Beyond Intangible Cultural Heritage Designation:
Protecting Jidong Shadow Puppetry

by

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Abstract

Intangible cultural heritage consists of traditional cultural forms passed down from generations by people of different ethnic groups, and it is an essential part of cultural heritage. Intangible cultural heritage is also a necessary symbol of a country or even a nation's historical and cultural achievements. This is of great significance in displaying national culture and heritage.¹

However, in modern society, many intangible cultural heritage traditions face difficult inheritance and development problems. This is mainly because traditional culture cannot reflect the rapid development of the times. Moreover, the new generation's lack of basic knowledge of cultural history is also one of the reasons for the lack of attention to intangible cultural heritage.

This thesis takes Chinese shadow plays, one of the intangible cultural heritages in the world, as the research object. By describing its background, development, performing skills, this paper shows the whole picture of this art and its current situation and dilemma in modern society. In addition, by investigating another intangible cultural heritage, Beijing Opera, learning from its successful protection and development experience, and combined with the protection guidance of UNESCO for the world intangible cultural heritage, this paper provides a feasible method for the development of methods to protect the shadow play. These methods would also offer valuable references to other intangible cultural heritage facing inheritance crises.

¹ “Zhongguo de feiwuzhi wenhua yichan weishenmo shi zuiduo de” [Why is China's intangible cultural heritage the largest in the world], China News (March 2021), https://www.chinanews.com.cn/gn/2021/03-22/9437703.shtml.
Introduction

Compared with the protection of material heritage, the preservation of intangible cultural heritage lies more in inheriting the skills, traditions, and customs, all precious intangible products. Different regions have various intangible cultural heritage, representing their history and development. For example, the traditional Ainu dance in Japan, the Vedic Chanting tradition in India, the Nordic clinker boat traditions, etc.2 This paper focuses on a unique performance form of Chinese folk drama, the shadow play. It is said that the shadow play originated in the Western Han Dynasty (202 BC to 8 AD) and has a history of more than 2000 years.3 In the thirteenth century, the shadow play was introduced to Asian and European countries and has become an important link of cultural exchange between China and other countries.4 It is one of China’s essential folk customs and was listed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 2011.5

A shadow play performance consists of two important parts, shadow puppet operation and singing. Puppets are silhouettes made of animal skin or cardboard. The singing is a combination of different dialects and traditional songs with local characteristics. In the performance, silhouettes of characters are projected on cloth using light, and actors interpret the

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3 Ban Gu, Han Shu [Book of Han], ( Hunan: Yuelu Shushe, 1994).
plot using the silhouettes with unique local music and ballads.\textsuperscript{6} Countless beautiful stories have been staged on the small cloth this long time, portraying vivid heroes.

It is worth mentioning that there are many similarities between shadow play and movies, and the rise of the film has been influenced by shadow play. Both stimulate the audience's senses by transmitting images and sounds through the medium of the screen. Although the film industry is developing rapidly and now has a more substantial influence on people, it cannot replace the shadow play. Different from the replicability of film, the variable performance of a shadow play has many influencing factors, such as the change of venue, the reaction of audience, the operation of performers, etc. Therefore, each shadow play performance is unique and cannot be copied.

However, although the shadow play has played an essential role in China and even in the world civilization, it is also facing numerous threats and challenges. First, with the decline of China's national strength during the late Qing Dynasty (1636 to 1912), many western countries invaded, resulting in losing a large amount of property and territory in China. Moreover, under the invasion of exotic cultures, the Chinese traditional culture has suffered a severe blow, and folk art such as the shadow play faces a crisis.\textsuperscript{7} Today, with the enhancement of China's powers, foreign aggression is unlikely to happen again. With the development of society, people's lifestyles, entertainment methods, and aesthetics have changed. Under such circumstances, the

\textsuperscript{6} Wei Liqun, \textit{Chinese Shadow Puppet Art}.  
\textsuperscript{7} Li Xiaobing, \textit{China at War: An Encyclopedia} (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2012).
shadow play, like many folk arts, has lost its prominence. With the decrease of audience and actors, the art of shadow play is dying out.\textsuperscript{8} These challenges also threaten the other intangible cultural heritage.

However, just as soldiers once took up arms to defend the country, many progressive intellectuals have also struggled to save Chinese traditional cultures. These ancestors carefully combed traditional culture, investigated folk customs and art, and devoted themselves to protecting intangible cultural heritage.\textsuperscript{9} Because the shadow play shows different performance styles and characteristics depending on the region, this paper takes the Jidong style of the shadow play as the primary research object and shows the whole picture of this art through the investigation of its history, performance style, shadow puppets production, and singing. Jidong style originated and popular in the Eastern Hebei Province, the author's hometown. The author can find the local shadow play troupe to collect first-hand valuable information, which is the main reason why the author chooses it as the case study.

The first chapter focuses on the history of the Chinese shadow play, including its origin, development, and present situation. The second chapter focuses on its various components in depth, including shadow puppet production, accompaniment instruments, singing styles, scripts, roles, etc. The third chapter pays attention to the performance, introducing the stage performance effect, the division of actors, related customs, etc. The fourth chapter examines the Beijing opera,

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{8} Wei Liqun, \textit{Chinese Shadow Puppet Art}. \textsuperscript{9} Ibid.}
another intangible cultural heritage in China, as a comparative case study to explore its background, performance, development, and protection policies. In the last chapter, the author introduces the difficulties of conserving the art of the shadow play in relation to the successful conservation efforts of the Beijing Opera and the guidance of UNESCO for intangible cultural heritage, to explore the methods suitable for the conservation of the shadow play. In this process, Wei Liqun, director of the shadow play art committee of the Chinese Folk Writers and Artists Association, and Zhang Xiangdong, the head of Xiangdong shadow play troupe, provided valuable first-hand resources and experience for the protection and development of this art form.
Chapter 1: The Background of the Chinese Shadow Play

As a performing art, shadow play has developed for thousands of years. It has played an essential role in Chinese cultural heritage and occupies a place in world civilization. This chapter will discuss the background of the shadow play, including its origin, development, early spread abroad, and its different periods of development.

Different Theories on the Origin of Chinese Shadow Play

The primary factor in the formation of shadow play is the relationship between light and shadow. In China, the earliest research on the principle of shadow science can be traced back to the Warring States Period in 475 BC. However, the theoretical research was not perfect and could not be popularized by the masses at beginning. The Chinese shadow play has a very long history and lacks accurate historical records, so the origin of this art is still controversial. Here are some common explanations of the origin of the Chinese shadow play.

According to the first theory, the shadow play originated in Shaanxi province in the Western Han Dynasty (206BC to 24AD). It is said that during the reign of the Chinese emperor Liu Heng, the main task of the maids in the palace was to look after the little prince besides

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serving the emperor. At that time, to comfort the little prince crying, the servants thought of a way to cut the Chinese parasol leaves into human shapes and show their shadows on the screen window to amuse the prince. This kind of entertainment later spread to the folk communities, leading to the emergence of the shadow play.¹³

In the second theory, the shadow play began in Xiaoyi Village, Shanxi Province, Northern Wei Dynasty (386 to 534 AD).¹⁴ It is said that there was a stone tablet in the village temple, which recorded in detail that Xia Zi, the educator at that time, imparted knowledge to others in the form of shadow play. As a result, the local people inferred that Xia Zi invented this performance, and the Xiaoyi village was the birthplace of the shadow play. However, the historical stone tablet has disappeared, and there is no clear documentary record of its existence, so the authenticity of this theory needs to be verified.¹⁵

The third theory is that the shadow play began in Xi’an in the Tang Dynasty (618 to 907).¹⁶ This is the point put forward by Qi Baishi, a famous Chinese painter. He analyzed that Xi’an has been the capital of China for hundreds of years. At that time, because the emperor Xuanzong loved art and music very much, many innovations in these fields arose in Xi’an.¹⁷ In

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addition, the local famous shadow puppets were more refined than those in other regions, and the actor’s performing and singing skills were more ingenious. Though there is no documentation, many Chinese historians think this hypothesis is reasonable.\(^{18}\)

Although there are many different opinions about the origin of the Chinese shadow play, it is recorded that the shadow play reached its peak in the Northern Song Dynasty (960 to 1127).\(^{19}\) However, with the entry of Jurchen at the end of that period, shadow play artists were forced to spread everywhere and gradually formed the performance of different styles throughout the country.\(^{20}\) The Jidong style of the shadow play was formed by the artists escaping from the north. However, the constant wars and disputes in the north at that time, coupled with the continuous droughts, floods, locusts, and other natural disasters, led to the stagnation of the shadow play. This situation was not alleviated until the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). At that time, the Emperor, Chengzu, settled in the north and encouraged the southerners to move to the north with Hebei as the center. This practice stimulated the north's economic development, brought the south's drama to the north, and gave the northern art a chance to develop. Since then, the Jidong School of shadow play has developed gradually.\(^{21}\)

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Chinese Shadow Play Spread Overseas

The shadow play has developed in many parts of the world, such as in India, Thailand, Myanmar, Indonesia, and Japan. Its scripts, forms, and styles in different countries have their typical features, but there is no doubt that shadow play originated from China in terms of time.\(^{22}\)

In the early thirteenth century, China was ruled by the Mongolian army led by Genghis Khan. As one of the performances to boost morale at that time, the shadow play was widely spread in the military. Later, with the western expedition of the Mongolian Army, the Chinese shadow play spread to Persia, Arabia, Turkey, and other places. By the mid fourteenth century, the shadow play had been introduced to Java, Siam, Myanmar, Japan, Malaya, Indonesia, Egypt, and other places, which started the spread of Chinese culture overseas.\(^{23}\)

By the fifteenth century, the shadow play developed further overseas, especially in Egypt, and became the most popular entertainment in the Saladin court of Sudan. Later, after the Turkish conqueror Selim led his army to conquer Egypt, shadow play actors were brought from Cairo to Constantinople. At that time, Turks used camel skin as the primary material for carving shadow puppets.\(^{24}\) In the second half of the eighteenth century, shadow puppetry gradually entered Europe. In 1767, Du Holde, a French priest who preached in China, brought all the forms and production methods of the shadow play back to France to perform and publicize this

\(^{23}\) Ibid., 12.
\(^{24}\) Qin Zhenan and Hong Chuantian, *Zhongguo Piyingxi* [Chinese Shadow Puppetry], (Taipei: Taibei shuquan chubanshe, 2001).
performance in Paris and Marseille. In the following year, the shadow play was introduced to London, England. In the time since, the Chinese shadow play has become a worldwide art.\textsuperscript{25}

