

**A study of the adaptive ability of a Chinese
Opera: three case studies of the localised Taiwan
Bangzi**

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Abstract

Taiwan Bangzi originally came from Henan province in China. Within the evolution in Taiwan society, it reveals a strong tendency of localisation in the past ten years. This paper will examine three contemporary operas from three perspectives: content of scripts, stage-performing methods and music, in order to demonstrate the ongoing and strengthening process of localisation and crossover of Taiwan Bangzi in this decade. The intention and evidence of localisation in Taiwan Bangzi can be found through the analysis in this paper from three aspects and a comparison in figures and music examples.

Keywords: Taiwan Bangzi (台灣梆子), localisation, Caogong Waizhuan (曹公外傳), Meirenjian (美人尖), Meishanchun (梅山春)

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Taiwan Bangzi¹ is one branch of Chinese traditional Bangzi (梆子) operas. It was imported from Mainland China to Taiwan around 1947~1949 with the military troops under a historical circumstance. Chen (2003), Chang (2007) and Ma (2014) examined the procedures of transformation and localisation of Taiwan Bangzi from manifold perspectives, such as the content of scripts, methods of performance art, and music. In this paper, I will illustrate the intensifying process of localisation and crossover by scrutinising three contemporary new-arranged operas from three aspects, in order to demonstrate how a foreign traditional opera in China assimilates vernacular conventional elements into Taiwan society, and the omnivorous ability in a Chinese opera genre. These three perspectives are content of scripts, stage-performing methods, and music, while the issue about social functions will be interpolated and integrated into discussion when necessary. Among a variety of operas performed in Taiwan in the past ten years roughly, I select three operas, which can be the landmarks in the localising procedure: Caogong Waizhuan (曹公外傳, A story of Caogong) (2003), Meirenjian (美人尖, Widow's peak) (2011) and Meishanchun (梅山春, Spring on plum mountains) (2014). The main reasons for this selection are that not only three of them are the stories

¹ Its official name in Mandarin is Taiwan Yu Opera, but in this paper, I use Taiwan Bangzi to indicate this group to illustrate the outcome of localisation and connection with traditional Henan Bangzi (河南梆子)

in Taiwan, but also more Taiwanese tunes are adapted in these three operas. In addition, more skills in the films and multimedia are utilised gradually.

Content of scripts

Caogong WaiZhuan

The story in Caogong Waizhuan is a fastidious story. Caogong is the leading actor in this opera and he was a real mayor in Taiwan in Qing dynasty (1636~1912). Being a mayor, he devoted himself constructing the drainage system in the local area, which helped ameliorate the ways that farmers utilised to look after their crops. This drainage system still remains and has an effect on the people in Kaohsiung in Taiwan. However, in order to increase the tension in a drama, most of the plots in this opera are spurious from a historian's viewpoint, because only part of the story in this opera is true.

The infrastructure of drainage system in the Kaohsiung area is the key point that connects this story with the contemporary experience of the audience. When they watch this performance in the theatre, they can realise this real and extant construction in Taiwan society. Furthermore, it is a starting point of this putative story to develop, because the presence of this existing historical infrastructure is to edify Taiwanese to ruminate on the Taiwan history, forming Taiwanese identity.

One of the main plots that develop from this construction is to advocate the probity of a former official to admonish and execrate the venality of plexiform bureaucracy system, which is replete with avaricious, mercenary and inexorable politicians in Taiwan when this opera was performing in 2003.

The probity and altruism of the character of the leading actor (Caogong) are very thought-provoking and impressive, becoming the unequivocal discrepancy between the uprightness of the official in this putative story and the venal politicians in the real world. This also reflects the expectation of Taiwanese and assuages the dissatisfaction with incumbent governors. In addition, the wife of Caogong reveals the traditional image in Taiwan society, which is supportive and helpful in the spear side of a family. When people who were educated and grew up in Taiwan society watch this opera in the theatre, they could recollect their experience in their lives quickly and realise that this story is very familiar to them.

In terms of the accuracy of this story and how it develops in the performance, people can find this story is an apocryphal one, although part of the plots is true. The arrangement of the plots of this story is obviously narrative and chronic and very similar to previous traditional Chinese operas.

Meirenjian (美人尖)

Compared to the putative story in Caogong, the second story is Meirenjian that is a real one in Chiayi (嘉義) in Taiwan. This story is written by a native novelist, Wang Chiungling (王瓊玲), in Taiwan and focuses on the whole life of a female Taiwanese in the traditional Taiwan society. The cynosure of this story is the discrepancy of interpretations of the widow's peak from two areas, which results in the severe animosity between two generations in a family (mother-in-law and daughter-in-law). Consequently, it becomes a widespread story in this local area, Chiayi.

The confliction between two generations (mother-in-law and daughter-in-law) is a common topic for Taiwanese soap operas on TV, so people who grew up in this society understand and realise this situation very well. Because the relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law in traditional Taiwanese culture is extremely unequal, when people watch this plots in the performance, they could recap their similar experiences and commiserate with the leading actress in the story. As a result, this topic is quite familiar to many audience in Taiwan and has a stronger connection within Taiwan society, compared with other common historical or patriotic stories in the traditional Chinese operas.

