 Regulation of Resonant Cavity and Tone Variation

The timbre of the opera line is one of the important techniques to reflect the character traits and thoughts and feelings of the characters in the play. From a purely technical point of view, the vocal organs, respiratory organs and resonance organs of the singer, under the control and domination of his/her intention, are delicately regulated and co-operate with each other, so as to achieve changes in timbre. This chapter mainly discusses how Zhang Baoying's flexible use of the resonating chamber produces different tone variations.

Each actor's physiological conditions are different, and the vocal effects vary, but everyone is capable of timbre variation. "The most basic timbre of vocal singing is rigidity and softness with light and darkness. The colour change of rigidity and softness depends mainly on the strength of breath to master; the colour change of brightness and darkness depends mainly on the control of resonance to do so." (Shen Si Yan, 1983) Crisp and bright sounds give a feeling of excitement and pleasure, while dull and dark sounds convey pain and negative emotions. These timbral variations can be found in the work sung by Zhang Baoying. The reason why Zhang Baoying's singing voice can really move the audience is that she can adjust the technique of resonating cavity well to better change the timbre and express the ideological content of the work. It is through these techniques that Zhang Baoying makes her performances more vivid and touching. For example, in "Peach Blossom Nunnery," the section "Nine Spring Returns and Apricot Blossoms Bloom" is mainly sung in the middle voice region, and requires the use of the oropharyngeal and nasal resonance. When teaching her students, Zhang Baoying talked about her own singing experience: "The voice is pushed out from the front, and there are many places where nasal resonance should be used, the voice is positioned on both sides of the nose, and the true voice is mixed with the false voice."

From her description, one can sense that Zhang Baoying's timbre is not innate, but is the result of her ability to comfortably regulate her resonant cavity. When she sings in the middle and lower registers, she uses her real voice as a base and increases the resonance of her chest, throat and mouth, which is one of the reasons why her voice sounds sturdy and not false. She emphasises the forward position of the voice, coming out from both sides of the nose, indicating that she is using oral and nasal resonance, resulting in a focused, solid voice. When she sings in the middle and high registers, she uses more falsetto to increase the proportion of head resonance, resulting in a brighter, more focused

tone. When she wants a slightly darker tone, she will let her mouth shrink a little. When she wants to express anger, she clenches her teeth and concentrates the resonance in the head cavity or nasal cavity. It can be seen that Zhang Baoying's tone ranges from thick and rich to bright and crisp through the regulation of the resonating cavities.

In short, Zhang Baoying achieves a variety of vocal effects and timbres by fine-tuning the resonance chamber. She is well aware of the need for moderation in adjusting the resonance chamber to avoid overly drastic changes. After a long period of stage practice, Zhang Baoying has accumulated a wealth of experience through continuous exploration and experience, which has laid a solid foundation for her unique style of singing processing.

6.1.5 Vocal ornamentation

Zhang Baoying, as an outstanding heir of the Cui School of Yu Opera, is unique in her singing music with her unique stylistic features. In this paper, Zhang Baoying's representative singing voice will be analysed in an attempt to summarize the characteristics of her singing art. In the musical analysis, Zhang Baoying's cantorial music will be analysed and discussed with Run Cavity as an entry point.

Runqiang is a crucial embellishment in Chinese music, which plays a decisive role in shaping the musical style. It consists of two parts, namely, the "run" and the "cavity," i.e., the embellishment and modification of the cavity. The Ming Dynasty musicologist Wang Ji De once pointed out that "the frame of music is in the song, but the colour is in the singing," in which "colour" refers to the meaning of "embellishment." Yu Huiyong of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music first clearly put forward the term "embellishment," pointing out that "in China's folk music, the formation of flavour depends largely on the means of 'embellishment.' " Run accent is one of the valuable legacies of China's folk music. It is a means of creation, i.e., according to the requirements of content performance and style performance, the singer-player uses a number of runic factors, in accordance with certain laws, combined with the corresponding melodic material, constituting a variety of "colour tones" and "characteristics of the musical work." These colour tones and characteristic musical interludes organically penetrate into the melody of the whole piece, and together with other factors, make the whole tune have a certain expressive function and the rhythmic colour of stylistic expression. (Yu Huiyong, 1963)

The embellishment is not just a simple modification of the melody, but the use of delicate techniques to enhance the emotional and stylistic expression of the tune. According to the music content and performance requirements, singers can flexibly use various embellishments to create rich tones and unique styles, making musical works more attractive. In ethnic folk music, Run Cavity occupies an important position and is a far-reaching artistic means.

The changes in the height of Chinese tones provide the basis for the embellishments in the tunes. The relationship between the singing voice and the tone of words is close, and the pitch of the tone of words restricts the ups and downs of the melody of the singing voice. Mei Lanfang emphasised the importance of harmony between the singing voice and the tone of the words, reflecting the importance of "the correct tone of the words". Some scholars point out that the artistic effect will be affected if one does not care about the accent or the words. The melody of national tunes contains both backbone and changing character sounds. Run Cavity is mainly based on the backbone character sound, supplemented by the changing character sound, through the changing character sound to the backbone character sound of the height, speed, weight, length, etc. to modify, forming different colour differences. Although the changing character sounds are subsidiary, they are the key factors of the rhythmic style. When the conscious use of the Runjiao technique reaches a mature state, it will form a flavour; if this flavour is prominent and stable, it will form a style; a distinctive and stable style will have an impact in the promotion, and it will become a genre. Rumour is the main factor that constitutes the rhythm, style and genre.

Rhythmic techniques provide a broad creative space for singers and players, make the notes in the score vivid and powerful, and enhance the musical expression. Scholars have discussed in detail the classification and form of embellishment, including melodic, rhythmic, strength, timbre and other aspects, as well as specific embellishment forms such as leaning tone.

Comprehensive views of the above scholars, and combined with the author's experience, now Zhang Baoying's singing art embellishment is summarised into four categories: linguistic embellishment, strength embellishment, speed embellishment and pitch embellishment. Zhang Baoying comprehensive use of timbre, pitch, rhythm, strength and other musical elements of his singing music embellishment, greatly

improving the singing of the music melody, so that his singing music in the Yu opera Dan line and even the entire Yu opera singing unique, for the improvement of the musicality of the singing of Yu opera Dan made an outstanding contribution.

For singing artists, technique is undoubtedly the "primary condition. Without superior technique, it is impossible to have high-level performances (singing)." (Wang Cizhao, 1989) Based on this, actors should strive to innovate their singing styles while paying more attention to a profound understanding and practice of various performance singing techniques. "Ruanchong" is a necessary artistic means for Yi Opera performers. In this paper, the author will analyze and elucidate the musical form of Zhang Baoying's singing in terms of linguistic toning and intonation, pronunciation and articulation, and filler words and syllables.

6.1.5.1 lyrical and tonal ornamentation

The art of tone and pitch modification, also known as "moistening the tone," is a core element of traditional Chinese opera, particularly evident in the performance of Xi opera. This technique involves subtly embellishing or exaggerating the tone of a narrative or lyrical melody based on the tone of the characters' syllables, with the goal of smoothing out any potential conflicts between the melody and the syllables and enhancing the expressiveness of the lyrics. Xi opera, which is based on the unique Middle Zhou rhythm and Hua dialect of Henan Province, combines this technique with a board-style change singing style, resulting in a melody that rises and falls in pitch, often leading to the "inverted syllable" phenomenon. However, Xi opera performer Zhang Baoying is able to skillfully use the technique of tone and pitch modification to resolve any conflicts between the melody and the syllables, resulting in a harmonious blend of the four tones of Chinese characters, reaching a high level of artistic achievement. As the Ming Dynasty dramatist Wei Liangfu once said, "The five tones are based on the four tones, and if the four tones are not used properly, then the five tones will be ruined." Zhang Baoying knows that only by mastering the four-tone rules of Chinese characters can she ensure that the five tones of the melody will flow smoothly.

The Middle Zhou rhythm and Hua dialect of Henan Province are similar in tone to Mandarin, but there are significant differences in the pronunciation of tone values. In regions such as Kaifeng, Zhengzhou, and Shangqiu in eastern Henan, the level tone is a rising tone, the rising tone is a falling tone, and the actual pronunciation has a lower tail

sound. The unique tone features of these regions make it particularly common for Xi opera to use sliding tones and other techniques. Zhang Baoying is able to accurately grasp these tone features in her performances and use sliding tones to great effect, decorating the singing style and enhancing the tone of her voice, adjusting her emotions, and highlighting the unique style of Xi opera.