It is worth noting that the shadow play was most popular in Germany among the European countries. In 1774, German poet John Wolfgang Goethe brought this art to Germany and personally presided over the performances. In addition, on his birthday of August 28, 1781, he performed his works "The Life of Minawa" and "The Judgment of Midas" in the form of a shadow play. Goethe’s esteem for the art of the shadow play resulted in German shadow play art development. In addition, in 1957, Dr. Myanmar from Germany made a memorable trip to Beijing, Xi’an, Chengdu, and other Chinese places to learn how to create a shadow play. The German "Sanmeiban Shadow Play Troupe" has already performed in many countries in Europe and Asia. Up to now, the music of German shadow play has still retained some Chinese features.\textsuperscript{26}

Moreover, Germany also has the most extensive collection of shadow puppets in Europe. In 1931, Carl Eger, an art dealer, bought these collections from a shadow play troupe in Chengdu. With the death of Eger in 1933, his son Gottlieb Eger inherited these collections and brought them back to Germany. Although some of the displays were destroyed or lost during World War II, most were well preserved. Today, about 340 puppet bodies and 520 heads, weapons, and scenes are kept in the puppetry Museum of the Munich Municipal Museum,


\textsuperscript{26} “German Chinese Forum,” quoted in Wei Lijun: \textit{Zhongguo Piying}, 11.
making it an essential collection of shadow play art outside China.²⁷ There are also collections of Chinese shadow puppets in the Swedish Museum of National Anthropology, the French Film Museum, the British Museum in London, the American Natural History Museum in New York, the Boston Art Museum, and some university galleries. Because of the influence of the Chinese shadow play in the world, some film historians even regard this art as the forerunner of film invention.²⁸

**The Pinnacle of the Shadow Play: The Qing Dynasty**

At the beginning of the Qing Dynasty (1636-1912), the shadow play developed rapidly and prospered. Government officials set up private shadow play teams and hired shadow actors at that time. Even soldiers stationed in various provinces would take shadow play teams to the battlefields to perform during wartime. During that period, the shadow play spread all over the country, from palaces to villages. People always invited shadow play teams to perform at festivals, sacrifices, weddings, and funerals. The well-known scholars also wrote plays for the shadow play to enrich the content of the scripts and make the performance more diversified.²⁹

In the middle and late period of the Qing Dynasty, with the decline of the government and foreign invasion, the shadow play in the palace stagnated. However, the art was still popular. Wealthy patrons cultivated private shadow puppet troupes. The shadow play was very popular

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because this art is closely related to local culture, geography, and customs. For example, popular folk songs could inspire shadow play songs. At this time, the popularity of the shadow play reached its peak.\textsuperscript{30}

In the early years of the Republic of China, with the overthrow of the Qing government and the establishment of the new national government, earth-shaking changes took place in China's political system, which led to significant changes in the situation of the shadow play. Li Dazhao was one of the revolutionary pioneers and a native of Laoting County in Eastern Hebei Province.\textsuperscript{31} He wrote a play against the Japanese aggressors, “an Zhonggen’s assassination of ITO.” This method of propagating patriotism to the masses in the form of a shadow play further expanded the influence of this art and turned it into an ideological and political propaganda tool.\textsuperscript{32}

\textbf{The Role of Shadow Play during the Chinese-Japanese War}

When the "September 18th Incident" occurred in 1931, the Japanese army invaded Northern Military Camp in Shenyang, China.\textsuperscript{33} Because of the nonresistance policy issued by Chiang Kai Shek, three northeast provinces were quickly occupied, and people fled for their

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{30} Ibid., 58.
  \item \textsuperscript{31} Li Dazhao is a pioneer of the Communist movement in China, a Marxist, a proletarian revolutionary, and one of the main founders of the Communist Party of China.
  \item \textsuperscript{32} Wei Gexin, “Laoting Piying” [Laoting Shadow Play], \textit{Laoting Wenshi}, no. 5 (December 1990).
  \item \textsuperscript{33} The September 18th Incident was an incident in which the Japanese Kwantung Army suddenly attacked Shenyang and occupied Northeast China by force.
\end{itemize}
lives. During this period, most shadow play artists were unable to perform and fled to other places.

With the "Lugouqiao Incident" on July 7, 1937, the Japanese army launched a larger-scale war of aggression, and the North of China soon became a Japanese colony. During the Japanese occupation, the shadow play suffered an unprecedented blow. Countless props were destroyed, many shadow play troupes were forced to disband, and actors were displaced. Only a small number of people that fled to remote areas were able continue the art. Moreover, the “pseudo-army” also restricted the play and prohibited all performances with the content of resisting aggression or colonists. In theaters, seats in the middle of the front row were forbidden to be sold but reserved for Japanese troops or police. During the performance, the theater staff had to prepare food for them, such as tea, melon seeds, fruit, etc.; otherwise, it was very likely for them to damage the theater and arrest the workers. Even some famous shadow play artists were in a very challenging situation. For example, in 1941, when Gao Rongjie, a famous shadow play actor, performed in Shenyang, a pseudo-policeman fought with people in

34 The leader of the Kuomintang and the supreme commander of the Chinese theater During World War II; Hei Longjiang, Ji Lin, and Liao Ning Provinces.
38 Wei Liqun, Jidong Shadow Play, 24.
the theater because there was no place reserved for his father. He detained Gao Rongjie and did not release him until he paid 50 RMB in compensation.\(^{39}\) Such events happened every month during that time.\(^ {40}\)

Due to the persecution of the Japanese and pseudo troops, many shadow artists turned to the Eighth Route Army led by the Communist Party and joined the anti-Japanese literary and art groups. With the victory of the Anti-Japanese riot in eastern Hebei in July 1938, the revolutionary forces broke into parts and concentrated on the battlefield behind the enemy. During this period, an Anti-Japanese personage, Chuai Zhenbang, organized a seven-member shadow troupe to perform a shadow play as a cover to carry out Anti-Japanese activities secretly. At the end of 1940, with the government's approval, the "Great Wall Film Club" was established and continued to perform shadow plays during the war. At that time, the shadow club members were armed. However, due to the large gap between them and the Japanese weapons, whenever they found traces of Japanese troops, they had to use the terrain to fight guerrilla warfare with the enemy. In addition to fighting, under the protection of the Chinese army, they would also perform shadow play at the junction of the enemy area and the liberated zone to publicize the Anti-Japanese belief to the masses.\(^ {41}\) [Fig. 1.1].


\(^{41}\) Liqun Wei, \textit{Jidong Shadow Play}, 27.
For such resistance, the Japanese army was furious and sent many troops to eliminate the shadow clubs, which gave the club a chance to lure the enemy. On one occasion, the shadow troupe performed “Shooting Traitor” in a village outside Qian’an city. During the performance, actors scolded the Japanese army and traitors to anger the enemy out of the city. But when the enemy arrived, the soldiers of the Eighth Route Army ambushed the enemy, killed, and captured more than 170 Japanese soldiers and pseudo-troops. As a result, the shadow play served as a powerful tool against the Japanese army.

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43 Qian’an City, a county-level city directly under the central government of Hebei Province, is in the northeast of Hebei Province. It was one of the strongholds in the Japanese War of aggression against China.
The Shadow Play during the Cultural Revolution

After Japan surrendered in 1945, the eight-year war between China and Japan was finally over. The Communist Party established the People's Republic of China in 1949. Since then, shadow artists all over the country have been actively reformed to adapt to the development of the times. However, in 1966, the Great Cultural Revolution occurred. During the ten-year turmoil, "Breaking the Four Old" activity had dealt a devastating blow to almost all Chinese folk culture and art. Many shadow props, puppets, and scripts were burned, and many famous shadow artists were publicly criticized, resulting in the long-term disappearance of this performance art.

During that period, all shadow troupes stopped performing, and most were even forced to disband. Even worse, countless famous shadow artists were persecuted. For example, at the end of 1966, Gao Rongjie died of cerebral hemorrhage due to long-term public insult; In the same year, Li Yunting, the head of a famous shadow play troupe, was beaten, leading to blindness. In July 1969, many shadow puppet troupes were sent to Majiagou Coal Mine for compulsory labor. Under cruel treatment, most shadow puppet club members were persecuted to death, and the clubs were forced to dissolve. It was not until the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976 that

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48 Ibid., 494.
shadow puppetry gradually resumed performing. However, during this period, many scripts were lost, the props of shadow play were destroyed, and shadow play artists were injured.49

**Overview of the Shadow Play’s Current Situation**

After the Third Plenary Session of the 11th CPC Central Committee in December 1978, the government shifted its focus to economic and cultural development and severely cracked down on cultural disrespect.50 Like other intangible cultural heritage projects, the shadow play is gradually on the road to revival. Old shadow artists were committed to training apprentices to impart their skills. In addition, the government lifted the ban on some traditional scripts and encouraged shadow puppet troupes to create modern and children's plays to stimulate the diversity and vitality of the audience.51

However, with the development of high-tech imaging technology and the transformation of social customs, people's cultural level and art appreciation habits are also constantly changing. Although a shadow plays' local dialect can still attract a group of people, the aging trend of its audience is apparent. The number of young people paying attention to the shadow play is also rapidly decreasing.52

49 Ibid.
52 Ibid.
At the beginning of the twenty-first century, scholars conducted a questionnaire survey on nearly ten thousand shadow artists. The result shows that 90% of the artists are over 60 years old, and most of them are too old to perform. Many famous shadow troupes no longer exist, and many classic scripts and props were lost because of improper preservation. Only a few professional troupes are left in China, and the proportion of middle-aged or young actors is tiny. The performance frequency of shadow plays decreased rapidly; only some people in remote areas continue to watch them. From the analysis of the current situation, the shadow play is on the verge of extinction.

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Ibid.
Chapter 2: A Regional Case Study: The Jidong Shadow Play

The art of shadow play consists of different parts. This chapter will take the Jidong shadow play as the representative to introduce its singing styles, scripts, characters, and the shadow puppets production.

The Singing of a Shadow Play

The singing of the early shadow play is primarily simple, something like monks chanting sutras. The modes of the shadow play’s singing can be divided into two categories: “Gong mode” and “Shang mode.” Shadow play artists also call them "singing with the small voice and the big voice," which are used for the female and male roles respectively. In traditional Chinese drama, roles are divided into Sheng, Dan, Jing, and Chou. Commonly used tunes include “Ping, Hua, Qiliang, Bei, Huan Yang, Yin Yang tones, etc.” These tones also correspond to their respective roles.