Two important issues can be found in this story: one is the inequality of the relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, and the other is the intransigent interpretation from previous generations in different areas. At first, in this story, the mother-in-law kept caviling everything what the daughter-in-law did since she got marriage with her ugly son because of her interpretation of the widow's peak of the daughter-in-law. On the other hand, the daughter-in-law cannot understand why her widow's peak is the curse in this village, rather than the blessing in her original village. However, with this prejudice, the daughter-in-law cannot establish a good relationship with the spear side of a family, because she was forced to accept this so-called superstition. Consequently, she chose to fight against her mother-in-law and the whole family, in order to gain the female right in a traditional society in Taiwan. Furthermore, people who grew up in the traditional Taiwan society more or less experienced similar situation. This plot edifies the audience to ruminate on the equality in gender and reminds people of the awareness of traditional superstitions in conventional concepts.

With regard to the accuracy of this story, it is totally different from Caogong, because the plots in Meirenjian are a real Taiwanese story in Chiayi, and this story is presented almost chronically to describe the whole contentious life of this female at that time. The opera begins with the question from the leading actress about why people in the spear side of a family think her widow's peak is a curse. All the plots are arranged chronically and focus on the whole life of the daughter-in-law. The denouement of this opera is different from others, because in general all the sufferings will be propitiated at the end in most of the traditional operas. This arrangement in the plots is rare in Taiwan Bangzi performances. In addition, the development of this story is replete with enmity. This can be found not only in the relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, but also in the relationships between them and their descendants, because from their perspectives, their mother and grandmother are very unfriendly and vindictive. As these two women passed away at the end of this opera, their animosity cannot be mollified. Because this tragic ending is unusual in traditional performances on the stage, this arrangement reflects the reality of a vernacular story in Taiwan and connotes the pressures of various superstitions and supercilious power in patriarchy Taiwanese society from a female victim's perspective.

Meishanchun (梅山春)

This story is similar to the previous one, Meirenjian, because the story is a real one in Taiwan society. The difference between Meirenjian and Meishanchun is there are three female stories in Meishanchun in comparison to the only

one story in Meirenjian. Liu Huifen (劉慧芬) rearranged two novels from the same author, Wang Chiungling, and depicted these three women's stories individually.

The issue about the role and inequality of adopted children is the connection with Taiwan society. Adopted female children were multifunctional in traditional Taiwan society about one hundred years ago. At that time, when parents could not look after their children because of their financial predicaments, they would sell their female kids to rich families to acquire some money. The girls adopted by the rich family were not merely the female kids, but rather the servants and the daughter-in-laws in the future. As a result, the position of these adopted female children were in the lowest position in the rich families. As the economy in Taiwan improves gradually, this phenomenon disappears. However, the impression of a traditional female in Taiwan society has existed in people's mind for a long period of time. In addition, this story emphasises not only the inequality of adopted girls, but also the pressure of the invective and strictures from their parents, relatives and neighbours because of the gender. When the audience realise this gender issue in this story, they would take pity on their longanimity and find the connection between the gender issue and Taiwan society.

Compared with the vindictive woman life in Meirenjian, these three stories in Meishanchun reveal the desires and redoubtable endurance of female Taiwanese. Under this hardship and unfriendly environment, they display the longanimity and munificence, in order to pursue a putative family life which is filled with warmth and love. The spirits revealed by these three leading actresses in this opera inspire people to face the challenges and quandaries in life and

assuage their sufferings, palliating the impacts in mind and becoming more sanguine. In these three stories, they face different tragic vicissitudes, including being forced to separate from each other, the loss of her daughter in the flooding, and the torture from her adopted mother. In contemporary Taiwan society, people would commiserate with their sufferings in the traditional Taiwan society and fortify their abilities to think about the predicaments in a positive way.

The accuracy of this story is undeniable, because all the three women in this opera are still alive in Taiwan. Compared with the previous local story, Meirenjian, this story (Meishanchun) is closer to people's life experience in Taiwan. In addition, the previous two operas are arranged chronically, whereas in this story, the author applies the "stream of consciousness" to describe these three stories. Three stories are presented individually: the first one is the prohibited relationship of a couple, the second one is the hardship of an adopted girl, and the third one is a philanthropic and munificent woman in Taiwan society.

In conclusion, these three stories are associated with Taiwan, but they focus on difference aspects. In Caogong Waizhuan, the starting point is a visible and extant heritage, as well as the tangible contribution of our ancestors. By emphasising the probity of an official in the government, the concept of anticorruption is presented in this performance, which can be used to admonish the incumbent and vernal officials in contemporary society.

Compared with this putative plots and poignant male image in Caogong Waizhuan, the other two stories put more attention to traditional female. Meirenjian presents an exceptional female role in traditional patriarchy society in Taiwan, because the leading actress wages her animosity

towards her mother-in-law, her husband and her descendants to reveal her dissatisfaction with the unfair misinterpretation of her widow's peak and gratuitous strictures. It also reminds the audience of some customs and conventional concepts in enculturation, some of which are superannuated in contemporary Taiwan society, but there is still a deleterious influence and impression on female equality.

The female image revealed in the third opera, Meishanchun, is totally opposite to the previous female story. Although these three women face onerous and miserable predicaments in their lives, they still present the munificence and the longanimity of traditional females in Taiwan society, transmuting negative impacts into positive expectations in the future. This hortatory opera really edifies the audience to ruminate on many quandaries in the real world optimistically, which would engender more inspiring energy in contemporary society.