Glissando, as one of the most common embellishments in Yu Opera singing, has a diverse range of morphological structures and expression methods. Zhang Baoying uses glissandos flexibly in her singing, based on specific character and scenario stipulations. She employs various techniques, including ascending and descending glissandos, anterior and posterior glissandos, as well as ordinary glissandos, retrograde glissandos, and glissando tremolos. She centers on the decorated notes and performs a smooth, continuous parabolic movement between the two notes, requiring a smooth transition without any interruption. This delicate treatment of glissandos not only makes the singing melody more beautiful and pleasing to the ear, but also accurately conveys the character's emotional changes.

6.1.5.2 Articulatory Ornamentation

In traditional Chinese singing technique, articulatory ornamentation are crucial basic skills that determine the clarity, beauty, and style of the singing art. Zhang Baoying, a renowned Yu Opera performer, has masterfully demonstrated the essence of articulation and resonance in her singing style.

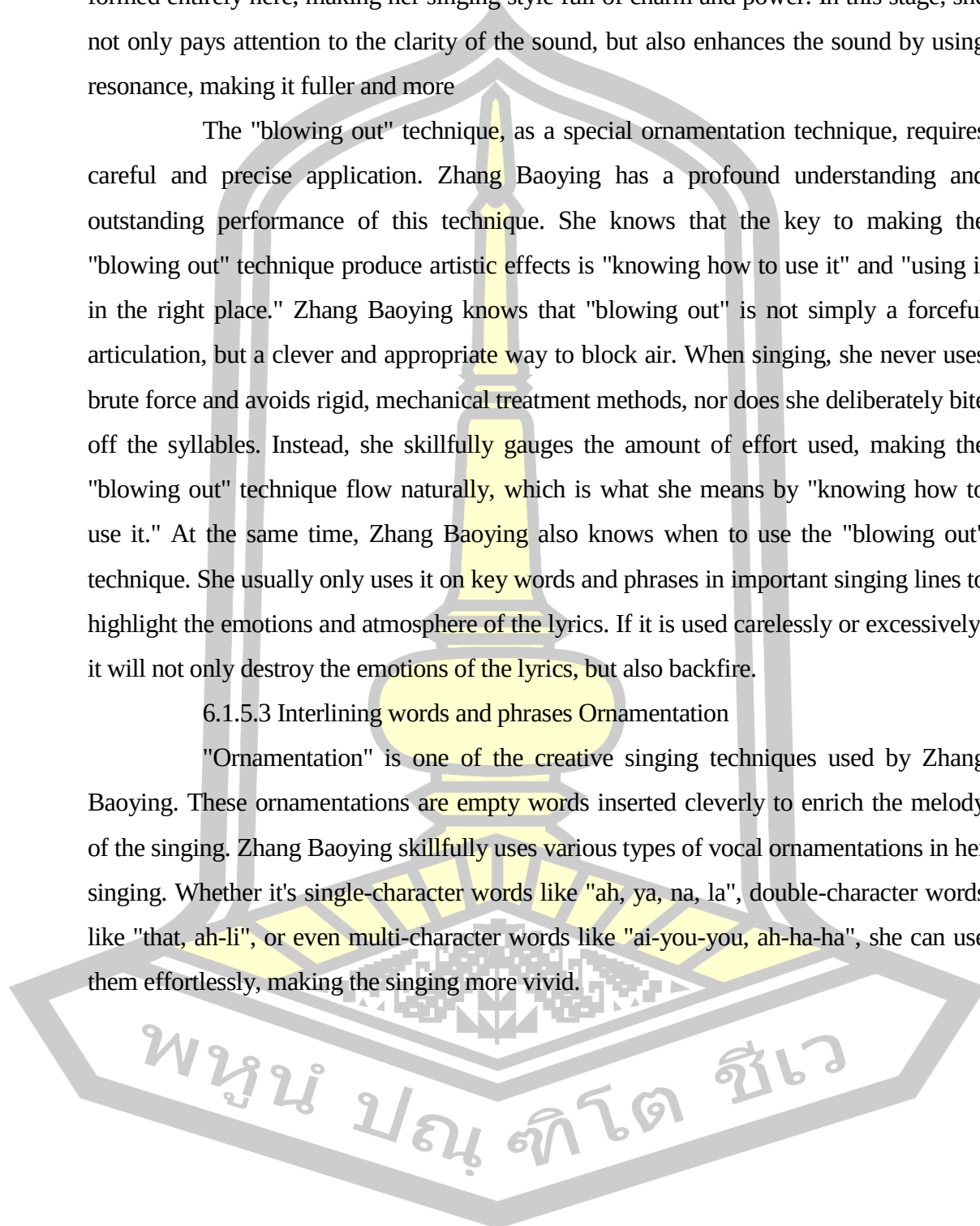
From the perspective of linguistic techniques in singing, articulatory ornamentation are continuous actions, but there are subtle differences in the sound production anatomy between the two. Zhang Baoying has masterfully grasped this point in her singing. She follows the pronunciation rules of Chinese characters and completes the sound production process through three steps: "obstruction," "holding," and "release." In the "obstruction" stage, she skillfully uses the pronunciation organs of the throat, tongue, teeth, lips, etc. to accurately locate the initial sound of the character, forming a clear articulation. This step is perfectly demonstrated in her singing style, with every character sounding like a round, clear pearl. In the "holding" stage, Zhang Baoying releases the sound of the articulated character when the breath reaches the position of the articulated character. She produces the sound of the body (the vowel part) with a smooth and powerful pronunciation. Her articulation process flows smoothly and powerfully,

with the vowel sound duration being the longest, and the resonance overtones being formed entirely here, making her singing style full of charm and power. In this stage, she not only pays attention to the clarity of the sound, but also enhances the sound by using resonance, making it fuller and more

The "blowing out" technique, as a special ornamentation technique, requires careful and precise application. Zhang Baoying has a profound understanding and outstanding performance of this technique. She knows that the key to making the "blowing out" technique produce artistic effects is "knowing how to use it" and "using it in the right place." Zhang Baoying knows that "blowing out" is not simply a forceful articulation, but a clever and appropriate way to block air. When singing, she never uses brute force and avoids rigid, mechanical treatment methods, nor does she deliberately bite off the syllables. Instead, she skillfully gauges the amount of effort used, making the "blowing out" technique flow naturally, which is what she means by "knowing how to use it." At the same time, Zhang Baoying also knows when to use the "blowing out" technique. She usually only uses it on key words and phrases in important singing lines to highlight the emotions and atmosphere of the lyrics. If it is used carelessly or excessively, it will not only destroy the emotions of the lyrics, but also backfire.

6.1.5.3 Interlining words and phrases Ornamentation

"Ornamentation" is one of the creative singing techniques used by Zhang Baoying. These ornamentations are empty words inserted cleverly to enrich the melody of the singing. Zhang Baoying skillfully uses various types of vocal ornamentations in her singing. Whether it's single-character words like "ah, ya, na, la", double-character words like "that, ah-li", or even multi-character words like "ai-you-you, ah-ha-ha", she can use them effortlessly, making the singing more vivid.



The image displays a musical score for Yu Opera, specifically the piece "The Story of Searching for My Son". The score is written in a Western staff with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The tempo is marked as 4/4. The lyrics are in Chinese characters with corresponding pinyin below them. The score is divided into three systems, with bar numbers 11 and 21 indicated. A QR code is located on the right side of the score.

待 为 娘 下 炊 房 添 柴 薪 脱 官 诰 来 围 裙 八
dai wei niang xia cui fang tian chai xin tuo guan gao lai wei qun ba

11 珍 汤 献 给 举 家 恩
zhen tang xian gei ju jia en

21 啊 哎 呀 饮 哪 哈 呀 哈 哪 呀 嗨
a ai ya yin na ha ya ha na ya hai

Figure 33. Yu Opera Music "The Story of Searching for My Son"

Source: Xiaoying Gao (2024)

Tese syllables (bar 20-26) played a crucial role in Zhang Baoying's singing style. They not only enriched the melody of the singing style, but also made the performance more in line with the characters' emotions and enhanced the artistic expressiveness. This is a segment of singing from the opera "The Search for a Child," in which the syllables express the joyful mood of Sun Shulin and her husband and son as they are reunited.

6.1.6 Dynamic Ornamentation (力度润腔)

Dynamic ornamentation refers to the singer's adjustment and handling of volume intensity based on the needs of content and emotional expression. The ways of dynamic changes are diverse, including contrastive and gradual transitions. In traditional Chinese opera music, the adjustment of dynamics must change along with the development of the plot and the psychological changes of the characters.