"Ping" was created by Zhou Wenyou, an old shadow play artist. This singing style is euphemistic, powerful, and beautiful; "Hua" belongs to Dan Roles' unique singing style. Originated by the old opera artist Miao Youyi, this has added some cheerful singing techniques to the traditional melody, suitable for dramas with compact rhythm, clever plot, and joy; "Qiliang" is a unique tone created by Lao Feng, an artist in the Qing Dynasty. This way of singing is suitable for the desolate Dan singing. Its performance

55 The name of the opera role, Sheng refers to men; Dan refers to a woman; Jing refers to a strong or rough man; Chou refers to the performance of funny characters, nose whitewashed, said clown, small face, etc. Wei Liqun, Jidong Shadow Play.
56 Different tones have different singing characteristics and are suitable for different roles. Wei Liqun, Jidong Shadow Play, 48.
character is the interweaving of tears and silence, grief, and anger, actors should show sadness in singing; Another kind of sadness tone called Bei tone, with a strong melody, can show the complicated emotions of the characters in detail, and is suitable for all kinds of characters. The function of expression is crying and sorrow; Huan Yang tone is a unique tone of Dan's character, which is used in the process when the protagonist wakes up after being frightened and fainted by people around him; Yin Yang tune is mainly used by women and is suitable for depicting the murders of people who have died. The tone is high and angry.  

During the performance, the actors always sing with a strong regional accent. In addition, another essential feature in shadow play singing is plug-in singing. After the sandalwood board starts, the first word of a sentence begins to sing in the second half of the beat, but it is forbidden to start singing at the beginning, which is a rare rule in other types of singing.  

In the development history of the Chinese shadow play, singing is an indispensable part of the art. Shadow play artists in different regions gradually established an independent singing system with local characteristics by constantly improving and innovating singing skills and exploring rhythm. As a result, the singing style of the Jidong shadow play is mainly based on the local singing style of the Laoting Opera.  

Laoting Opera has a unique tune system, well-known for its gentle and pleasant sound and strong local flavor. Its early singing music is simple in melody, dull in ending, and slow in rhythm, like Buddhist chanting. Later, the Laoting Opera gradually absorbed the local folk

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57 Wei Liqun, *Chinese Shadow Puppet*, 293.
58 The first word of a sentence is sung in the first half of the beat. Wei Liqun, *Jidong Shadow Play*, 46.
60 Laoting Opera originated in Hebei Province, a county subordinate to Tangshan city. Laoting accent is also a local dialect.
songs, slang, and other kinds of music, forming a beautiful melody and unique dialect singing method. The intensity of the "Laoting" accent became one of the criteria for art critics measuring the performance.61

From 1920 to 1930, due to the expansion of the city and the needs of people's cultural life, shadow puppet troupes in various counties were no longer limited to the local area but flocked to other areas to expand the performance market. However, due to the differences between local dialects and folk music, the audience had different appreciation and evaluation of a shadow play performance, and there were gradually contradictions among actors from different regions. The singing of the Jidong shadow play has gradually developed into the eastern, western, and northern schools with the Luanhe river as the boundary.62 The main difference between them is the accent of singing and reading. The eastern and northern groups use the Laoting accent as the standard, but the latter has a more robust local flavor; the western group sings with a Tangshan accent. In addition, most counties east of the Luanhe river sing elegantly and happily. To the west of the river, every county has a bold and unrestrained singing style with a fast pace.63

In addition, there is a critical singing feature in the Jidong shadow play - actors gently pinch their throat with fingers when singing. [Fig. 2.1]. This skill originated from a Qing

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62 Luanhe River is the only river flowing into the sea from the Bohai Sea. Originated from Fengning County, Hebei Province, it flows into the Bohai Sea in Laoting County; Wei Liqun, *Jidong Shadow Play*, 62.
Dynasty shadow puppet actor named Tian. He was unable to perform generally because of his throat injury. So instead, he tried to hold the voice with his fingers to control the vocal cord and gradually created a soft, delicate, beautiful, and natural sound. Once this kind of voice was performed, it was loved by the masses, and this way of singing was also popular.64


64 Ibid.
When it comes to the accompaniment of Jidong shadow play, there were only percussion and no stringed instruments in the early days. Percussion instruments include “Bell Touching, Cymbals, Nao, Small Double Bell, Cloud Gongs, Drums and so on.”65 [Fig. 2.2, 2.3, 2.4].

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65 Bell Touching, one of the traditional Chinese musical instruments. Two for a pair. The touch clock is made of brass. When playing, use the rope passing through the small hole, one for each hand, and strike each other to pronounce. “Peng Zhong” [Bell Touching], Baidu Encyclopedia, accessed December 20, 2021, https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E7%A2%B0%E9%92%9F/4396871?fr=aladdin; Nao is a kind of copper percussion instrument in ancient China, with a huge shape. Nao is used to mean that the mouth is facing the sky and the hand is facing down. When it is knocked to one side, the sound is powerful, broad, and pleasant. “Nao,” Baidu Encyclopedia, accessed December 20, 2021, https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E5%A4%A7%E9%93%99/3995587?fr=aladdin; Cymbal, round, protruding in the middle, made of copper. Big cymbals have a loud voice, primarily used for ensemble, drama, song, and dance accompaniment. “Cymbal,” Baidu Encyclopedia, accessed December 20, 2021, https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E5%A4%A7%E9%92%B9; Cloud Gong appeared in the Tang Dynasty. Folk is also known as nine-tone Gong. It is one of the few gongs that can play music. “Yun Luo” [Cloud Gong], Baidu Encyclopedia, accessed December 20, 2021, https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E4%BA%91%E9%94%A3/342447?fr=aladdin; Wei Liqun, Chinese Shadow Puppet, 293.
The singer can use a Ba and small double bell in the performance or use the giant Cymbal and the drums simultaneously. However, it was not until the late Qing Dynasty (1636-1912) that
the Jidong shadow play was played with four-stringed instruments, dulcimer, Sanxian, and Erhu, etc.\textsuperscript{66}

\textit{The Creation and Significance of a Shadow Play Script}

The content of a Chinese shadow play performance has continued the tradition of ancient scriptures, history, and stories of ghosts and gods, including the historical romance and folklore from the Spring and Autumn Period (770 BC to 476 BC) and the Warring States Period (447 BC to 221 BC) to Ming (1368 to 1683) and Qing (1636-1912) Dynasties.\textsuperscript{67} Most of the stories are about the rise and fall of the feudal dynasties, Chinese traditional feudal morality, and folk traditional customs, which represent the development and changes of China.\textsuperscript{68}

Although the origin of the shadow play is still controversial, its formal singing style and content are closely related to the famous "folk saying" in the Tang Dynasty (618-907). In other words, the script of a shadow play may have originated from Buddhism in this period. "Folk saying" was a kind of rap activity conducted by monks in temples to attract people. The monks translated the Buddhist scriptures into easy-to-understand vernacular and interspersed some convincing historical stories and folk tales in the process of rap. This is to popularize Buddhism so that audiences of all ages can understand it. Later, this kind of rap gradually broke away from

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{66} Wei Liqun, \textit{Chinese Shadow Puppet}, 293.} \\
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{67} The spring and Autumn period is the first half of the Eastern Zhou Dynasty, that is, from 770 BC to 476 BC. Jianmin Du, \textit{Chronology of imperial lineages in China} (Jinan: QiLu Press, 1995); The Warring States period was a period of significant change in Chinese history after the spring and Autumn period, from 477 BC to 221 BC. Sima Qian, \textit{Historical Records} (Beijing: Zhong Hua Book Company, 1959).} \\
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{68} Wei Liqun, \textit{Jidong Shadow Play}, 88.}
the Buddhist sutras and became its own system. In this way, this expression form was no longer confined to monks in temples, professional "rap musicians" began to appear in public. The purpose of rap was also no longer limited to spreading Buddhism but used for performances at some major festivals, funerals, and weddings.69

The form of shadow play scripts can be roughly divided into two types: with and without words. Most oral scripts are derived from folk rap literature, such as "storytelling."70 These scripts have only the story's synopsis, no specific lyrics, which is similar to the outline of the story taught orally by the elderly artists. When performing such scripts, the shadow artists have to remember the plot of the story before the performance, while others need to improvise puppet performances based on singing. In this kind of performance, it is necessary to highlight the voice of a prominent actor along with the team's voice.71

Most dramas with words were written by literati in the Ming (1368 to 1644) and Qing Dynasties (1636 to 1912), especially for shadow play. Because the rulers loved opera and took it as the primary means of propaganda, opera scripts entered an essential stage of development and prosperity. This kind of script contains chanting words, commonly known as "Yingjuan" or "Jingjuan Book," and most of these were long stories. It usually takes more than a month for a story to be fully presented. In the plot, the characters are complex and complete, the structure and rhythm of the script are changeable. In scripts, there are dialogues and singing lines of each

70 Storytelling is an ancient Chinese traditional oral performance art form, which became popular in Song Dynasty.
71 Wei Liqun, Chinese Shadow Puppet, 78.
character and hints for the actions of different characters during the performance, which are very vivid and detailed.72

One of the pioneers of script creation at that time was Gao Shuyao, a famous "Xiucai."73 He lived in Laoting County during the Daoguang period (1636-1912) of the Qing Dynasty.74 He loved poetry and songs and collected many classic historical books. However, due to his integrity and stubbornness, he often had conflicts with the county magistrate, so he was dismissed. After leaving the government, he founded a private school in the countryside. In addition to teaching, he also wrote many famous scripts, such as “Er Du Mei,” “San Xian Zhuan Chu Shibiao,” and “Qingyun sword,” all scripts used to denounce evil and promote justice. He also created some new singing forms for a shadow play, enriched the repertoire, promoted the innovation of music singing, and made the shadow play flourish.75