Stage-performing methods

Caogong Waizhuan



Figure 1 The costume in Caogong Waizhuan (Caogong is in the middle) (Ma 2014: 19)

According to the background in this story, the costume of all the performers is a Taiwanese conventional dressing style in Qing dynasty, including hairstyle (Figure 1). Most of the previous Henan opera describe the historic stories and each character is equipped with suitable clothing, for example, the colour-embroidered red ceremonial robe for women is the common one for a bride. In this opera, the style is a conventional Taiwanese dressing that is different from some contemporary operas in China during and after the Culture Revolution (1966~1976). Furthermore, the backdrops on the stage are contemporary highly decorated and changed according to various plots

It is obvious that some Taiwanese elements are used in this performance, for example, some traditional performance arts in Taiwan. Bajiajiang (八家將) and Dingtao (陣頭) are

utilised in this opera on the stage in order to set up a Taiwanese atmosphere (Figure 2 & 3). These two traditional performances are parts of Taiwanese culture, especially in the wedding, and celebrations in Taiwan society. When these two conventional performing arts are demonstrated on the stage, the audience can easily find the connections between this onstage story and the real society in Taiwan.



Figure 2 Bajiajiang2

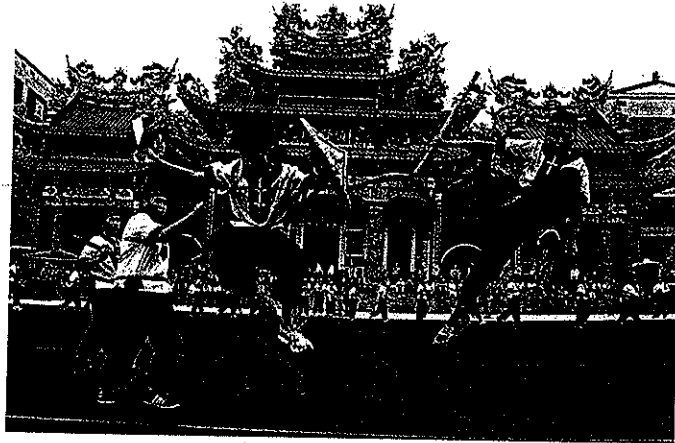


Figure 3 Dingtao3

Meirenjian



Figure 4 The leading actress in Meirenjian

In Meirenjian, the style of costume is quite similar to the story in Caogong Waizhuan, because the propinquity of this two stories. At the beginning of this performance, a very traditional Taiwanese red robe for a bride is very obvious (Figure 5), because of the plot in wedding. For the rest of the performance, the dressing style is the conventional Taiwanese clothes (Figure 6).



Figure 5 Wedding4 in Meirenjian

3 <http://www.swcb.gov.tw/album/index-1.asp?m=16&m1=13&m2=376&sid=61&page=2> Accessed on 11/07/2014

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[http://www.khcc.gov.tw/home02.aspx?ID=\\$5101&IDK=2&EXEC=D&D ATA=24763&AP=\\$5101_HISTORY-0](http://www.khcc.gov.tw/home02.aspx?ID=$5101&IDK=2&EXEC=D&D ATA=24763&AP=$5101_HISTORY-0) Accessed on 11/07/2014

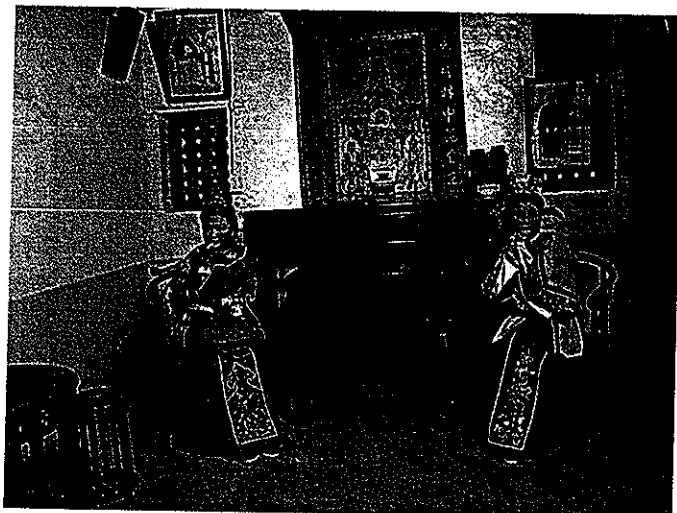


Figure 6 Meirenjian⁵ (Left: mother-in-law; Right: daughter-in-law)

One stage-performing method in this performance is an innovative way in Taiwan Bangzi that is the application of the skills in multimedia and filming. In this opera, multimedia and filming techniques are applied to present the plots in Taiwan Bangzi performances for the first time. Compared with the previous highly decorated and frequently switched backdrops, the image projection on the screens replaces many backdrops. On the screens in this opera, some fragments in the stories are displayed in films, and some static images are projected as the backdrops, which act as the real street view and the symbol of the pressure of their ancestors (see Figure 7). As a result, one

⁵ <http://blog.xuite.net/chiung.ling4866/twblog/112243415> Accessed on 11/07/2014

change on the stage can be found that with the help of high technology, many plexiform backdrops have been substituted by the application of multimedia. In addition, the symbolic performing skills in the traditional Chinese operas would not be obfuscated by the refulgent, manifold, and meretricious backdrops.