In the performance of Yu Opera on stage, the singer needs to be good at drawing on the strengths of others based on their own characteristics, constantly enriching the means of expression, and through the "improvisation based on the heart"

of traditional singing tones, they can continuously create new tunes that conform to the personality traits of the characters and bring out their own advantages, thereby winning the recognition and appreciation of the audience. This chapter will analyze and discuss the practical operation and application of Zhang Baoying's "rhythmic embellishment" technique in singing from three aspects: the lightness and heaviness of the force, the contrast of the force, and the gradual progress of the force, combined with relevant examples.

6.1.6.1 The modulation of the voice through variations in intensity

In the art of traditional Chinese opera, the contrast between light and heavy in intensity is a pair of complementary and mutually reinforcing concepts. These concepts not only hold significant importance in music but are also crucial in opera performances. In traditional Chinese philosophy, pairs of opposites such as light and heavy, strong and weak, and hard and soft are regarded as interdependent and inseparable unities. Therefore, the variation in intensity becomes an essential means of artistic expression.

Representative Henan Opera performer Zhang Baoying demonstrates unique skills and profound artistic accomplishment in the modulation of intensity. Through the adjustment of intensity, Zhang Baoying can more accurately convey the emotional fluctuations of characters and the development of the plot. For instance, when portraying a character's excitement or anger, she enhances the volume and intensity to highlight the dramatic conflict and the intensity of emotions; while when expressing a character's tenderness or sadness, she reduces the volume and intensity to create a gentle and touching atmosphere. Zhang Baoying's mastery of intensity variations not only enriches the performance forms of Henan Opera singing but also enhances the overall artistic expressiveness.

For example, in the segment "Seeing the bandits, I am so angry that my eyes are on fire" from "Selling Miao Lang", when Liu Yingchun sings "Am I not the unburied Qin Xianglian still alive in this world? I would rather freeze to death without your thread, starve to death without seeking help from your officialdom; I will die clean and pure in this world, and go to the netherworld with a clear conscience", the intensity weakens, as if she is speaking to herself, with her head lowered and tears

streaming down her face, expressing Liu Yingchun's grievance and resentment towards her husband.

6.1.6.2 Nuance of Dynamics in Ornamentation

As a Peking Opera performer, if one wants to handle the dynamics and inflection of the singing properly, they must have a profound understanding of the emotional connotations contained in the lyrics, the relationship between the musical tones and the style characteristics. They also need to carefully design the variations in the intensity and weight of the voice. As Xu Dachun once said, "There are times when a certain character in a line should be sung softly and another loudly; there are also times when a certain line in a tune should be sung softly and another loudly. There is no fixed rule." (Xu Dachun) In Peking Opera singing, paying attention to the variations in volume is crucial, especially the appropriate use of the contrast between soft and loud, which is essential for expressing the depth and richness of emotions. Zhang Baoying has made significant achievements and has a deep understanding of the "soft and loud contrast" technique in singing.

In the "Selling Miao Lang" scene, when Liu Yingchun sings "I'm so angry at the bandits that my eyes are on fire", she is denouncing her unfaithful husband Zhou Wenxuan. When she sings the line "Am I still the unburied Qin Xianglian, still alive in this world?", the orchestra stops and she sings a cappella. A small gong sound "cang, cang, cang" follows, and she continues singing a cappella "I'd rather freeze to death than accept a penny from you, I'd rather starve to death than go to your official office". The orchestra plays an interlude, and she continues singing a cappella "I'll live a clean life in this world". The orchestra plays an interlude again, and she sings a cappella "I'll die a pure death in the netherworld". Then the orchestra joins in, releasing a powerful burst of energy, pushing the singing to a climax, and portraying the heart of a kind woman who has suffered betrayal by her husband, endured hardships to support her family, and is now at the brink of despair and anger. The contrast in dynamics and the choked singing style moved the audience to tears along with the performer. This is the power of tragedy, and it is also the charm of the performer's art.

Zhang Baoying's application of "dynamic vocal ornamentation" showcases her outstanding artistic talent. In her performances, she meticulously selects the

variations and contrasts in volume to bring the characters in the play to life and convey their complex emotions, making the roles more vivid and the emotions more rich and diverse. This precise control of volume not only enhances the artistic expressiveness of her singing but also elevates the overall appeal of the drama.

It goes without saying that "vocal ornamentation" is the core of the charm in Yu Opera singing, and it is a comprehensive reflection of an actor's singing skills, artistic appreciation ability, and cultural literacy. The methods of vocal ornamentation not only reflect an actor's personal style and school characteristics but also allow the audience to experience a unique flavor and profound artistic charm during the appreciation process. For an outstanding actor, both technique (vocalization methods and skills) and art (personal knowledge and cultural cultivation) should be given equal importance. Through her practice, Zhang Baoying has demonstrated the organic integration of technique and art. Accurately grasping the light and heavy volume is the foundation of singing technique, while rationally arranging the light and heavy volume in the singing is the higher level of vocal ornamentation art. The two complement each other and are interdependent, jointly shaping her unique singing style.

6.1.7 Tempo Ornamentation

Tempo-rhythmic Tempo ornamentations refer to a technique for adjusting the tempo of a melody according to the content, style, and emotional expression requirements of a work. In traditional Chinese music theory, great emphasis is placed on the expressive power of tempo. In his book "The Creek and Mountain Scenery of the Guzheng" (published in the Ming Dynasty), Xu Shangying wrote: "There is a slow tempo, then there is a fast tempo, like the four seasons with their hot and cold temperatures. However, I have two opinions on speed: one is small speed, the other is large speed. Small speed is slightly faster, but it should be tight, so that the fingers do not hurt the elegant tempo of the piece, but rather have the charm of flowing clouds and running water. Large speed is precious because it is urgent, but it must be urgent without being disordered, maintaining a leisurely atmosphere, and being able to emit the sound of a collapsing cliff and a flying waterfall. Therefore, speed is used according to one's intentions, and more so according to one's spirit. The charm of small speed, the uniqueness of large speed." This passage shows that tempo changes

play a crucial role in music expression. By skillfully using tempo contrasts and changes, music content can be better expressed and the unique style of Chinese music can be better demonstrated. The tempo changes in traditional Chinese music have great flexibility and are called "monkey skin," which means that the tempo changes in performance or singing are expressed as "pushing" and "withdrawing." Among them, "pushing" means speeding up the rhythm, while "withdrawing" means slowing down the rhythm. This monkey skin-like tempo change is widely used in traditional Chinese vocal singing.

Zhang Baoying also extensively used this type of ornamentation technique in her singing practice, especially in free-meter singing passages. Zhang Baoying skillfully controlled the tempo to make her singing both fluid and powerful, like flowing clouds and collapsing cliffs. This tempo change not only enhances the expressive power of the music, but also allows audiences to feel the emotional depth of the work more deeply.

For example, in the "The Sequel of Qin Xianglian" opera, the segment "Forced to stand aside as a royal woman" begins with a free and slow tempo in a scattered rhythm. Starting from the second line "Please listen to my heartfelt words," it switches to a slow tempo, with a steady and slow pace. After a long section of slow tempo singing, it switches to a *erba* tempo from the phrase "with my children to the capital to find my husband," which is slightly faster. When the word "black" is sung, the tempo picks up and the *erba* tempo becomes a fast *erba*. When the word "you" is sung, the tempo slows down again, returning to the *erba* tempo, with a clear 12-beat *ta-di* (a musical phrase) sung on the "tui" (suffering) note, using a descending arpeggio and ending on the "7" note of the "tui" sound. Then the music switches back to a fast *erba* tempo, using a speed-accelerating embellishment. When the word "suffering" is sung, the tempo slows down again and returns to the *erba* tempo. The segment ends with a return to the scattered rhythm of the initial tempo in the "Count Marquis, choose someone else, I'll be grateful for your great kindness." The entire segment uses a technique of tempo contrast to delicately express Qin Xianglian's inner conflict over not being able to accept her enemy's daughter as her son-in-law.

6.1.8 Pitch ornamentation

Pitch ornamentation, as the name suggests, refers to the melodic changes that occur as a result of the morphological aspects of pitch. The realisation of pitch ornamentation mainly relies on the use of various ornamental tones, such as leaning tones, waves, trills, glissandi and interludes. Decorative sounds are auxiliary sounds used to enrich and beautify the melody and enhance the tonal colour. In the singing and performance of traditional Chinese folk music, ornamentation is a very common and practical way of pitch ornamentation. They are usually represented by temporary symbols and have no independent time value, but their actual time value is counted in the tone it modifies or the previous tone. The author will analyse Zhang Baoying's pitch ornamentations in terms of pitch from three aspects: leaning, bobbing and trilling.