In addition, the role of a shadow play in the dissemination of ideas was also reflected in the Republic of China. In the second year of the Republic of China, Sun Huanlun, the magistrate of Laoting County, employed Zhang Tingmeng, a scholar, to improve shadow plays. He deleted the backward feudal thoughts in the traditional dramas and added the views of expelling the Tatars and restoring China's popular beliefs to help social education.76 [Fig 2.5].
Figure 2.5. Traditional shadow play scripts. Photo by author.
The lyric's rhythm in the script is also very special. Songs can be divided into verse and prose, with prose as narrative and verse as lyrics. Various plays have their matching verses, and the actors can increase or decrease according to the situation. The lyrics in a shadow play are very particular about rhythm; that is, the pronunciation of the last word in every sentence should rhyme so that it sounds smooth and pleasant. The pronunciation position of the word is different, and different mouth shapes are formed, and the rhyme of the end of each sentence should make a unified standard, such as closing and opening of the mouth.\textsuperscript{77}

\textit{Modeling and Character Features of Shadow Puppets}

The Jidong shadow play, as one of the most representative shadow play styles in northern China, has developed for nearly one thousand years and finally formed its unique artistic modeling system.\textsuperscript{78} Its shadow puppet is famous for rigorous structure, exquisite carving, and gorgeous colors. However, because the shadow puppet is flat and needs to adapt to the relationship between the characters in the play, its modeling must be characterized by exaggeration, deformation, simplicity, etc.\textsuperscript{79} In addition, these silhouettes have also been influenced by folk papercuts, temple sculptures, frescoes, and traditional Chinese drama costumes, as well as stylized facial makeup and decorative patterns.\textsuperscript{80}

\textsuperscript{77} Wei Liqun, \textit{Jidong Shadow Play}, 95.
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid., 124.
\textsuperscript{79} Wei Liqun, Chinese Shadow Puppet, 313.
\textsuperscript{80} Wei Liqun, \textit{Jidong Shadow Play}, 134.
The shapes of characters are rich and varied, typical images of various industries carved according to plot and performance effect. In addition to characters, shadow puppets also include thousands of scene props, such as terraces, pavilions, attics, Stone trees, sedan chairs, various weapons, cloudy and rainy weather, and various animal characters.\textsuperscript{81} [Fig. 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9].

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid., 124.
Figure 2.6. Female shadow puppet character. Photo by author.
Figure 2.7. Flag props. Photo by author.
Figure 2.8. Long sword weapon props. Photo by author.
Traditional shadow play troupes use special shadow play boxes to hold puppets. There are about 500 puppets’ heads and 100 bodies in a small shadow box, and nearly 2,000 heads and more than 200 bodies in the big film box. [Fig. 2.10]. Body and head can be matched to form different characters before performances.82

82 Zhang Xiangdong (Head of Xiangdong shadow play Troupe) in discussion with the author, June 2021.
From the perspective of role classification, the faces of the puppets’ heads in the Jidong style can be divided into several categories: Sheng, Dan, Jing, Binjiao, Da, Chou, and Yao. [Fig. 2.11]. Although names may vary in different regions, it is generally like the roles in traditional Chinese opera.83

- Sheng refers to the male characters in the play, which are divided into scholar roles and martial roles. Their faces are all hollowed out with the bridge of the nose.
- Binjiao refers to the elderly male role, like the facial makeup of the Sheng role, but with a long beard.
- Dan refers to the female characters in the play. According to the age of the

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characters, their personalities can be subdivided into “Qingyi,” that is, the dignified and steady young and middle-aged women; “Huadan,” a young and lively girl; “Sword-and-Horse Dan,” a female general or marshal in the battlefield; “Martial Dan” is a woman or spirit with excellent martial arts; “Old Dan,” a senior woman.

- Jing refers to the young, brave, rough personality, divided into black, red, green facial makeup.
- Da refers to impressive leaders with big eyes and big beards. Such as Cao Cao, Bao Zheng, etc.\(^\text{84}\)
- Chou the characters are funny, witty, or cunning. Generally, they have a flattering smile and white circles around their eyes.
- Yao refers to all kinds of monsters, immortals, etc., in the play, with complex and diverse facial makeup.\(^\text{85}\)

\(^{84}\) Cao Cao, a classic figure in shadow play. He was the founder of the Wei state at the end of the Eastern Han Dynasty. He was also an outstanding statesman, militarist, litterateur, calligrapher, and poet in ancient China; Bao Zheng, a classic figure in shadow play. He was the censor of the Northern Song Dynasty, whose primary function was to monitor officials and solve cases.

\(^{85}\) Wei Liqun, *Jidong Shadow Play*, 125.
Figure 2.11. Facial makeup of different characters in Jidong shadow play. Source: Wei Liqun, Jidong Shadow Play, 2009, 125-126.

1. Young Dan’s face, unmarried girl.
2. Hua Dan facial makeup, the image of young or middle-aged women.
3. Ugly Dan’s face, female clown role.
4. Yao Dan’s face, a female clown role above middle age.
5. Young Sheng’s face, young man.
6. Old Sheng’s face, older male roles.
7. Red Jing’s face, hero roles of valor and integrity.
8. Black Jing’s face, general in the army.
9. Old Chou’s face, older but funny characters.
10. Bearded, tanned, and majestic leaders.
11. Bearded, white-skinned, treacherous, and sinister leadership roles.
12. Monster face.
Generally speaking, "Xiao Sheng" and "Xiao Dan" are hollow faces. A long nose bridge summarizes the side face line from forehead to nose tip. Eyebrows and eyes are connected in a ring shape. The mouth is simplified into a short red line, and the chin is treated at right angles. The differences between men and women mainly lie in headdresses, buns, earrings, and so on. The facial makeup of the militant figures is generally characterized by exaggerated eyes, bold eyebrows, and horizontal stripes. Even nose hair and ear hair are highlighted. The clowns' face is usually grinning, with white eyes around his eyes; Others carved scars on the top of their heads and plastered their sideburns to vilify their image.86

In addition, hats are also an important feature of puppet head modeling. There are many types of hats worn by different figures, such as helmets, crowns, headscarves, hats, and buns. For example, military commanders mostly wear helmets; Officials and Buddhas wear the crown. The headscarves and hats have various shapes and are worn mainly by ordinary people. According to the various types mentioned above of faces and multiple combinations of crowns and hairpins, the heads of shadow puppets with different identities and characteristics, such as emperors, generals, gifted scholars, beauties, people, gods, demons, monks, and Taoist priests, are produced.87

86 Wei Liqun, Chinese Shadow Puppet, 313.
87 Wei Liqun, Jidong Shadow Play, 128.
Apart from the shadow puppets' heads, the puppets’ bodies are also very abundant. According to the style, it can be divided into python, robe, leaning, armor, mask shirt, shirt, coffin, clothes, trotters, etc.\(^{88}\) [Fig. 2.12].

- **Python Robe**: it is the official uniform of the emperor and the general in the shadow play. The robe is embroidered with a Python shape, so it has this name. It has yellow, white, red, green, black, and other colors. Among them, the yellow robe was worn by the emperor, old loyal officials worn white, black was worn by treacherous officials, red and green were worn by ordinary court ministers.
- **Robe**: including brocade robe, leather robe, “Buzi” robe, and black robe. Wealthy businessmen wore the first two, "Buzi" robes by low-level officials and black robes by poor scholars.
- **Kao**: for officers and men's clothing, wearing armor, with back flag.
- **Armor**: it is also a uniform for officers and soldiers. It is like Kao clothes, but it doesn't carry a back protecting flag.
- **Traditional Chinese cover shirt**: the official dress worn by the marshal, with armor on the inside and boa on the outside.
- **Traditional Chinese T-shirt**: worn by officials at all levels of the imperial court.
- **Cloak**: refers to the open style coat, worn mainly by heroes or the elderly.
- **Clothing**: including cassock, crime clothing, filial piety clothing, etc. for various special roles or situations.
- **Small “Paozi”**: clothes for children.\(^{89}\)

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\(^{88}\) Ibid.

\(^{89}\) Ibid., 128-129.

1. Red Python Robe, the general clothing of court ministers.
2. White Python Robe symbolizes the clothing of loyal officials of the court.
3. Female Python Robe, the dress of a queen or highest-ranking imperial concubines.
4. Female Kao, the dress of the female general.
5. Traditional Chinese cover shirt, marshal's official uniform.
6. Yellow mandarin jacket, the costume of the leader of the imperial court guard.
7. Scholar shirt, the official uniform of civil servants in the imperial court.
8. Traditional Chinese sleeve shirt, clothing of ancient scholars.
9. Male Cloak, clothing of martial arts figures.
10. Taoist Robe, a robe worn by Taoist.
11. The costumes of male jugglers, the legs above the knee joint are separated and can be used for big strides and splits.
The difference between male and female roles is also reflected in the feet in the costume modeling of shadow puppets. Men are matched with combat boots, facing and flat boots according to their identity; Women are mostly shown in inch shoes, and a few are embroidered shoes.  

According to all kinds of facial makeup, crowns, hairstyles, and the matching with the bodies, the shadow puppets with various identities and characteristics, such as emperors, gifted scholars, beauties, people, deities, and monks, are produced to adapt to the multiple performances. Therefore, these shadow figures have a profound and extensive basis for people's appreciation of the folk. Moreover, once they appear, the audience can immediately recognize all kinds of figures.

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90 In ancient Chinese aesthetics, women's feet are smaller and more beautiful, so women's foot binding is a tradition. This is when women were young, people wrapped their feet tightly with a cloth to make them deformed and smaller. Therefore, ancient women's shoes mainly were inch shoes. This feudal habit was abolished during the Republic of China. Zhang Zichen, Zhongwai minshuxue cidian [Chinese and foreign folklore dictionary], (Zhejiang: Renmin chubanshe, 1991), 46-50; Wei Liqun, Jidong Shadow Play, 132.