Figure 7 An image of ancestors projected on the screen⁶

There are some Taiwanese elements on the stage in this opera. The first one is quite common in traditional performances in Chinese operas that is the webbing ceremony, and the second one is the ceremony, which people normally utilised to preclude the deleterious effect on the whole family,

⁶ This photo is provided by Taiwan Bangzi Opera Company, National Center for Traditional Arts. (2014/08/30)

such as using a fork to poke the sedan (Figure 8). The third one is the curse on the female who has the widow's peak by revising the grinder. The fourth is an antediluvian method and custom existed in the traditional Taiwan society, Ximenfeng (洗門風), which means the female has to be punished in a humiliating way in the public in order to redress the damage of the reputation of the spear side of a family caused by her unforgivable felony that was not proscribed in traditional customs in Taiwan society, such as elopement and pregnancy before marriage. In this story, the leading actress is forced to carry two heavy buckets filled with water across the winding road on the hill, washing the cumulative dust and blemish on the door of the her wife's family (Figure 9). These four Taiwanese elements are quite widespread customs in the traditional Taiwan society.

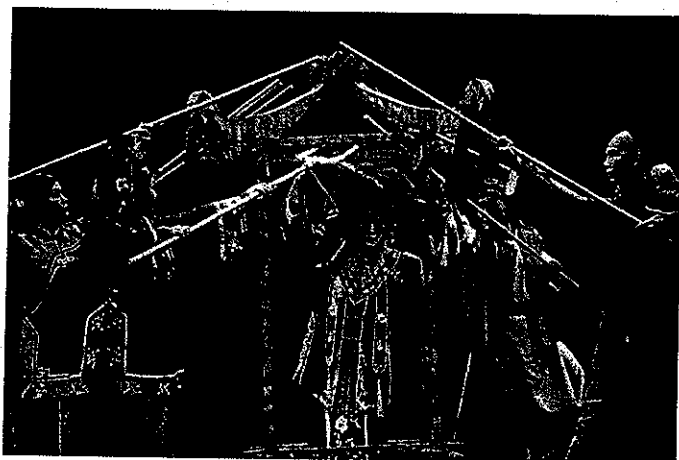


Figure 8 Forking the sedan⁷

⁷ This photo is provided by Taiwan Bangzi Opera Company, National Center for Traditional Arts. (2014/08/30)

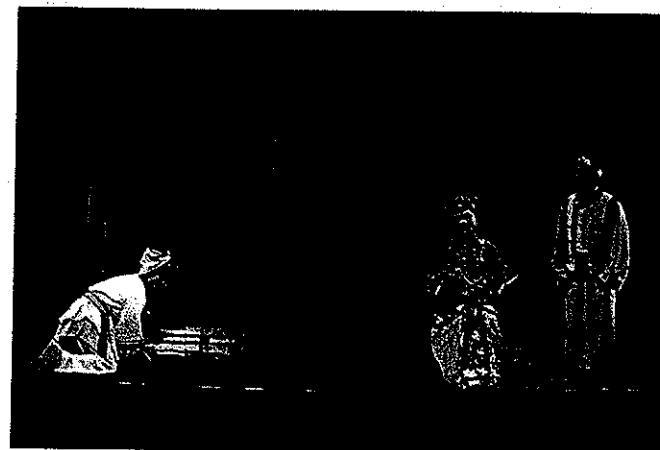


Figure 9 Ximenfeng⁸

Meishanchun

⁸ This photo is provided by Taiwan Bangzi Opera Company, National Center for Traditional Arts. (2014/08/30)



Figure 10 Three leading actresses in Meishanchun (Left: Hanxiao; Middle: Axi; Right: Qiuyue)

Compared with the dressing style in Qing dynasty in the previous two operas, the costume is the traditional Taiwanese style after 1912 (Figure 10). All of three leading actresses are still alive in Taiwan, so the costume of these three women is the style in the generations of grandparents or great grandparents of the youngsters in Taiwan now.

Similar to previous opera, Meirenjian, multimedia and filming techniques are utilised more in this opera. In addition to the image on the screen on the stage, more films are played on the screen to convey the plots in this story. This application of the films and multimedia simplifies the complicated and heavy backdrops on the stage.

The most obvious Taiwanese element revealed in this opera is the outdoor theatre by Gezixi (歌仔戲). Gezixi is the native Taiwan opera and it was a social behaviour in the traditional Taiwan society before the advent of TV and computer. In that period of time, watching the Gezixi was a kind of entertainment and a good opportunity to chat with neighbours, building up good relationship with them. Consequently, this element in Taiwan can be recognised immediately when watching Gezixi is presented on the stage. The way which Gezixi is presented in this performance is a play-within-a play method. It means the Gezixi is part of the story that acts as the connections between two plots. It not only connotes the result of the plot, but also encourages the leading actress to recollect her memory in the story (Figure 11, 12 & 13).