6.1.8.1 Leaning Tone

A leaning tone is a note attached to an ornamented tone, usually sounded in front of or behind it, marked in the form of a small note that does not take up the time value of the ornamented tone. They can be classified according to the number of modifiers into "single leaning tone" and "multiple leaning tone," or according to the position into "front leaning tone" and "back leaning tone." The "back leaning tone." The leaning tone can be divided into three categories according to its function: the first category is the leaning tone used to decorate the melody of the singing cavity, the second category is the leaning tone that helps to express the emotion, and the third category is the leaning tone that plays the function of the word. There are abundant leaning tones in Yu Opera singing, and Zhang Baoying's singing is no exception.

Leaning tone is one of the most commonly used embellishment techniques in Zhang Baoying's singing. Such as "Peach Blossom Nunnery" "you are the old mother" Dou's singing, example of the leaning tone to play a role in decorating the melody of the singing, so that the singing is more pleasant to listen to, increase the rhythm of the singing. Example of the fifth measure is between the same tone between the melody to decorate the leaning tone, leaning tone and the decoration of the main tone between the four degrees of jumping, this leaning tone decoration to avoid the longer value of the stiff and dull. The ornamentation of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th bars belongs to the leaning tone between non-homophones, and there is a major

second and minor third progression between this leaning tone and the main tone it adorns, and there is also a jump of more than four degrees. The 2nd and 3rd bars belong to the minor third progression, while the 4th bar belongs to the fourth degree jump.



Figure 34. Yu Opera Music "Peach Blossom Nunnery"



Figure 35. Yu Opera Music "Peach Blossom Nunnery"

Source: Xiaoying Gao (2024)

There is also a kind of decorative singing tone, this kind of leaning tone is often used to modify the end of the singing phrase or the end of the whole phrase. This kind of leaning tone not only plays a decorative role for the ending tone, but also plays the role of emphasising the ending tone and drawing the finishing touch because it is often strengthened when singing. In the example, the word "tai" (台) at the end of the 7th bar uses the leaning tone, which plays a kind of tone aggravation.

In addition, there is another kind of leaning tone appearing behind the decorated tone, which is called "back leaning tone", and the leaning tone behind the word "for" (为) in the 8th bar of the example is the back leaning tone, and it is a double leaning tone. The use of this kind of leaning tone makes the singing more euphemistic and vivid, and achieves the artistic effect of a finishing touch.



Figure 36. Yu Opera Music "Peach Blossom Nunnery"

Source: Xiaoying Gao (2024)

6.1.8.2 Wave Tones

Waves are made by starting on the decorated tone, making a short boost to the neighbouring tone, and then returning quickly to the original tone. Depending on the pitch position of the ornamented tone, it can be categorised as an "upper" or "lower" wave. In Zhang Baoying's singing, the use of the wave tone is mainly based on the "upper wave tone," and the starting position and the way of this technique show certain regularity and programme characteristics. For example, the heroine of Qin Xianglian sings "Three Rivers of Water Cannot Wash Away My Full Belly of Wrongdoing," in which Qin Xianglian tells that after her husband Chen Shimei went to Beijing to take the examination, his hometown was unfortunately hit by drought and natural disasters, and his crops failed to yield, and his hunger was hard to endure, and he was already in grief when he sang "The Second Eunuch Died of Starvation in the Cao Tang." When it comes to the song "The Second Grandma and Grandpa Starved to Death in the Cao Tang," Zhang Baoying has carefully processed and refined the original opera's cantata, giving full play to the expressive function of the music, expanding the length of the cantata considerably, and fully expressing the heroine Qin Xianglian's sorrowful and bleak feelings as she remembers her lost loved ones, with only one word, "Grandma," dragging out the cantata. The dragging of the

word "granny" (婆) (bar 3-12) alone is as long as 10 bars. When singing the dragging accent, Zhang Baoying makes reasonable use of the wave tone embellishment technique, using the upper wave tone singing method to modify the feather tone on the weak beat, and then falling on the strong beat of the next bar to make a sound effect staccato, resulting in a kind of sound effect with a choking tone, coupled with the unique sense of sadness of the expressive power of her voice, accompanied by the whimpering and running of the cantata, as if without realising it, it brings the audience to the sadness of Qin Xianglian's two in-laws dying in the grassy hall due to starvation and misfortune. It is as if the audience is unconsciously transported to the tragic scene of Qin Xianglian's second in-laws dying of starvation in the Cao Tang, which is a scene of great sadness and immense sympathy.



Figure 37. Yu Opera Music "Selling Miao Lang"

Source: Xiaoying Gao (2024)

Zhang Baoying's skilful use of this technique added layers and subtlety to her singing. Each wave transition was smooth and natural, enhancing the melody and allowing the character's emotions to be conveyed more vividly.

6.1.8.3 Vibrato

Vibrato is a common and important embouchure technique in Yu Opera singing, which produces a unique trembling sound effect through the vibration of the vocal cords. During the singing process, the muscles of the pharynx and larynx will contract intentionally, making the larynx shake up and down, thus forming the effect of vibrato. This technique not only makes the tone fuller and rounder, but also gives the voice a delicate and soft quality, and the voice ripples appear more detailed and even.

In Zhang Baoying's singing, the longer notes are usually decorated with vibrato, which effectively avoids the flatness that may occur when the notes are drawn out, and makes the whole singing voice more beautiful and melodious. According to the different amplitude of vibration, vibrato can be divided into two types: strong vibrato and micro-vibrato, each showing different sound effects and emotional expression. This flexible use of vibrato technique enriches the expressive power of singing.

1) Strong vibrato

Strong vibrato, often called "crying vibrato", has an important expressive power in Yu Opera singing. It is based on the true voice, combined with mixed resonance, with special emphasis on the resonance effect of the oral cavity and chest cavity. Under this technique, the tone column becomes thicker, the point of attachment moves backward, and the larynx shakes violently, with the trembling interval exceeding the second degree. Such an expression is particularly suitable for conveying strong dramatic conflicts, and can effectively express profound emotions such as grief, sorrow and desolation.

The use of strong vibrato is particularly prominent in Jang Bo Young's singing. Through this technique, she vividly presents the inner struggles and emotional fluctuations of the characters, enabling the audience to feel the tragic fate and emotional conflicts of the characters in the play.

For example, in "Peach Blossom Nunnery", in the section "Dou's Tears", Dou sings "My Zhang Cai fu, your soul listens" followed by a trailing cadence of more than 50 beats, and the section is sung in a common plate in Yu Opera. The section is sung in the common plate style of Yu Opera [Scattered Plate], with the use of leaning, bobbing, and vibrato, especially the use of vibrato, which avoids the flatness of a long cantata, making the singing tactful and touching, and expresses Dou's overwhelming grief at learning that her husband has died. Zhang Baoying's strong vibrato not only enhanced the dramatic effect of her singing, but also added a rich sense of layering to her performance, deeply moving every audience member. This strong emotional expression fully reflects her deep understanding of the art of Yu opera and her superb singing skills.

2) Soft vibrato

"Soft vibrato", is an important technique in Zhang Baoying's singing. It is based on falsetto, combined with mixed resonance, especially emphasising the resonance effect of the head and pharyngeal cavities. When singing, the vocal cords round and vibrate slightly, and the larynx has a relatively small air-blocking point, which produces a small, rapid and slight jitter, and the voice appears more forward as a result. The intervals of the microvibrato are usually within a minor second, which is very suitable for use in lyrical singing, and can effectively express the emotions of coolness, frankness, and self-complacency. In Jang Bo-young's singing, the use of vibrato demonstrates her delicate grasp of the character's emotions. Through this technique, she is able to give her character more layers and subtle emotional changes in the deeply emotional phrases, allowing the audience to feel her character's inner tranquility and confidence.

6.2 Conclusion

This chapter analyses the art of Zhang Baoying's singing through two major aspects: her singing technique and her singing music analysis. The results of this chapter are summarised as follows.