91 Ibid., 134.
The Application of Colors in Jidong Shadow Puppets

Color is an essential supplement to the beauty of the shadow puppets. Traditional shadow play artists are not limited by specific patterns when dealing with colors. Instead, they play based on conventional color concepts according to the texture and role characteristics of the shadow puppet itself, forming a bright, gorgeous, contrasting, and harmonious artistic effect.92

The contrast and coordination of Chinese traditional five colors, red, yellow, blue, white, and black, are fully reflected in shadow puppetry.93 However, blue is often replaced by green in the Jidong style, just because in the past, the performances of shadow play were illuminated by oil lamps, and the colors of blue and black under the light were too close. In addition, using green instead of blue can also increase the contrast between red and green and make the characters look brighter. In this way, the five colors in the Jidong shadow play became red, yellow, green, white, and black. Because the hollow part of the puppet appears white on the screen, but the puppet material is yellow, the practical colors are only red, green, and black, rendered with the carving edge as the boundary and juxtaposed with each other.94

In addition, the color of the puppets' face also represents the character characteristics, such as red face for loyalty, black face for integrity, white face for cunning, and green face for

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92 Teng Yuntao and Yan Xiaokun, Changli Piyingxi [Changli Shadow Play], (Beijing: China Drama Publishing House, 2014), 176.
94 Ibid.
bandits and monsters. The coordination and collocation of these traditional colors make shadow play produce colorful artistic effects.95

Carving methods and skills of Shadow Puppets in the Jidong Style

In shadow play art, carving puppets is one of the most critical parts because the vividness of the figure image is directly related to the effect of performance. The shadow carving skills recorded in the Historical Records can be traced back to the Song Dynasty (960 to 1279).96 At the earliest time, people used paper as puppet-making material; Later, with the progress of technology, people chose sheepskin as the primary production material and colored paint as decoration.97

During the Wanli period of the Ming Dynasty (1573 to 1620), Huang Suzhi improved the materials for making shadow puppets.98 In the beginning, he made puppets out of thick paper, but later his disciples used sheepskin and donkey skin instead.99 This is because donkey skin has many advantages, such as transparent, thin, easy to carve, easy to color, strong in toughness,

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95 Ibid., 177.
96 The Song Dynasty was divided into two stages: the Northern Song Dynasty and the Southern Song Dynasty, from 960 to 1279. Guangming, et al., China Encyclopedia, “Song Dynasty” (Beijing: China Encyclopedia press, 2011).
97 Wu Zimu, Meng Liang Lu [Dream of Song’s Memoirs], Song.
98 In ancient China, it was customary to use the emperor’s name in power as the year number. The Wanli year was from 1573 to July 1620, which was the Ming Emperor Zhu Yijun. This is also the longest-used year name in Ming Dynasty. Huang Renyu, Wanli shiwunian [Fifteen years of Wanli], (Shanghai: Shenghuo, Dushu, Xinzhi sanlian shudian, 1997).
99 Yuntao and Xiaokun, Changli Shadow Play, 181.
waterproof and anticorrosive, etc., so it has become the primary material for making shadow puppet and is still used today.\textsuperscript{100}

The carving process of shadow puppets in the Jidong style is rigorous, which can be divided into seven steps from material selection to production; scraping donkey skin, “Jiang” skin, cutting, carving, coloring, oiling, and assembly respectively.\textsuperscript{101} Each process is interrelated, among which “Jiang” skin and engraving are the most critical. The superb shaping process can make the carved puppets smooth even after one hundred years. Exquisite carving skills can also make puppets show beautiful rhythm and exquisite craftsmanship.\textsuperscript{102} The following is the specific process of the traditional manufacturing method.

The first step is scraping donkey skin: the primary material of puppets is animal skins, especially young donkeys’ skin. Because young donkeys have not been forced to work hard, their skin pores are thin and have excellent transparency. First, soak the peeled donkey skin in a vat for 24 hours in summer and five to seven days in winter, which requires the donkey skin to reach the degree of soft soaking.\textsuperscript{103} When peeling donkey skin, be careful not to let the blood get on the skin; otherwise, the blood will penetrate it, and the scraped skin will not be transparent.\textsuperscript{104}

After the leather is soaked, take it out and put it on a wooden frame made of logs, with the

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{101} Yuntao and Xiaokun, Changli Shadow Play, 180. \\
\textsuperscript{102} Ibid., 181. \\
\textsuperscript{103} Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{104} Yang Jinbo (Shadow puppet carver in Xiangdong shadow play Troupe) in discussion with the author, June 2021.
\end{flushright}
leather up, and scrape the residual meat inside the leather with a spatula. In this process, the scraper should not be too sharp to not break the skin.

After that, the scraped leather should be pierced along four sides, and the distance between each hole is about 3 to 5 inches. Then, use a small rope through the hole to tie the leather tightly to the wooden frame. Next, lean against the wall and dry the inside of the leather toward the sun, because it is not easy to dry if the hairy side faces the sun. After the leather is dry, scrape off the hair outside the donkey skin with a knife, and then scrape off the oil and meat inside the donkey skin. When scraping, the force should be balanced until the leather is clean and transparent to avoid knife marks. In winter, it is important to prevent the donkey skin from freezing; otherwise, the opacity of the finished product will affect the use. The thickness of the donkey skin shall be moderate; too thick will lead to poor transparency and blur the puppet image. The knife is always round and half-rolled, when shaving the skin, the craftsman will hold a needle in his mouth to sharpen the blade. Every time a leather set is scraped, the craftsman will hold the needle in one hand, hold the knife upside down in the other hand, and gently turn the handle to make the blade rotate along the needle bar to sharpen it. [Fig. 2.13].

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105 Yuntao and Xiaokun, Changli Shadow Play, 181.
106 Yang Jinbo, June 2021.
107 Yuntao and Xiaokun, Changli Shadow Play, 181.
The newly scraped donkey skin is called rawhide; it is not suitable to directly engrave shadow puppets. Although it has been strongly pulled on the wooden frame, the scraped donkey skin texture has not been destroyed, and it will shrink when exposed to water and become warped when exposed to wind and light. In addition, the rawhide is oily and difficult to color. To overcome the above challenges, craftsmen usually shape and degrease donkey skin before carving, called "Jiang" skin. Because traditional shadow play is performed under the oil lamp, puppets carved with rawhide are easy to bend when heated under the light. But the treated leather
is not only transparent, but also tricky to curl, and is not afraid of the oil lamp, the wind, and easy to color.\textsuperscript{108}

In the process of “Jiang” skin, the first step is to cut the scraped skin into the right size, then put the thick and thin skins into the water, finally take them out to dry after they are transparent. In this drying process, the floating water on the leather should be dried with absorbent articles first and cannot be directly exposed to the sun. When the water vapor on the leather is dried, fold it with a cotton cloth, place it on a wooden board and flatten it with a heavy stone. In this flattening process, the cotton cloth should be opened and dried for several minutes every few hours and then pressed again and again until the donkey skin is dry to make the skin soft.\textsuperscript{109} If pressed for too long and not opened for drying, it is easy for donkey skin to get moldy due to lack of contact with air.\textsuperscript{110} In addition, some artists also brush a layer of rice soup on leather so that it can be painted easily after carving.\textsuperscript{111}

The third step is to draw a draft, which is the basis of carving. Past artists have handed down many exquisite carving works and patterns used as samples for carving artists. Sculptors usually put leather on the pattern and use steel needles to outline characters on the leather according to the original picture. After that, cover the skin with a towel soaked with water. After the skin is soaked and softened, it can be carved with a knife. However, a few accomplished

\textsuperscript{108} Ibid., 182.
\textsuperscript{109} Ibid., 184.
\textsuperscript{110} Yang Jinbo, June 2021.
\textsuperscript{111} Yuntao and Xiaokun, Changli Shadow Play, 184.
sculptors can also create new shapes according to their needs.112 When dealing with the drawings of various parts of the puppet body, people should pay attention to the problem of "circle line" at the connecting parts; that is, the overlapping proportions of each part of the puppet body should be aligned according to the patterns, and the structure should be orderly.113

After the draft is drawn, skin selection will be carried out. Each part of a donkey skin has a different thickness, and it also has horizontal and vertical textures. It should be noted that when making shadow puppets, the skin must be used along its vertical texture; otherwise, the puppets are more likely to bend under the oil lamp, resulting in some curling and not sticking to the shadow screen. The characteristics of the materials selected for making different parts of puppets are also different. The upper part of the puppet’s body should be made of thin skin to adapt to the turning movement. The waist skin of the puppet is slightly thicker, and the lower part should be thick, so that the puppet made in this way will be straight and flat, and it will hang stably; Puppet heads require thin, moderate, and transparent leather. As for the upper arm, it needs thinner skin to adapt to flexible movements such as martial arts; For the puppet material of tables and chairs, the thickest part of donkey skin needs to be selected to ensure its stable placement.114

The next step is carving. In the Jidong style, the carving of shadow puppets is usually to carve two layers of donkey skins with one knife, which has high carving efficiency and saves time. The donkey skins of the same shape and size up and down are bound, holes are punched in

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112 Yang Jinbo, June 2021.
113 Yuntao and Xiaokun, *Changli Shadow Play*, 185.
114 Ibid., 185-186.
the corners, and fine leather silk is cut out to be introduced and fixed and then placed on a wax plate for carving.\textsuperscript{115} When carving, artists hold the knife handle with their thumb and forefinger, and push the knife forward along the line drawn by the steel needle against the back of the blade. Carving usually starts with the outline and then the face. When a long line is needed in carving, the engraver should not carve it to the end but must stop halfway and leave a small section of the interface to keep the puppet connected as a whole.\textsuperscript{116}

Commonly used carving knives have different sizes and blade shapes, which artists themselves usually make. [Fig. 2.14]. No matter what kind of carving blade is, it is necessary to carve the puppet according to the needs of different objects and shapes, which requires the edge to be neat, clean, and symmetrical. Attention to the 90-degree angle between the knife and the skin is required to avoid edges of the upper and lower puppets are different, and the lines are out of shape.\textsuperscript{117} [Fig. 2.15]. The carving of a shadow play puppet in the Jidong style is mainly done with a straight knife. According to the characters, two carving methods are adopted: "positive carving" or "negative carving." Positive engraving is to hollow out the puppet's face and leave the outline of each part; Negative carving is hollowing out the contour line, leaving the solid face.\textsuperscript{118}

\textsuperscript{115} Wax board is a small wooden board about 8 inches long and 5 inches wide, dug into a wooden trough. Only the edges around the board are left. Then it is mainly made of beeswax, added with a small amount of butter, heated, melted with an iron spoon, and mixed with the ash, and filled into the wooden trough. Yuntao and Xiaokun, \textit{Changli Shadow Play}, 185-186; Yuntao and Xiaokun, \textit{Changli Shadow Play}, 187.
\textsuperscript{116} Yang Jinbo, June 2021.
\textsuperscript{117} Yang Jinbo, June 2021.
\textsuperscript{118} Yuntao and Xiaokun, \textit{Changli Shadow Play}, 187.
Figure 2.14. Carving tools for shadow puppets. Source: Yuntao and Xiaokun, Changli Shadow Play, 2014, 186.