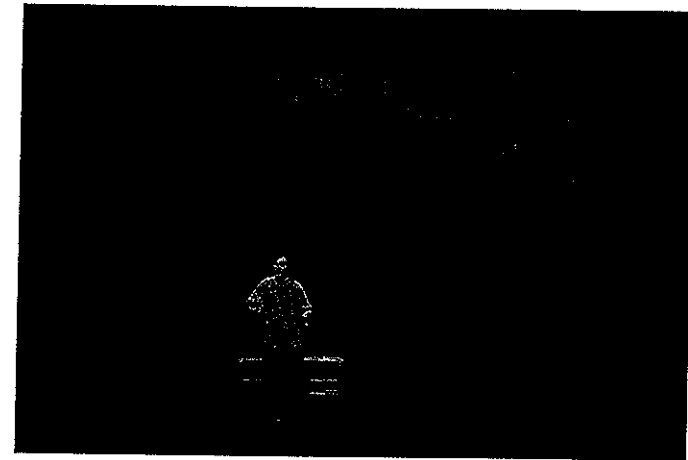


Figure 11 Gezixi is played on the screen behind a leading actress in Meshanchun.⁹

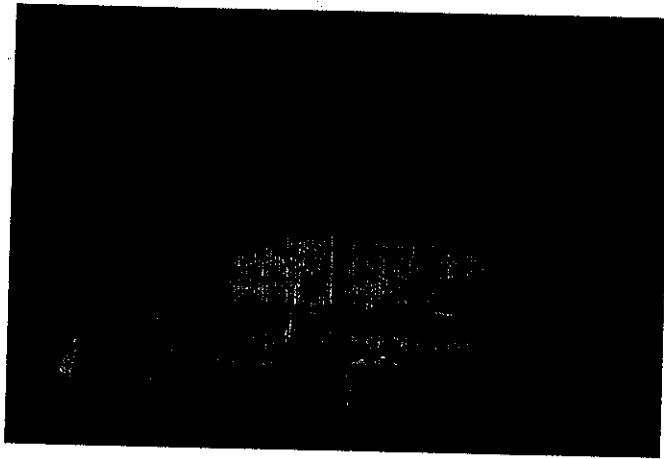


Figure 12 The performers are watching the Gezixi on the stage.¹⁰

⁹ This photo is provided by Wang Chiungling in 2014.

¹⁰ This photo is provided by Taiwan Bangzi Opera Company, National Center for Traditional Arts. (2014/08/30)



Figure 13 Gezixi is played on the screen behind leading actresses in Meshanchun.¹¹

The presence of the Gezixi on the stage also edifies people to ruminate on the function of traditional operas in the past and in the contemporary society in Taiwan. For instance, before each family could buy the TV and computer for their main entertainment, watching outdoor traditional Chinese opera, including Gezixi, was the main entertainment, whereas after these electronic gadgets became so widespread, people changed their method for social activities and the model of establishment and development of their interpersonal relationships. Consequently, when watching the Gezixi acts as part of the performance on the stage in the method of play-within-a-play, it seems the time machine, which helps the audience recap their experience in the past in Taiwan society.

¹¹ This photo is provided by Taiwan Bangzi Opera Company, National Center for Traditional Arts. (2014/08/30)

Music

Caogong Waizhuan

As a previous researcher indicates several characteristics in music (Ma 2014), the symbol of localisation is the application of a widespread tune, which is a Taiwanese folk song (see music example 1). The flexibility for a traditional Chinese opera to accommodate external tunes and element is a common phenomenon, and the usage of a Taiwanese tune is the first time in Taiwan Bangzi. This can be considered as the starting point in localisation of Taiwan Bangzi. The tune of Wangchunfeng is not only the interlude between the acts, but also the singing with new lyrics behind the curtain as the background music. In addition to this Taiwanese tune, most of the tunes are new-composed Henan opera style and dominant.

野 茫 茫
Ye Mang Mang

天 昏 暗 山 重 重 路 在 那 邊
Tian Hun An Shan Chong Chong Lu Zai Na Bian

行 急 急 斗 笠 綠 令 心 愁 愁
Xing Ji Ji Dou Li Xian Ling Xin Xuan Xuan

親 人 離 山 親 人 離 山
Qin Ren Feng Shang Qin Ren Feng Shang

Music example 1 Rearranged Wangchunfeng (Ma 2014: 31)

Furthermore, many contemporary methods in this composition are presented in this opera and studied by Ming-Hui Ma, such as modulation (2004: 117), the mixture of two traditional tunes (2014: 13), adaption of local tunes (2014: 24), extensive coloratura (2014: 29), and repetition of one phrase (2014: 30). These music characteristics become more common in the following two opera, and the musics in the other two performances reveal a stronger tendency and more evidence in localisation in Taiwan Bangzi.

Meirenjian

Compared with the music in Caogong Waizhuan, the music in Meirenjian is quite similar, but more Taiwanese tunes are adapted. For example, when the bride gets on the sedan, the audience can be aware that the Beiguan¹² tune in Taiwan, Baijiachun (百家春), is played several times as the background music, which is the widespread and fervent tune in Taiwan in the wedding ceremony (see music example 2), which is replete with ebullience. This tune is played in many places in this opera. When the plot is associated with wedding, people can hear this melody as the background. It is the first time for Taiwan Bangzi to utilise a Beiguan tune in the performance.

¹² *Beiguan* is a music genre in Taiwan traditional music.



Music example 2 Baijiachun

After this familiar tune in Beiguan, another common folk song is used to establish the atmosphere in Taiwan, which is Caomeng Nongjigong (草蟲弄雞公). In this opera, the whole tune is played several times after the melody of Baijiachun. As a result, the music character in Taiwan is quite obvious (see music example 3)



Music example 3 Caomeng Nongjigong

The applications of duet and chorus on the stage and behind the curtain become a common phenomenon in contemporary performance. This kind of duet can be heard more than five times, which act as the main singing sections and the background singing sections. For example, in music example 4, bar 1~2 and bar 5~6 are for male, while bar 3~4 and bar 7~9 are for female. From bar 11, it is the chorus, and

the final phrase from bar 17 is the repetition of bar 15~16 (Re Ren Xian). As a result, after Caogong Waizhuan, in this opera, this kind of singing method becomes more common both for background music and conveying plots in the story.