In terms of singing technique, firstly, Zhang Baoying's method of using her voice is to combine her Jia Benyin with her Da Benqiang and her Er Benqiang, and to reasonably match them in proportion, which is called the method of mixing the true

and false half-type of the voice by the author. She adopts the combined breathing method of chest and abdomen in her luck, and she is able to use the techniques of stealing, sinking, lifting, dragging and pushing with ease. In her singing, she mixes her true and false voices, using her small voice more in the high notes and her big voice more in the middle and low notes, while the transition between the true and false voices is smooth and natural, with no obvious cracks. Zhang Baoying is able to correctly use the breath and the vocal cords in good co-ordination, and reasonably use this relationship to sing. She is able to use the power of the laryngeal and pharyngeal walls to make the voice finally reach the head cavity and throw it forward. Zhang Baoying sings with a clever use of resonance techniques, showing the richness and layering of the voice through the mixing of true and false voices and the reasonable matching of resonance chambers. She pays attention to the stability of the pivot point of the voice to ensure the stability and efficiency of vocalisation. The clever use of nasal resonance adds a unique flavour and style to her voice. At the same time, she flexibly regulates the resonance cavity to achieve a variety of changes in timbre, making the performance more vivid and touching.

The analysis of the singing music is based on the ornamentation, which analyses Zhang Baoying's singing music from the vocal ornamentation, dynamic ornamentation, tempo ornamentation and pitch ornamentation. The tempo ornamentation analyses Zhang Baoying's singing from three aspects: tempo ornamentation of word tone, ornamentation of biting and spitting words, and Tempo ornamentation of lining words. In terms of character tone, Zhang Baoying accurately masters the four tones of the Chinese characters, and uses techniques such as sliding tone to resolve the contradiction between tone and melody and enhance the unique style of Yu opera. In terms of biting and spitting, she accurately grasps the anatomical power of pronunciation according to the laws of pronunciation of Chinese characters, and completes the pronunciation by forming, holding and removing resistance, so as to make the singing voice clear, full and full of infectious power. At the same time, she cleverly applies the techniques of glottal blocking and spouting to enhance the expressive power and passion of the singing voice. In lining words, Zhang Baoying flexibly uses imaginary words to enrich the melody of the singing voice, close to the character's emotion, and enhance the artistic expression. Dynamic ornamentation is an

important means of ornamentation in Zhang Baoying's singing art, Zhang Baoying adjusts the volume and strength to accurately show the fluctuation of the character's emotion and the development of the plot. In the intensity of the ornamentation, she flexibly adjusts according to the emotional changes of the characters, enhancing or reducing the volume to create different atmospheres. In the contrast of intensity, she carefully designs the changes of intensity, especially the contrast of lightness and heaviness, to deeply express the depth and richness of emotions. Zhang Baoying's subtle grasp of the intensity of ornamentation not only enhances the artistic expression of singing, but also strengthens the overall infectiousness of the drama. Tempo ornamentation is a means to adjust the tempo ornamentation of melody to express the content and emotion of the work. Zhang Baoying flexibly uses the contrast and change of tempo in her singing to enhance the musical expression and convey the inner world of the character. In the loose plate type of singing, she shows the fluency and shocking power through "urging" and "withdrawing". For example, in "The Sequel of Qin Xianglian", she skilfully uses the tempo changes of the slow board, the two-eighths board and the loose board to profoundly express Qin Xianglian's inner conflict, making the singing rich in layers and resonance. Zhang Baoying is good at using the techniques of leaning tone, wave tone and vibrato in her Yu Opera singing. Leaning tones include single leaning tone, multiple leaning tones, front leaning tones and back leaning tones, which are used for decorating the singing voice, expressing emotions and correcting words. Wave notes are used to add a sense of hierarchy and delicacy by returning to the original sound after a short run. Zhang Baoying often uses wave notes, such as the dragging of the word "mother-in-law" in Qin Xianglian, and the use of wave notes makes the emotion more vivid. Vibrato is divided into strong vibrato and micro-vibrato. Strong vibrato expresses strong emotions, such as Dou's grief in "Peach Blossom Nunnery", while micro-vibrato is suitable for lyrical passages, showing delicate emotions. Zhang Baoying flexibly uses these embellishment techniques to make the singing melodious and the expression of emotion profound.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION, AND SUGGESTIONS

7.1 Conclusion

7.1.1 Family life and Educational Background of Zhang Baoying are summarized as follows:

The development of Zhang Baoying's singing voice has gone through a process of learning the tradition, ing the tradition, innovating and breaking through, and forming a unique style. 1976 was the period of Zhang Baoying's transmission of the Cui School, and he imitated Cui Lantian in his singing voice and learned from many famous opera masters, but he did not innovate in this period. 1977-1984, Zhang Baoying, with the help of Yang Lanchun and Wang Jixiao, staged the works of Pao Qingtian and Selling Miao Lang, and there were many innovations in his singing voice, which gradually became mature and his personal style became more and more personal. In 1985, Zhang Baoying was appointed as the director of the Anyang City Yu Opera Troupe, and she led the troupe to rehearse a new costume drama, The Sequel of Qin Xianglian, which was a great success. The play was a great success and won the first prize in the first Henan Provincial Drama Competition, and is one of the few representative plays handed down from this competition. Through the creation and performance of this play, she took another solid step on the road of innovating the art of Cui Pai and crossed a new stage, and the art of singing was also quite mature. Playwright and director Shi Lei adapted the play The Story of Searching for My Son for Zhang Baoying based on the traditional play Eight Precious Soup, which became another representative masterpiece of Zhang Baoying's mature singing art. Zhang Baoying is known for her skill in playing the role of the Qingyi, and she has portrayed many roles in the Qingyi, and is known as “the first Qingyi” among the Cui School. However, Zhang Baoying is not limited to portraying the Qingyi, she broke through the line in The Story of Searching for My Son and successfully portrayed Sun Shulin, the old Dan, in which “The Nga Sheng Sheng Please” became a classic singing section and was widely loved by the audience. In 1996, she left the Yu Opera Troupe to become the vice principal of the School of Opera, and began to engage in the

education of Yu Opera to cultivate new talents. She accepted a wide range of disciples, consciously undertaking the historical mission of inheriting the art of Cui school and promoting national culture, from the first disciple she accepted in October 1986 to November 9, 2024, she formally accepted a total of 82 disciples. Zhang Baoying and her disciples presented the “new Cui school of art” in the hearts of the audience more and more influence, loved by the majority of fans, will write a new chapter to promote the creative transformation and innovative development of China's outstanding traditional culture.

7.1.2 After describing the working experience of Zhang Baoying . The researcher has learned that:

Zhang Baoying's artistic career in Yu Opera is explored through her performances in modern, traditional, and transplanted works. Her modern plays, including Honghu Red Guard and Li Shuang Shuang, reflect social transformation, female empowerment, and patriotic themes. Traditional works, such as Peach Blossom Nunnery and The Sequel of Qin Xianglian, emphasize virtues like loyalty and filial piety, portraying resilient and wise female figures. Additionally, she played a key role in adapting and performing transplanted works from other opera genres, enriching Yu Opera's artistic landscape. Zhang Baoying's legacy extends beyond performance; she significantly contributed to the development, preservation, and innovation of Yu Opera. Through her dedication to education and artistic refinement, she ensured the survival and evolution of the Cui School, influencing future generations and solidifying her status as a leading figure in Yu Opera history. Zhang Baoying played a crucial role in preserving and promoting the Cui School of Yu Opera through performance, education, and media engagement. She inherited the Cui School style from her mentor, Cui Lantian, mastering and innovating its techniques. Committed to education, she mentored over 80 students, ensuring the continuation of Yu Opera. She also organized training programs and participated in local opera troupes to nurture young talent. Zhang leveraged modern media, including films, recordings, and social platforms, to expand the reach of Yu Opera. Her contributions in education, performance, and cultural promotion have cemented her legacy as a key figure in the preservation and evolution of the Cui School.

7.1.3 Regarding the third research objective of the article: the analysis of Zhang Baoying's singing techniques, the following conclusions were drawn from the analysis:

In terms of technique, she blends Jia Benyin, Da Benqiang, and Er Benqiang, creating a mix of true and false voices. She uses chest-abdomen breathing and effortlessly applies techniques like stealing, sinking, lifting, dragging, and pushing. Her transitions between true and false voices are seamless, ensuring a stable and resonant vocalization. She skillfully utilizes nasal resonance and adjusts resonance cavities to enrich timbre and emotional expression. Musically, her singing features vocal, dynamic, tempo, and pitch ornamentation. She masters Chinese character tones, using sliding tones to align melody with pronunciation. Her biting and spitting techniques make the voice clear and expressive, while glottal blocking and spouting enhance dramatic impact. She adjusts dynamics and tempo, creating expressive contrasts. In *The Sequel of Qin Xianglian*, she blends slow board, two-eighths board, and loose board to convey inner conflict. She also employs leaning tones, wave tones, and vibrato—for instance, wave tones in "mother-in-law" and vibrato in "Peach Blossom Nunnery"—to add depth and emotional resonance.