Figure 2.15. A craftsman who carves shadow puppets. Source: Yuntao and Xiaokun, Changli Shadow Play, 2014, 187.
The next step is to color and oil the shadow puppet: the dye can directly use a solid color so that the puppet's color effect will be powerful. Before coloring, the donkey skin should be wiped on both sides with a wrung wet towel and then colored immediately. Some craftsmen will paint a layer of glue on the puppet surface before painting to make it brighter after oiling. Carved puppets need to be dyed with the same color on both sides. Dyeing is divided into two methods: flat coating and separate dyeing. The flat coating spreads the color evenly on the skin; Separate dyeing uses colored pens and clear water pens to paint and dye the depth changes. Generally, before dying, it is necessary to determine the color to be dyed according to the shape, and at the same time, pay attention to the juxtaposition of colors with the knife-edge as the boundary.\textsuperscript{119}

The painted puppets can be oiled after being pinched and dried thoroughly. This step will make the puppets more transparent, durable in use, and convenient for joint movement. Most early puppets were painted with tung oil. After 1950, they were painted with varnish and hung in empty rooms to dry in the shade. When oiling, the artist applies tung oil or varnish to the palms of their hands and evenly rubbed on both sides of the puppet with color at the same time so that the oil is evenly applied. Put the oiled shadow play parts in a basket with bamboo strips and put a layer of donkey skin on each layer of bamboo strips, then put them in a ventilated and dust-free place, and finally cover them with a small cloth awning to prevent dust. Craftsmen can also hook

\textsuperscript{119} Ibid., 190-191; Yang Jinbo, June 2021.
up the puppets that have just finished oiling with fine iron wires and let them dry naturally.\textsuperscript{120}

The last step is the binding of shadow puppets: after the oil on the carved parts of the puppets has dried up, the puppet's different parts can be wrapped with thread according to the designed initially movable joints. [Fig. 2.16]. It is worth noting that the front and back of the sleeve and legs of the puppet should be distinguished when binding and the low-level mistakes of anti-binding should be avoided.\textsuperscript{121}

In addition, the puppet's two arms should be set at the same point from both sides of his body; The binding of two legs is one after the other, but the front leg should be bound from the right side of the puppet's traveling direction, while the back leg is opposite. After the puppet’s body is attached, a collar should be added to the neck to facilitate the insertion of the puppet's head. Then sew the joystick at the neck and hands. The joystick is made of iron bars and straw, and its length depends on the height of the puppet so that it is convenient and flexible to operate and can be placed on the screen smoothly.\textsuperscript{122}

\textsuperscript{120} Yuntao and Xiaokun, Changli Shadow Play, 191.

\textsuperscript{121} Ibid., 192; Yang Jinbo, June 2021.

\textsuperscript{122} Yuntao and Xiaokun, Changli Shadow Play, 192-193.
The above is the complete process of making shadow puppets. For shadow carvers, the repair skill of damaged puppets was as crucial as the production technology. Because most shadow plays were performed under oil lamps in the past, puppets were easily blackened, resulting in fuzzy color on their surfaces, and tung paint on their surfaces was easily sticky when heated. Therefore, these puppets needed to be renovated once in two or three years. The method is to soak the old puppet in alkaline water, take it out to dry, and flatten it after the tung oil and color fall off, then re-color and oil it. Some craftsmen use sodium hydroxide to brush the old puppet lightly to shed the grease and paint on its surface. Others buried the old puppets in the
plant ash and sprayed them with damp water, but this method may deform the puppet parts, so it is not recommended.\textsuperscript{123}

However, since the beginning of China's liberation, the shadow puppets will not become sticky due to heat, because the lighting in shadow play was changed from oil lamps to fluorescent lamps, thus avoiding the blackening of puppets due to smoke. Therefore, the methods of repairing old shadow puppets have been gradually lost.\textsuperscript{124} But with time, the color of the puppet’s surface may fade, and direct coloring will be hindered by the grease protective layer on its surface or failing pigment. In this situation, folk artisans can paint the color with a brush and then apply it by soap flakes, so that they can dye the color on the puppet with an oily surface and then finish the varnish again after the paint is dry.\textsuperscript{125}

\textsuperscript{123} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{124} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{125} Zhang Xiangdong (Head of Xiangdong shadow play Troupe) in discussion with the author, June 2021.
Chapter 3: The Performance of a Jidong Shadow Play

A shadow play is a comprehensive form of artistic performance. Although its props are simple and the play is convenient to perform, it is not easy to describe the stories of historical figures clearly and show their personality characteristics. This requires shadow play artists to make vivid shadow puppets, have superb singing skills to depict the emotions of various characters, have outstanding abilities in manipulating the puppet, and the rigorous cooperation of the whole team.\footnote{Wei Liqun, Chinese Shadow Puppet, 263.} This chapter will introduce different aspects of the shadow play performance in detail.

The Stage of Shadow Play

Traditionally, before performing the play, actors should set up a high stage with wooden poles in an open space and set up tents around the stage. A long table with a shadow “screen” would be set at the stage entrance.\footnote{Ibid.} Moreover, the screen should be placed on the table in a slight forward inclination so that the actors can manipulate the puppet easily.\footnote{Wei Liqun (third grade Professor, School of fine arts and design, Hebei Normal University, member of national intangible cultural heritage protection expert committee, deputy director of Hebei intangible cultural heritage protection expert committee) in discussion with the author, July 2021.} It is worth noting that the screen was initially made of white cotton paper, but later they were changed to a white cloth. Puppets vary in size in different places, and so do shadow screens. The screen in the Jidong style is generally two meters wide and one meter high.\footnote{Wei Liqun, Chinese Shadow Puppet, 263.} [Fig 3.1].
In terms of material selection for stage construction, most stages were mainly made of local materials or built with wooden poles or boards. The choice of materials is flexible; even the trunk near the site can be used. However, the stage no longer needs to be temporarily built with wood in an open space in the urban areas but is built indoors with brick, reinforced concrete, and other materials. [Fig 3.2].

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130 Ibid.
Lighting in shadow play is also very important, which directly affects the performance effect. The lamp needs to be hung close to the shadow window. During the Republic of China, large bowls of soybean oil or cottonseed oil were used as fuel for lamps, with five to seven wicks, and a special tin can wrap around the lamp. [Fig. 3.3].
The actors were always blackened after each performance because the oil lamp would emit thick black smoke when it was ignited. However, some older artists believe that performing under oil lamps will have special effects. Therefore, today, with the development of science and technology, shadow puppet performers in some remote areas still insist on using oil lamps for lighting. Whenever the performance reaches the plot's climax or the puppets change, the actors gently blow the light. The shaking of the lamp will make the shadow vibrate, resulting in an intense performance atmosphere.\footnote{Ibid., 265.}
Behind the screen is the place where the actors perform. Behind and on the left and right sides of the shadow window are long ropes or strings for hanging puppets. This arrangement also makes it easier for the actors to take them down and hang up. Singers, percussion, and string accompanists arranged behind the screen.\textsuperscript{132}

\textbf{Operation Skills of Shadow Puppets}

Shadow play, as puppet art, is mainly performed by singing and manipulating puppets. The puppet itself has no change in facial expression, so the characters’ thoughts and personality depend on the actors’ singing and operating to integrate into the puppet, giving it life.\textsuperscript{133}

There are many different shapes of shadow puppets all over the country. They are made of donkey skin, cowhide, camel skin, horse skin, thick paper, and other materials. Due to the different thickness and hardness of the materials, the size of puppets and the coordination of movements are different. In addition, the number of levers used to manipulate puppets in different areas is different, so their methods are various. However, no matter what style of shadow play, the performer’s manipulation skills play a vital role in the performance.\textsuperscript{134} It requires the actor to be familiar with the script, master the rhythm of the performance progress, and cooperate closely with the singer. Professional controllers can manipulate eight or nine

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{132} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{133} Ibid., 274
\item \textsuperscript{134} Ibid., 275.
\end{itemize}
puppets with one hand and do various actions simultaneously. Excellent manipulation skills can delicately express puppet emotions and arouse the audience’s sympathy.\textsuperscript{135}

Because all shadow puppets are sided images, they can only move forward, back, up, and down, but not left and right, which has great limitations and difficulty for the operators. In addition, many martial arts plots require actors to manipulate puppets to make exaggerated and complex movements, such as fighting, splitting, changing clothes, and so on. Usually, a manipulator’s hands must manipulate several puppets to turn and jump simultaneously.\textsuperscript{136} When some auxiliary props, such as tables, chairs, and puppets, need to be placed on the shadow window during the performance, the actors have no time to pull down the curtains and change the channel but throw the auxiliary props close to the screen with fast speed and wrist skills, which requires the props to be placed firmly and keep a proper distance between them. This technique needs long-term diligent practice.\textsuperscript{137}

In addition, each puppet is usually equipped with a joystick on its neck and hands. An iron rod around the neck is called the central rod, and the rod on each hand is called the hand rod. The central rod can show the puppet’s front and back legs, sitting and lying, turning over, jumping, and other actions; The hand rods can direct the movement of throwing sleeves, covering mouth, rotating, and so on.\textsuperscript{138} When handling rods, the actors should firmly grasp them

\textsuperscript{135} Wei Liqun, \textit{Jidong Shadow Play}, 175.
\textsuperscript{137} Zhang Xiangdong, June 2021.
with five fingers. They also need to pinch them hard, dance flexibly and keep the puppets balanced. Every subtle action must meet the requirements of the characters in the specific situation of the plot and closely and harmoniously cooperate with the music and singing. In the martial arts plot, besides the two levers that dominate the puppet movements, there are also mounts, weapons, whips, and other levers, sometimes even as many as seven.\textsuperscript{139}

In a Jidong shadow play, the common manipulation skills are using spears, sticks, and swords. Fighting can be divided into two types: horse and ground, which operate similarly. First, the joystick of the weapon is folded with the two levers of the actor’s puppet. Then, hands folded, opened, closed, twisted with the thumb and forefinger so that the spear can stab back and forth, the stick can be mixed, and the dagger can fly up and down. In this process, it is necessary to pay attention, use hands, eyes, and heart, and the flexibility of fingers is the key.\textsuperscript{140}

Besides, one of the essential things in manipulating puppets is to show the thoughts and feelings of characters. Although there is stylized facial makeup of good and evil in the exquisite, sculpted shadow puppet figures, their expressions are all fixed. Therefore, actors need to express different emotions of the characters; they need to control the puppets to do the appropriate movements, bring in their feelings, and make puppets a soul and vivid artistic image.\textsuperscript{141} For example, in manipulating an elderly character, the puppet should be controlled to hunch over to show the characteristics of the elderly; In a frustrated figure’s performance, puppets should be

\textsuperscript{139} Wei Liqun, July 2021.
\textsuperscript{140} Wei Liqun, Chinese Shadow Puppet, 275.
\textsuperscript{141} Ibid.
manipulated to hang their head and sigh, showing lost emotion; When expressing the character’s joy, puppets can clap their hand, raise their head, and then tilt back and forth body to show happiness, etc.\textsuperscript{142}

The above-stylized puppet movements come from life. Nevertheless, these activities are exaggerated according to the needs of the performances to make the audience feel the personalities of the characters and enjoy the charm of art. These fully reflect the critical role of manipulating skills in shadow puppet performances.\textsuperscript{143} The following are some skills of scene expression in a traditional shadow play.