Music example 4



Music example 5

Meishanchun

The music of localisation in this opera is more mature than the previous two performances. In this opera, the composer not only deliberately use more tunes in Taiwan, but also integrate them into traditional Henan Bangzi. The main purpose for this is to establish a familiar environment when the audience listen to these vernacular tunes. In fact, applying external tunes in traditional opera is not first time; however, it is the first time to integrate these local tunes within traditional singing. In addition, the local and widespread tunes by Gezixi are utilised in this opera both to remind the audience of the familiar atmosphere in Taiwan society, and to connect the plots in this opera.

Diudiutong (丟丟銅) is a widespread Taiwanese folk song. Music example 6 is the original tune and music example 7 to 13 are seven variations of this tune in this opera, which are played in various places in the whole opera. Most importantly, some of these variations sometimes act as the introductory section for a singing section (e.g. music example 11 & 12). In the previous two operas, the composers usually use their modified introductory sections and bridges which are full of traditional style in Henan Bangzi as the connections between various phrases, whereas in this opera, the composer rewrites the Taiwanese tunes as the connections, especially the tune Diudiutong. Consequently, this tune becomes a leading motive in the music in this opera. Furthermore, in this opera, the composer adapts this tune (Diudiutong) for the instrumental solo piece which acts as the background music in the conversations and transitional music (music example 9 and 10).



Music example 6 Diudiutong



Music example 7



Music example 8



Music example 9



Music example 10



Music example 11



Music example 12

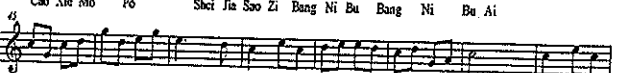
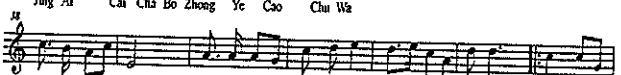
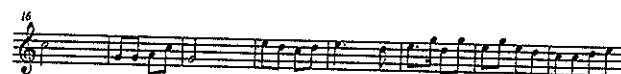


Music example 13

Another traditional tune in Taiwan Beiguan music is also used in this opera. This tune, Baijiachun (百家春), is a widespread tune for instruments in Beiguan, and this melody is played frequently in many conventional ceremonies for Han tribe, such as wedding. This application of this melody is not the first time, because it is played in the previous opera, Meirenjian. Similar to Meirenjian, this tune is played when the performers represent the wedding ceremony on the stage (music example 2).

Taohuaguodu (桃花过渡) is another folk song utilised in this opera. Compared with the tune (Diudiutong), this second folk song in Taiwan is used in a different way. For example, in music example 14, it shows that there are five parts: part 1 is from bar 1 to 24, part 2 is from bar 30 to 43, part 3 is from bar 44 to 67, part 4 is from bar 70 to 74, and part 5 is from bar 75 to 98. Obviously, part 1, 3, and 5 are the tune of Taohuaguodu, whereas part 2 and 4 are main sections for singing. As a result, this tune and singing section are intertwined in this music example and it is a good demonstration of the hybrid style of

Taiwanese style and traditional Henan opera style, forming the Taiwan Bangzi style.



踏山
Ta Shan

怪 咬 採 茶 播 種 野 草 除 哇
Jing Ai Cai Cha Bo Zhong Ye Cao Chu Wa

草 鞋 磨 破 誰 家 燒 子 幫 你 補 幫 你 補 咬
Cao Xie Mo Po Shui Jia Sao Zi Bang Ni Bu Bang Ni Bu Ai

誰家大嫂 殷殷勤勤 補我的破衣服
 Shei Jia Da Sao Ying Ying Qin Qin Bu Wo De Po Yi Fu

Music example 14

Tianhehe (天黑黑) is played in this opera as the beginning of the singing section. Music example 15 is a good illustration to support it. This tune is played from bar 9 to the first half of bar 18 with an introductory section before the tune and a connecting phrase (second half of bar 18 to 21), which is traditional style in Henan opera, after the tune. It is followed by a very traditional singing style in Henan opera (from bar 22).

梅山
 Mei Shan

嶺
 Ling

出了大平 震天 動地 口吐
 Chu Le Da Shi Jing Tian Dong Di Ye

Music example 15

In this opera, some tunes are played several times which act as the leading motive. For example, one tune is played several times by different instruments in many places in this opera (music example 16).

Music example 16

In addition to music example 16, music example 17 is played by a sorrowful Chinese instrument (Guanzi¹³) twice in the performance to establish a morose atmosphere, when the actress recollects something happened in the past.

¹³ Guanzi is a Chinese double-reed aerophone and its tune colour is sorrowful.



Music example 17

In terms of the music in this opera in the process of localisation, the maturity of fusion of traditional Henan Bangzi style and local Taiwanese music style is better than the counterparts of the previous two operas, because of the degree and the amount of usage of tunes in Taiwan and the integrations of Henan Bangzi style and Taiwanese style.