7.2 Discussion

This dissertation aims to explore Zhang Baoying's family life and educational background, working experience, and singing techniques. The research process used a variety of research methods, including field research, literature analysis, interviews and material analysis. By analyzing the collected materials, the researcher aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the characteristics of Zhang Baoying's singing art and to contribute to the transmission and development of Zhang Baoying's singing art.

The introductory section of the thesis provides the background to the study, introducing the founding of the Cui school of art and the development of Zhang Baoying's singing art. It outlines the objective of the study, which is to examine the characteristics of Zhang Baoying's singing art. The introduction successfully lays the foundation for the ensuing study and provides a clear direction for the research.

The literature review section provided a comprehensive overview of existing research on Zhang Baoying's singing art. The researcher referred to previous studies to establish the knowledge base of the topic. The literature review revealed that previous studies focused on Zhang Baoying's artistic career and learning experience. The review also identified a number of shortcomings in the existing literature, which this study aims to address.

The research methodology section details the scope of the study, the process, material collection, management and analysis, and the presentation of the findings. The researcher conducted a field survey, visited specific locations, and collected data and information through interviews and observations. Various research tools such as literature analysis and field survey were used to ensure the comprehensiveness and reliability of the data collection process. The use of categorization and validity testing in data management and analysis demonstrated the commitment of the researchers to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the data.

Based on the research methodology used, the researcher collected a large amount of data including video and audio recordings, photographs and written information. The data was analyzed over categorizing the data. The researcher utilized ethnomusicology and art theory to interpret the collected data to draw meaningful conclusions. The findings section presents the results of the analysis, focusing on Zhang Baoying's singing technique and singing music analysis.

The study shows that the development of Zhang Baoying's singing art has gone through a process of learning the tradition, inheriting the tradition, innovating and breaking through, and forming a unique style, and that Zhang Baoying's singing art is an innovation and development of Cui Pai's art. By analyzing Zhang Baoying's singing skills and the musical characteristics of her singing art, the study reveals the uniqueness of her singing art.

The conclusion of the study explores the relationship between the findings and the research objectives, theoretical principles and existing literature. The conclusions reached are consistent with previous research on Zhang Baoying's singing art and the basic principles of ethnomusicology and art theory. The study confirms the cultural significance of Zhang Baoying's singing art and reveals its unique musical characteristics. In addition, the paper discusses the significance of the findings of the

study and offers a series of recommendations for the further transmission and development of the art of Cui Pai.

To sum up, the paper successfully explores the evolution of Zhang Baoying's singing art, the work played by Zhang Baoying and its classification, focuses on the analysis of Zhang Baoying's singing skills and the musical characteristics of his singing, and discusses the transmission methods and the current situation of the promotion of Zhang Baoying's singing art. Through a well-designed research process and the use of various research methods, the researchers collected and analyzed relevant data, providing valuable insights for an in-depth understanding of Zhang Baoying's singing art. The results of the study are consistent with existing literature and theoretical principles, which help to improve the understanding of Zhang Baoying's singing art and provide practical suggestions for the preservation and promotion of this traditional culture.

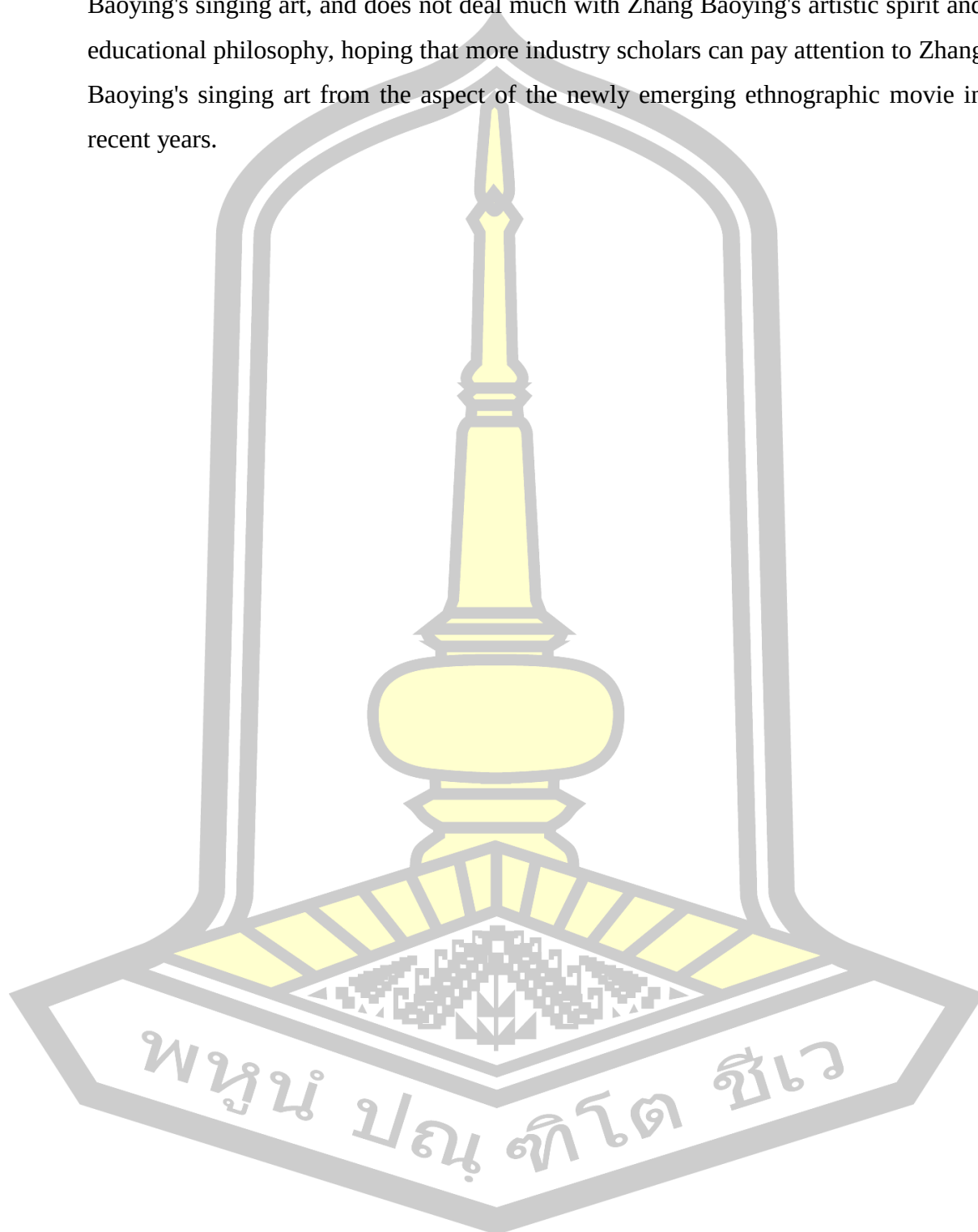
7.3 Suggestion

7.3.1 Suggestions for Further Research

First of all, Zhang Baoying's singing art has been called “New Cui School” by the theoretical circles, and “New Cui School” is relatively “new” compared to “Cui School”. What are the aspects of “New Cui School”, that is to say, on the basis of Cui Lantian's transmission, Zhang Baoying has made some innovations in what aspects? What are the similarities and differences between her and Cui Lantian's singing art? A comparative study of Zhang Baoying and Cui Lantian can be made in terms of the singing method, singing style and work. This will give people a deeper understanding of the continuing significance of Cui's art in a changing cultural environment.

Secondly, at present, among Zhang Baoying's disciples, basically all of them are imitating Zhang Baoying, and there has not yet appeared a disciple who has both the characteristics of Zhang Baoying's singing art and his own distinctive features. In view of this problem, the countermeasures proposed by the author on the development of Zhang Baoying's singing art are not targeted, and some of the measures are more generalized. Therefore, more researchers need to pay attention to the transmission and development of Zhang Baoying's singing art.

Thirdly, the article pays more attention to the ontological study of Zhang Baoying's singing art, and does not deal much with Zhang Baoying's artistic spirit and educational philosophy, hoping that more industry scholars can pay attention to Zhang Baoying's singing art from the aspect of the newly emerging ethnographic movie in recent years.