- Performances without physical objects: for example, when performing boating on the lake, because there is no water on the stage, actors can use the bumps of boat props to express the meaning of water.
- Smoky: spraying smoke on the shadow screen can create an atmosphere of dark clouds of smoke.
- Fire spraying technique: with liquor burning rosin in your mouth, spray it on the place where the flame needs to appear on the shadow screen. Ignite immediately, and you will have a vivid effect of fire.
- Umbrella holding: fold the umbrella props into a closed shape and fix them with thin elastic. When the rubber bands are released, the umbrella will open.\textsuperscript{144}

With the development of science, some technologies can be properly integrated into shadow play, such as making waves and sea water, raging fire, clouds and rain and lightning, etc., which makes the overall performance more enjoyable and shocking.\textsuperscript{145} [Fig 3.4]. Compared

\textsuperscript{142} Zhang Xiangdong, June 2021.
\textsuperscript{143} Wei Liqun, \textit{Chinese Shadow Puppet}, 276.
\textsuperscript{144} Ibid., 278.
\textsuperscript{145} Ibid., 276.
with the effect of traditional shadow play, the integration of modern technology also ensures the safety of actors to a large extent. This shows that traditional art and modern technology are not always contradictory. In the case of proper use, science and technology can also play a role in promoting the development of traditional art.

Figure 3.4. Use the projector to put the fire scene on the props of the shadow screen. Photo by author.
The Performance of Jidong Shadow Play

In the past, most shadow plays were performed in the open spaces in streets. Before the performance, actors always played gongs and drums to attract audiences. At present, shadow play in the city are mostly performed in specific theaters, and tickets are sold in advance. Therefore, the role of drumming to attract the audience has disappeared. However, this tradition is still going, as a signal of the start of performance, and it can also urge audiences to find the corresponding seat as soon as possible.

It is noteworthy that beating gongs and drums is not arbitrary, the beating time is generally about ten minutes. When the audiences are basically seated, actors can begin to perform. As soon as the drums and gongs stopped, puppets appeared on the screen. A backstage commander controls the rhythm of the performance by beating the board. After the drums were over, he began to hit the board three times. The first castanet is to remind the actors to get ready. A few minutes later, the next two soundboards marked the beginning of the performance.

The whole performance is based on the scripts. In the Jidong school, actors are required to sing the script on the stage as it is, and they are not allowed to change lines without authorization. The script is placed in the middle of the long table with the screen. After an actor finishes one page, the actor on the right turns it to the next page with a bamboo stick and presses it down with iron. Actors must be familiar with their lyrics, and each of them shall leave

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147 Zhang Xiangdong, June 2021.
immediately after performing their roles, leaving space for other actors to watch the script. At the
top of the screen, the puppet operators should follow the actors' singing and accompanying music
and perform various actions in the plot.\textsuperscript{149} Although each shadow play's performance mode and
lines are fixed, when there are some unexpected situations, such as one character singing but the
next character does not appear in time, the former actor needs to improvise and add a few words
to delay time.\textsuperscript{150} This reflects the professionalism of a shadow puppet actor.

In addition, there are strict regulations on the number and division of actors' labor in the
performance. A regular performance needs seven or eight actors. The leading actor on the left
side of the stage is responsible for selecting the puppets needed on-site and controlling the
performance progress. The person on the stage's right side is a second-level actor whose primary
duties are to cooperate with the leading operator, supervise the lights, add oil to the lights, turn
over the script for the singers and perform some roles. The remaining six percussionists are
responsible for the accompaniment of drums, clappers, gongs, cymbals, and singing of different
parts. In general, they will be assigned to sing different roles, but they can also help each other
when similar roles are posted.\textsuperscript{151} Besides, there were no actresses in the old shadow play troupes,
so all the female characters in the performance were sung by male actors.\textsuperscript{152}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{149} Ibid., 271. \\
\textsuperscript{150} Zhang Xiangdong, June 2021. \\
\textsuperscript{151} Wei Liqun, July 2021. \\
\textsuperscript{152} Wei Liqun, \textit{Chinese Shadow Puppet}, 266.
\end{flushright}
In terms of performance duration, performing a play usually takes two to three hours, but the time can also be adjusted according to the audiences' requirements. When the performance is over, the leading actor would put the script in front of the screen and move the puppets away to signal the end of the performance. But sometimes, the audiences may not leave immediately but applaud and cheer for a long time to show their love for the performance. In this case, actors should make an additional short performance to thank the audience for their enthusiasm, which is also the hidden rule of shadow play.\textsuperscript{153}

\textit{Folk Customs of the Jidong Shadow Play}

Since the birth of Chinese folk art, it has permeated with rich totem concepts and natural religious worship consciousness. Because the origin of shadow play art is influenced by religious culture, especially Buddhism, the traditional shadow play groups have religious customs and unique folk customs. Since the appearance of this art, religion has also used it to publicize its thoughts, thus forming the phenomenon of a cross between religion and folk culture. Therefore, in the traditional shadow play groups, the custom of offering sacrifices to gods has always been preserved.\textsuperscript{154}

\textsuperscript{153} Wei Liqun, July 2021.
\textsuperscript{154} Yuntao and Xiaokun, \textit{Changli Shadow Play}, 215.
In the Jidong shadow play, traditional troupes worship Guan Yin Bodhisattva. Under normal circumstances, Guan Yin statues or throne are attached to the box containing shadow puppets, and always keep secret from others. [Fig. 3.5]. Whenever Guan Yin Festival, Mid-Autumn Festival, or performing with the theme of God, the group members open the puppets’ box, and the actors to burn incense to worship Guan-yin Bodhisattva. In addition, many shadow puppets are also depicted according to the straight nose and fine eyes of Guan Yin Bodhisattva’s profile. This has become a unique custom of shadow play in the Jidong style. Jidong Shadow Puppetry troupes took Guanyin Bodhisattva as the ancestor, which was influenced by myths and legends. It is said that a long time ago, many tribes in northern China lived a nomadic life. These groups were violent, dissolute, and disobedient, and often harassed people in the South. Southerners had no choice but to burn incense and kowtow to pray for the protecting of Guan Yin Bodhisattva. Their pious prayers touched Guan Yin, so she/he went to the north to preach and persuade people to do good deeds. But the locals could not understand the truth in the Scriptures. In this situation, Guan Yin found two monks, asked them to cut some paper men, and set up a table and a lamp, and then sing scriptures and manipulate paper puppets

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155 Guan-yin is the most used bodhisattva translation in Buddhism and refers to the bodhisattva adopted by other eastern religions. The Chinese name Guan-yin is the abbreviation of Guanshiyin, which means "the person who perceives the sound of the world." Perceiver of the World’s Sounds, 31, October 2018.
156 Every year, Guan Yin Festival falls on the lunar calendar of 19th of 2nd Moon, 19th of 6th moon and 19th of 9th Moon. Temples with Guan Yin worship will have such festivals with many devotees visiting to pay their respects, In Chinese Festivals, retrieved 28 July 2021, https://www.chinatownology.com/chinese_festivals.html; Mid-Autumn Festival, also known as Moon Festival or Moon Cake Festival, is a traditional festival celebrated by people in East and Southeast Asia. It is also the second most important festival after Chinese New Year. On this day, the Chinese believe that the moon is at its brightest and fullest size, coinciding with harvest time in the middle of Autumn.
156 Yuntao and Xiaokun, Changli Shadow Play, 216.
156 At present, there is no clear record to explain the gender of Guan Yin Bodhisattva.
to attract people to accept enlightenment. This way of singing scripture is considered as the predecessor of shadow play, and Guan Yin Bodhisattva is also regarded as the ancestor of shadow play.\textsuperscript{159} Although these myths carry people’s beautiful vision, they cannot be used as a formal theory of origin because they are fictional.

Figure 3.5. The picture of Guanyin Bodhisattva attached to the shadow puppets’ box. Source: Yuntao and Xiaokun, Changli shadow play, 216.

\textsuperscript{159} Yuntao and Xiaokun, \textit{Changli Shadow Play}, 217.
The Jidong Shadow Play Customs in Special Festivals: Returning God and Worshipping Ancestors

In northern China, there is a special theme of shadow play that is very popular. It is specially performed for returning gods and worshipping ancestors.¹⁶⁰ For example, if a person’s family is sick or has a child, they would pray Guan Yin for blessing. After that, they would also invite a shadow play troupe to perform the special performance.¹⁶¹

Such exceptional shadow play performance usually takes three days. On the first day, singing was used to appease the gods. After that, a simple tent will be set up in the master’s yard, in which the gods’ tablets were placed. That night, the actors had to perform the script designated by the employer: the plot of sacrificing gods. The next day is the official day to return gods’ grace. When the sun is shining at noon, they will perform the “Bright Shadow” on the memorial tablet of the gods in the hut.¹⁶² Most content is praying to God and wishing their family peace and happiness. The third day is the day of “sending God,” they don’t perform during the day but wait until the evening. After the formal shadow play performance, they will perform an additional short section, not for the audiences but for Guanyin Bodhisattva and the gods.¹⁶³ This custom still exists in some remote mountainous areas in eastern Hebei region today.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁰ Those who prayed for God's blessing fulfilled the promise to gods.
¹⁶¹ Yuntao and Xiaokun, Changli Shadow Play, 219.
¹⁶² The shadow play performed during the day is called bright shadow.
¹⁶³ It is believed that when performing the shadow play of sacrificial content, Guanyin Bodhisattva will be summoned and come to watch. Yuntao and Xiaokun, Changli Shadow Play, 220.
¹⁶⁴ Yuntao and Xiaokun, Changli Shadow Play, 220.
In addition, there used to be a rule that women were not allowed to appear on the shadow play stage or perform in teams. This is a manifestation of discrimination against women in old Chinese society. However, since China’s liberation, the status of women has gradually improved, and this rule has naturally disappeared.\textsuperscript{165}

\textsuperscript{165} Ibid.
Chapter 4: Case Study- Beijing Opera

Beijing Opera, also called Peking Opera, is China’s most influential opera style. Various artistic elements in the performance are used as symbols of traditional Chinese culture. In 2006 and 2010, Beijing Opera was inscribed in the first batch of the National Intangible Cultural Heritage List and UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity representatives. Beijing Opera has achieved great success in inheritance, development, and protection as a traditional Chinese drama performing art. This chapter takes Beijing Opera as a case study to introduce its origin, development, and dissemination. Its successful protection measures and experience may be helpful examples for the conservation of the shadow play.