Compared with the one leading actor or actress in the previous two operas, there are three leading actresses from three different stories in this opera. In order to differentiate these three female roles, the composer apply different singing styles not only to contrast the discrepancies among them, but also to make a connection with the individual characters from these three women. For example, the first female is Hanxiao (含笑) and it focuses on the relationship between a couple. As a result, the composer arranges more sections for a duet, in order to reveal the warmth and happiness when they fall in love (music example 18 and 19). In music example 18, voice one is for female and voice two is for male. This music example can be divided into two symmetric parts, which contain an antiphon and a duet. From bar 1~6 and from bar 9~12 are the antiphonal style and followed by bar 7~8 and bar 13~20, which are duet style. This kind arrangement is devised by the composer to establish the feeling of conversation of a couple while dating. The final phrase, Di Jiu Tian Chang, is

repeated and performed in a higher range to emphasise their expectation in the future for their warm and sweet relationship.

Music example 18

Music example 19 is another excerpt of a duet in this opera. The introductory section is from bar 1 to 4, and from bar 5 to 15 is the singing part for female. After a two-bar bridge (bar 12~13), from bar 16 to 26 is the singing part for male, followed by another female singing from bar 27. In addition, the repetition of some phrase to reinforce is easy to

be recognised from bar 12~13 and bar 14~15, because bar 14~15 is the repetition of bar 12~13 in a higher range in order to emphasise the question from the leading actress.

1-84

(Female) Shang Hua Jiao Jie Liang Yun
 上花驛結良緣

7
 談何容易 誰主婚誰下聘 誰把親
 Tan He Rong Yi Shei Zhu Hun Shei Xia Pin Shei Ba Qin

11
 提誰把親提(天助)我身還還正若一百銀
 Ti Shei Ba Qin Ti (Male) Wo Sheng Bian Hai Zhi zhe Yi Bai Yin

19
 帶 還嫌婆去提親 早定佳
 Qian Mei Po Qu Ti Qin Zao Ding Jia

25
 期 (Female) Tian Zhu Ge Ge Pan Zhi Pan
 Qi (Female) Tian Zhu Ge Ge Pan Zhi Pan

Music example 19

In addition to music example 18 and 19, the usage of a duet or a chorus becomes more common for singing behind the curtain to narrate the plots in the performance, especially for the ending of some act and the ending of the whole opera. Music example 20 and 21 are the whole singing section, which is similar to music example 14 in structure, and music example 20 is devised for a chorus while example 21 is for a duet. It is quite obvious that music example 11 is used as the introductory section from bar 1~4 and the connection from bar

27~30 between music example 20 and 21. Furthermore, it acts as the ending of music example 21 from bar 19~22. As I mentioned earlier, music example 11 is a variation of Diudiutong, so this section would be full of Taiwanese atmosphere, when the audience listen to it in the theatre. Furthermore, one common use in contemporary performance in Taiwan Bangzi can be found in music example 20 and 21, which is the repetition of one phrase. In music example 20, the final four words of a phrase (Ba Gan Fei Tao) are repeated from bar 23, whereas in music example 21, bar 16~18 is the repetition of the phrase from bar 13 to 14.

1-110

飛 遊 遊 的
 Lie You You De
 Liang Cheng Cheng De

6
 飛子 月伴兒 照 明 晃 晃 的 金 光
 Fei Zi Yue Ya Er Zhao Ming Huang Huang De Jin Guang

11
 映 射 樹 分 明 黃 銅 來 尙
 Ying Mei Shuo Fen Ming Huang Tong Lai Wei

16
 這 初 戀 戀 今 生 的 真 情 無 沒 把 肝 肺
 Zao Que Shi Ta Jin Sheng De zhe Qing Wu Yi Ba Gan Fei

23
 掏 把 肝 肺 掏
 Tao Ba Gan Fei Tao

Music example 20

112

恩 恩 怨 怨 紛 紛 繞 繞 甘 甘
En En Yuan Yuan Fen Fen Rao Rao Gan Gan

甜 甜 細 細 明 明 燈 燈 非 非
Tian Tian Xi Xi Jiao Jiao Shi Shi Fen Fen

苦 計 較 半 生 心 腳 一 世 半 半 生 心 腳
Ku Ji Jiao Ban Sheng Xin Jiao Yi Shi Lao Ban Sheng Xin Jiao

苦 計 較 半 生 心 腳 一 世 半 半 生 心 腳
Ku Ji Jiao Ban Sheng Xin Jiao Yi Shi Lao Ban Sheng Xin Jiao

一 世 半
Yi Shi Lao

一 世 半
Yi Shi Lao

Music example 21

The second actress in this opera is Qiuyue (秋月). The life of Qiuyue in this story is replete with torture and unfair treatments by her adopted mother. The composer set up a smooth singing style, which is similar to the singing songs, for Qiuyue. The notes in her singing emphasise on different notes compared with traditional Henan Bangzi. For example, people always focus on tonic or dominant notes in traditional singing style; however, in the tunes sung by Qiuyue are designed to focus on mediant and submediant. In music example 22, a variation of Diudiutong (music example 11) is used to the introductory (bar 1~4) and ending (bar 23~26) parts for this

background singing. Furthermore, from bar 20~22 is the repetition of the final three words (Zi Nue Chao) in bar

180

素 月 流
Su Yue Liu

光 哪 愁 人 照 悲 喜 價 味 哪
Guang Na Chou Re Zhao Be Xi Qing Wei Na

苦 澀 熬 百 憂 千 愁 知 多
Ku Jian Ao Bai You Qian Chou Zhi Duo

少 今 朝 細 數 自 憐 嗚 自
Shao Jin Zhao Xi Shu Zi Nue Chao Zi

露 嗚
Nu Chao

18.