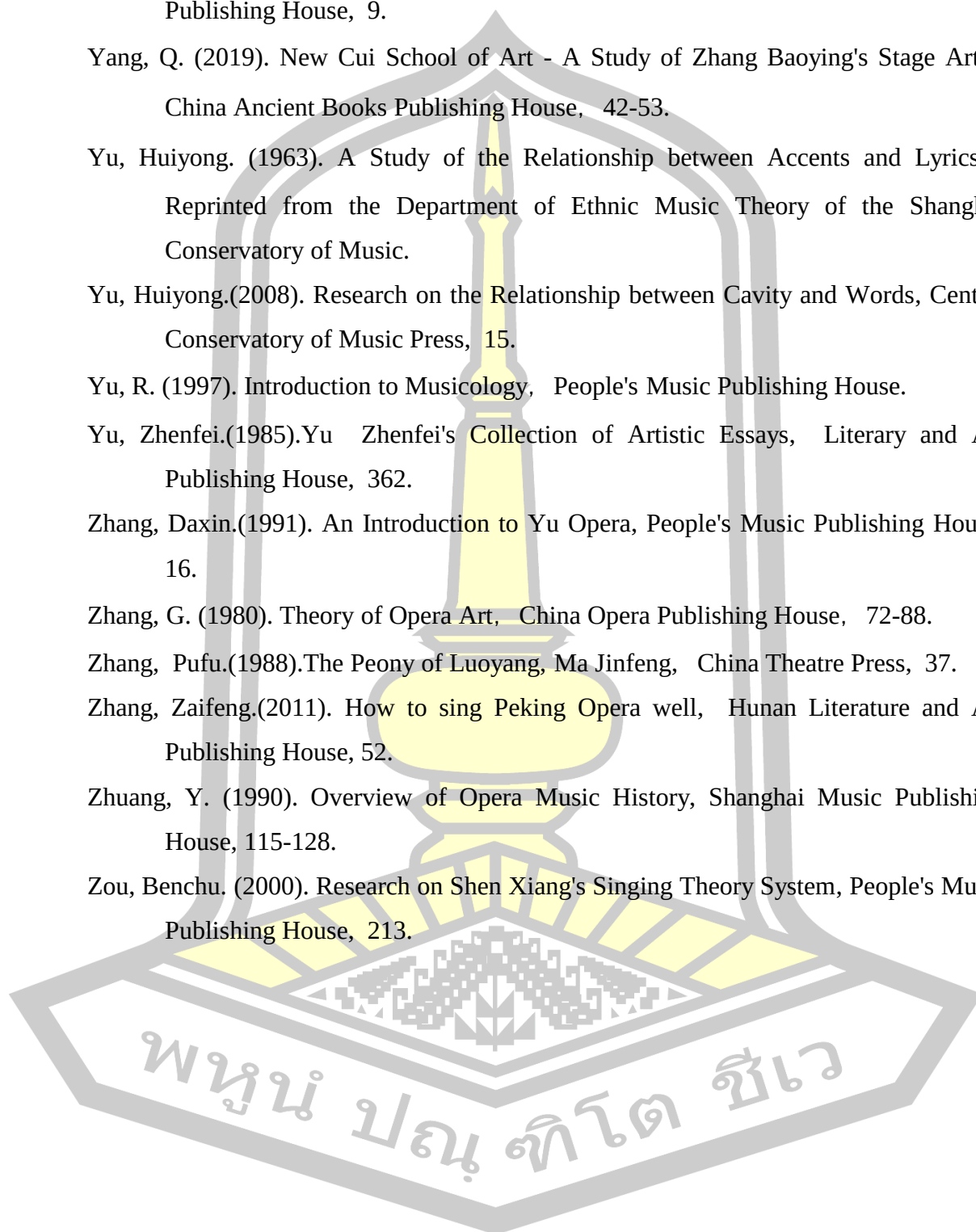
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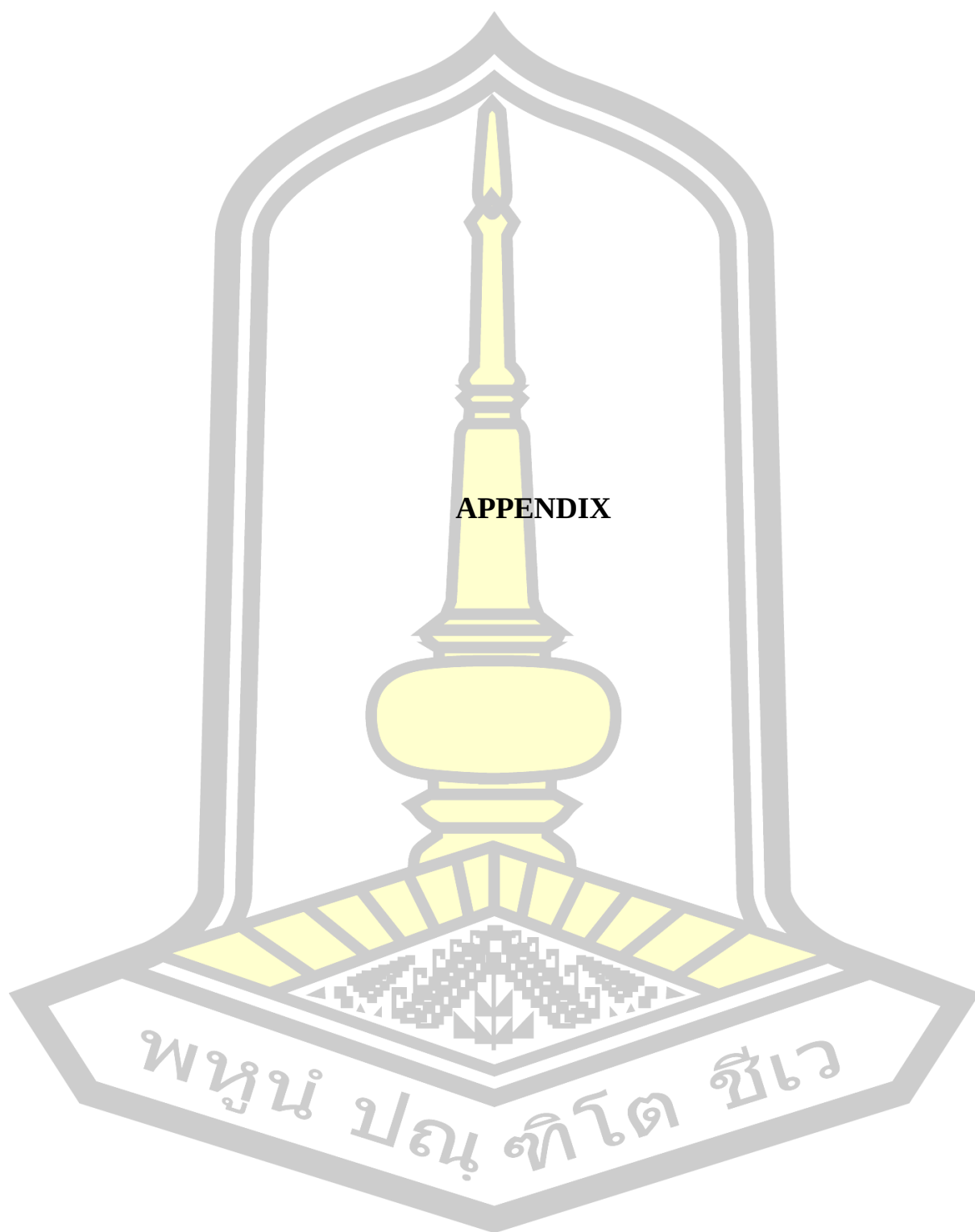
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Appendix 1

Explanation of Special Terms in Dissertation

1. Da Ben Qiang(大本腔): also known as the true voice, is traditionally referred to by terms such as Da Ben Sang or Yang Diao.
2. Er Ben Qiang(二本腔): also known as the falsetto, is traditionally referred to by terms such as Er Ben Sang or Xiao Sang.
3. Jia Ben Yin(夹本音): refers to a vocal technique that mixes true and falsetto voices. However, it is limited to the mixing of high and mid-range vocal registers, with no tonal quality in the low range.
4. Runqiang(润腔): consists of "run," meaning embellishment or refinement, and "qiang," which refers to tone or melody, encompassing various musical forms and tunes.
5. Blowing out(喷口): A special enunciation technique that employs the lips, tongue, and other speech organs to produce sounds with significant force and sharp intensity, creating an explosive and vigorous delivery of words.
6. Slow Tempo(慢板): One of the rhythmic styles in Yu Opera, characterized by a steady and slow pace, typically in 4/4 time.
7. Erba Tempo(二八板): One of the rhythmic styles in Yu Opera, characterized by a moderately fast tempo, typically in 2/4 time.
8. Free Tempo(散板): One of the rhythmic styles in Yu Opera, characterized by a free and flexible tempo.