Music example 22

In music example 23, the focus on mediant and submediant is quite obvious, which is devised by the composer deliberately. When the leading actress sings on the stage, it is easy to differentiate these three singing styles in this opera. In addition, at the beginning of music example 23, from bar 1~4 is a variation of the tune, Diudiutong (music example 12) and the repetition of a phrase (Feng Zhu Yao) in bar 31 is from bar 32 within an extensive coloratura to reinforce the critical well-being condition of her mother-in-law.

♩. 66

我 女 生 歪 膝 若
 Yang Nu Sheng Ya Jian Ruo

草 草 草 良 人
 Cao Cao Cao Liang Ren

離 離 果
 Li Li Guo

一 生 隔 遠 總 難 料 愛 恨 糾 纏 自 感 嘆 恨 母 刑 弱
 Yi Sheng Ji Yu Zong Nan Liao Ai Hen Jiu Chan Zi Nue Chao Yang Mu Bing Ruo

孤 身 老 漢 飄 浪 游 風 搖 搖 風 搖 搖
 Gu Shen Lao Han Piao Po Miao Feng Zhu Yao Feng Zhu Yao

Music example 23

The third woman is Axi (阿惜) who is the oldest female in this story. A traditional singing style is used deliberately by the composer, Zuo Qiwei (左奇偉), in order to reveal the age of Axi. When the audience listen to these conventional styles, they could realise the difference in compared to the other two female singing ways. From bar 1~25 in music example 24 can be considered as the combination of music example 6, 7 and 11 with a new modified ending. This four-bar (27~30) phrase is a common connection in traditional singing style in Henan opera and bar 27 can be repeated several times on the stage for moving. The repetition of one phrase (Shi Jie Pan) exists from

bar 39 to 40, which is the reinforcement of the previous two bars (37~38).

♩. 120

梅 嶺 村 人 跡 罕 穿 山
 Mei Ling Cun Ren Ji Han Chuan Shan

越 嶺 石 階 盤 石 階 盤 嶺
 Yue Ling Shi Jie Pan Shi Jie Pan Na

Music example 24

In music example 25, it is obvious that the section from bar 1~5 is a variation of Diudutong (music example 13) and from bar 7 the leading actress sings an extensive coloratura to emphasise the hardship of a military life. In addition to this coloratura from the beginning of this singing section, from bar 21 is the combination of the repetition of bar 20 (Xing Ren Ku) and an extensive coloratura, which is a widespread phenomenon in contemporary Taiwan Bangzi performances. As a result, music example 25 is a good demonstration of a hybrid style of Taiwanese style and Henan Opera style.

♩ 66

沙 場 征 戰 苦 哇
Shu Chang Zhen Zhan Ku Wu

親 人 泣 道 墟 露 慘 雲 愁 送 取 征 生 離 死 別
Qin Ren Qi Dao Tu Wu Can Yun Chou Song Jun Zheng Sheng Li Si Bie

行 人 哭 行 人 哭 呀
Xing Ren Ku Xing Ren Ku Ya

Music example 25

With this arrangement by the composer, the juxtaposition of three kinds of styles is a main music character in this opera. Music is not merely the sound to support the singers and background music, but rather the multifunctional sound to demonstrate the connections between music and stories and the mature localisation process in music in Taiwan Bangzi.

Conclusion

In this paper, I used three operas to demonstrate this ongoing process of localisation in Taiwan Bangzi in the past ten years. From the analysis of three aspects (content of scripts, stage-performing methods, and music), the tendency and more evidence of localisation of Taiwan Bangzi reveal in a comparison among these three operas. The first important part is the application of a local story in Taiwan. Caogong Waizhuan is a putative male story partly based on local history, whereas Meirenjian and Meishanchun are two real local female stories in Taiwan.

The second evidence is the involvement of Taiwanese elements. The story of Caogong Waizhuan is from an extant drainage infrastructure in Taiwan and some traditional performances are applied to increase the Taiwan atmosphere, for example. In the story of Meirenjian, it is replete with some traditional ceremonies and superstitions, such as forking to sedan and washing the threshold and the door. In Meishanchun, the real traditional Taiwan opera, Gezixi, is presented in films on the stage directly that acts as part of the plots and the connections in the story.

The third point is the music, which is the most obvious character in localisation. Three different composers integrate local Taiwanese tunes in different ways. From a comparison, it is quite obvious that the amount of Taiwan tunes and the number of Taiwan songs not only increase but also more smoothly integrated, in particular, the music of Meishanchun reveals the hybridity of Taiwanese tunes, traditional Henan opera and contemporary singing methods.

In addition to the evidence of localisation through the analysis, the application of multimedia and films become the evidence of crossover. This presence is not only the symbol of modernisation from high technology, but also an issue, which encourages the audience to ruminate on the necessity of high-decorated backdrops in contemporary performances.

In conclusion, in the past ten years, the tendency of localisation in Taiwan Bangzi becomes more obvious in many ways, including content of scripts, stage-performing methods and music, and it is an ongoing phenomenon in contemporary Taiwan under an atmosphere of forming a Taiwan identity. In the process, we can see the adaptive ability for Taiwan Bangzi to cooperate with other fields, such as the skills in multimedia and films, forming a crossover performing style in Taiwan.

This use of crossover is not only a new method in Taiwan, but also inspires the audience to think about the style in the traditional performance and the localised Taiwan Bangzi in contemporary performances.

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