Appendix 2

Interview Photos

1.Time

May 2023 to October 2024

2.Site

Anyang Cui School of Art Research Institute, Anyang Art Research Institute



Figure 38. Photo of the author of this article with Zhang Baoying

Source: Ran Lin (2023)



Figure 39. Zhang Baoying Teaching Photo

Source: Ran Lin (2024)



Figure 40. Zhang Baoying Receiving Her Disciples Photo
Source: Kunpeng Qin (2024)



Figure 41. Interview with Zhang Baoying
Source: Jin Wang (2024)



Figure 42. Key Informant Yang Qi Held a Launch Event for His New Book

Source: Xiaoying Gao (2024)



Figure 43. The person on the far left in the picture is Casual Informant Yang Shaolong, the chairperson of the Anyang City Dramatists Association. The one in the middle is Zhang Baoying. The person on the far right is Key Informant Yang Qi.

Source: Xiaoying Gao (2024)



Figure 44. Zhang Baoying is guiding the rehearsal of a drama.

Source: Xiaoying Gao (2024)



Figure 45. The leftmost person in the picture is Zhang Baoying's disciple Sun YuJing performing on stage.

Source: Xiaoying Gao (2023)



Figure 46. At the National Political Consultative Conference, Zhang Baoying had a group photo taken with Zhang Junqiu and Xiang Kun. 1990, Xiangshan Hotel, Beijing
Source: Yang Qi (2023)



Figure 47. After watching "The Story of Searching for My Son", Master Chang Xiangyu of Yu Opera took a photo with Zhang Baoying. Zhengzhou, 1992
Source: Yang Qi (2023)



Figure 48. Zhang Baoying was awarded the first place and the gold medal in the Competition of the Ten Leading Actresses of Chinese Yu Opera. Zhengzhou, 1994

Source: Yang Qi (2023)

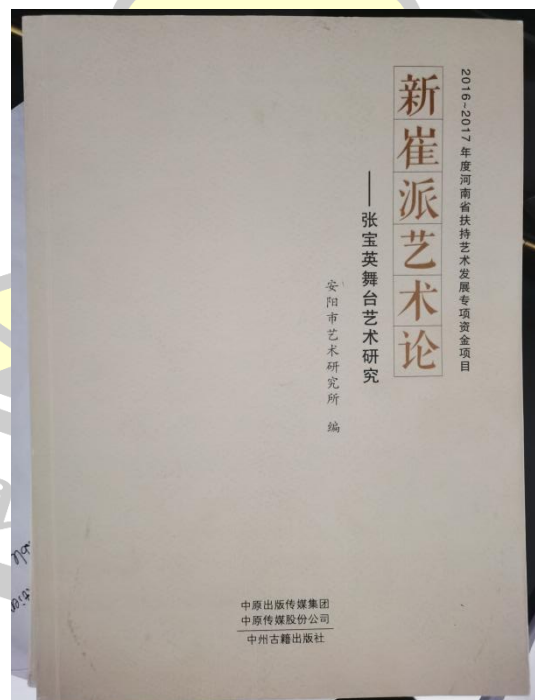


Figure 49. On the Art of the New Cui School

Source: Yang Qi (2022)

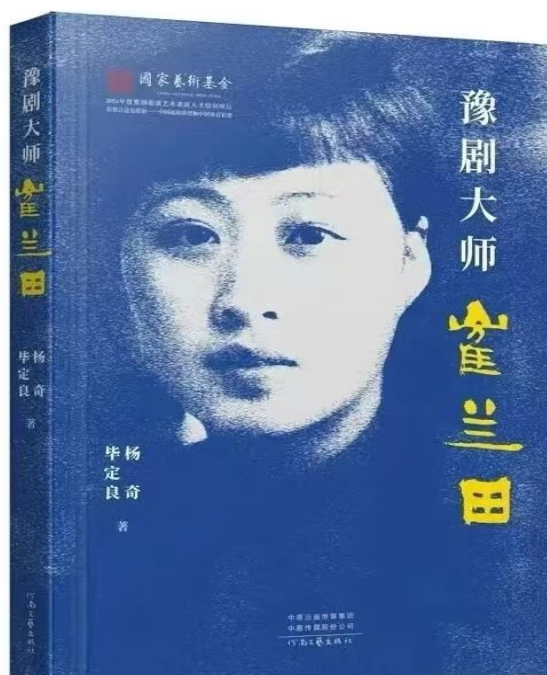
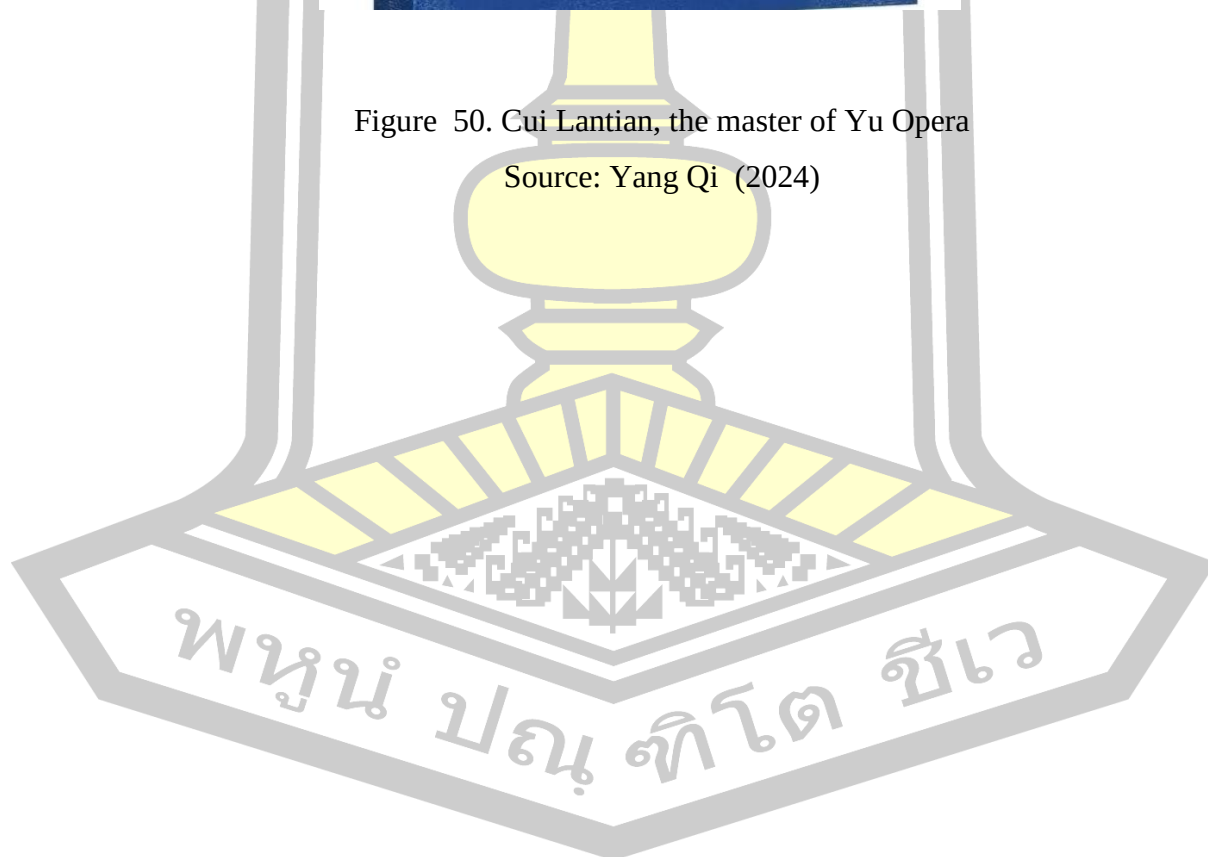


Figure 50. Cui Lantian, the master of Yu Opera

Source: Yang Qi (2024)



BIOGRAPHY

NAME	Xiaoying Gao
DATE OF BIRTH	May 1978
PLACE OF BIRTH	Henan Province, China
ADDRESS	461 Pingyuan Road, Wenfeng District, Anyang City, Henan Province, China
POSITION	Anyang City, Henan Province, China
PLACE OF WORK	Anyang Vocational and Technical College
EDUCATION	1995 -1999 Bachelor's Degree, Music Education, Northeast Normal University 2006 - 2009 Master's degree, Musicology, Fujian Normal University 2022 - 2025 (Ph.D.) College of Music at Mahasarakham University