The Origin and Characteristics of Beijing Opera

Beijing Opera’s distribution is centered in Beijing and spread all over the country, but this does not mean that it is only a drama performance with Beijing characteristics. On the contrary, it is a comprehensive artistic expression created by blending the drama characteristics of different regions. Since 1790, four famous Hui opera troupes entered Beijing from the south, forming Beijing opera’s predecessor. At that time, many styles of dramas were prevalent in

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166 “Jing Ju” [Beijing Opera], Zhongguo feiwuzhi wenhua yichan Wang [China Intangible Cultural Heritage Network], December 29, 2019. https://baike.baidu.com/reference/75719/3a1aPWNcoF6YpFQme7iCT218-POVoeFvWLsQG2UWYLrgOqjAzo4L1t1C5p1N5bQQ9FGNcXujHMI2dQV_bZXFJWBWoOKkDjhxg.


168 “Beijing Opera,” China Intangible Cultural Heritage Network, https://baike.baidu.com/reference/75719/3a1aPWNcoF6YpFQme7iCT218-POVoeFvWLsQG2UWYLrgOqjAzo4L1t1C5p1N5bQQ9FGNcXujHMI2dQV_bZXFJWBWoOKkDjhxg.
Beijing. Still, there was little contact and infiltration among various troupes, leading to the relative independence of different opera styles. However, the Hui troupe’s approach is just the opposite. They widely solicited predecessors’ opinions, constantly absorbed the advantages of various operas, and integrated them into Hui Opera. Local audiences loved Hui Opera for its rich repertoire and changeable performance forms. However, the increase in the popularity of the Hui Opera has led to the decline of other operas. Under this circumstance, for the sake of livelihood, Qin opera artists joined the Hui school. In this process, Hui artists widely absorbed the singing and performance styles and script contents from Qin Opera, which created favorable conditions for the Hui opera’s development. Later, Han Opera arrived and joined the Hui troupes in 1821, a confluence of Hui, Qin, and Han Operas was formed, which laid the foundation for the birth of Beijing Opera. In addition, in 1840, Hui Opera further learned from the advantages of Kunqu Opera and Beijing Singing and finally formed the Beijing Opera after continuous exchanges and integration.  

From the perspective of drama features, Beijing Opera is better at expressing political and military struggles with historical themes, and most stories are taken from historical romance and

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169 A play is sung in the Beijing dialect; Qin Opera is a traditional opera in Northwest China and one of the national intangible cultural heritages; Han Opera is a local drama in Wuhan, Hubei Province, one of the traditional operas of the Han nationality and one of the national intangible cultural heritages; “Zhongguo Jingju fazhanshi” [Development history of Chinese Peking Opera], Jingju yishu [Peking Opera Art], (Wenhua zhongguo China Culture, April 17, 2019), https://baike.baidu.com/reference/75719/b849iKH4AlkG6Hd1UIJRC5zFl52wUqdp1p6m-IL.eN34z6S_p0DrZOLU60UxRvynBk5jnW6qfdz7FV1wHHsCWhbMXMD3e--3Bw85EBxiKg4acC_1Y1_dF3HmxHsyttnAp45Q9a9A40oF; Kunqu Opera is one of the oldest traditional operas of the Han nationality. It originated in the Kunshan area, Suzhou, China, in the 14th century. “Zhongguo xiqu zhimu: Beifang Kunqu” [The Mother of Chinese Opera -- Northern Kunqu Opera], Zhongguo chuantong wenhua [Chinese Traditional Culture], (Zajia, November 29, 2013), https://baike.baidu.com/reference/216928/3c06bWGavv9XTx3F9mcAvrSpkGMKBIzRz5DKKoXmYiJVUFKbul.topd9oVydTwU00xJNzK2Vr8R4svFCg-KaCiUxWx3; “Jing Ju” (see chap. 4, n. 166).
Peking Opera is a song and dance performing art in terms of performance. Song and dance are the two elements of the performance, reflected in its four expression methods, namely Chiang, Nian, Zuo, and Da. Among them, Chang means singing, Nian refers to the musical recitation, which complements each other and constitutes one of the two significant elements of “song.” Zuo refers to the body movements of dance, and Da relates to martial arts and tumbling skills, which are combined to form the second central element of Beijing Opera performing arts, dance. Although opera actors have different divisions of labor and performance contents, they should be trained from these four aspects to ensure that they can give full play to the artistic features of Beijing Opera and better show various figures.

In the role classification, roles in Beijing Opera are classified not only according to the natural and social attributes of the characters but also according to their personality characteristics. It is worth noting that everything on the Peking opera stage does not appear based on the original appearance of life but exaggerates artistically in all aspects of makeup and costumes according to the characteristics of the characters played. In this way, the roles on the

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170 Zhezi Play is a beautiful story intercepted in long plays. The plot is short but complete, saving time and effort than performing the whole drama. “Zhongguo wuda juzhong zhi jingju jianjie” [Introduction to Peking Opera, one of China's five major operas], Zhongguo shehui kexu wang, March 16, 2011, https://baike.baidu.com/reference/75719/2be2cjDkQK0U5SH2H8DmcywFqp4iBb7FgFu2cqX2UbXreVwMeh2B7CkDIBNkd5H

171 “Zhongguo Jingju fazhanshi” [Development history of Chinese Peking Opera], Jingju yishu [Peking Opera Art], (Wenhua zhongguo China Culture, April 17, 2019), https://baike.baidu.com/reference/75719/b849iKl4ALkG6id1UIRVC5zFts2uqd1pi6m-ILcNx44oS_p0Dr7OLUJ60UxrIvmBkJpW6qfdz7FV1FHHsCWlbMXMD3c-_3Bw85EBiXi4aC_1Y1_t3HMxHSiytmAp4SQak9A40ol.

172 Natural attributes refer to the physiological characteristics of characters, such as gender, age, etc; Social attributes refer to the characteristics of characters in society, such as identity, occupation, etc.
stage are divided into four types: Sheng, Dan, Jing, and Chou, which is very similar to the occupation division in shadow play.\(^{173}\) In addition, like the shadow play, the Beijing Opera also attaches great importance to the use of color. The difference is that the former is mainly used in puppets, while the latter is painted directly on the actors’ faces, that is, facial makeup. Different colors represent different personalities. For example, the red face implies praise, meaning loyalty and bravery; The black face is neutral and represents courage and wisdom. Colorful faces and green faces are also neutral, representing folk heroes; Yellow faces and white faces are derogatory, meaning cunning and cruelty; golden and silver faces imply mysteriousness, representing gods and ghosts. The initial function of facial makeup was only to exaggerate the facial features textures of characters in the play and use exaggerated techniques to express the characters’ nature, psychological, and physiological characteristics to serve the plot of the whole play. Later, however, facial makeup gradually became a kind of pattern art with national characteristics, with the human face as the expression means, from simple to complex, coarse to fine, and from simple to profound.\(^ {174}\)

In addition, according to different themes, Beijing Opera performances can be divided into martial arts scenes and non-martial arts scenes, and the accompanying instruments are also different. In the martial arts play, most of the instruments used are percussion instruments, such

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\(^{173}\) “Jingju hangdang de huafen” [Role Division of Peking Opera], Zhongguo Jingju [Chinese Peking Opera], April 17, 2019, https://baike.baidu.com/reference/75719/ffa6cK3rqX2EeqYYY7khrngPGvXmzGI_FTEACutWTGoiI79TSdHMCg2Hgy7NyKI Ferq_FCGz4SCzsQwzFhggDLDDLLOExcj8sStuLu9OQUhwX63YD5Qbp-UuJBUDZEksuaqKUf31Dw.

\(^{174}\) “Chinese Peking Opera,” Peking Opera Art (see chap. 4, n. 168).
as board, drum, gong, and cymbal. In non-martial arts performances, pipe instruments such as Jinghu, Beijing Erhu, Yueqin, Sanxian are often used. Among them, musical instruments such as drums, gongs, and cymbals are also used in shadow play art performances.

\[175\] Jinghu, also known as huqin, is a traditional Chinese stringed instrument; Beijing Erhu is a traditional Chinese string instrument. It was invented with the formation of Beijing opera at the end of the 18th century. Its shape is very similar to that of Jinghu, but the tone is more mellow. “Jing Erhu” [Beijing Erhu], *Baidu Encyclopedia*, accessed December 20, 2021, [https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E4%BA%AC%E4%BA%8C%E8%83%A1/6904033?fr=aladdin](https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E4%BA%AC%E4%BA%8C%E8%83%A1/6904033?fr=aladdin); Yueqin is a traditional Chinese plucked instrument, which originated in the Han Dynasty. “Yueqin,” *Baidu Encyclopedia*, accessed December 20, 2021, [https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E6%9C%88%E7%90%B4/498985?fr=aladdin](https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E6%9C%88%E7%90%B4/498985?fr=aladdin); Sanxian is a traditional plucked instrument in China. Its origin is controversial, but the earliest written records can be traced to the Tang Dynasty. “Qiao Samxian” [Beautiful Sanxian], *Guxian xinsheng: Zhongguo chuantiang minzu qiye de chuanyinshi jicheng* [Ancient String and New Sound: Innovative Inheritance of Chinese Traditional National Instrumental Music] (Xinhua News, September 14, 2018), [http://www.xinhuanet.com/video/2018-09/14/c_129953461.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/video/2018-09/14/c_129953461.htm); “Jingju de yueqi” [Musical Instruments of Beijing Opera], *Zhongguo Jingju* [Chinese Beijing Opera], April 17, 2019, [https://baike.baidu.com/reference/75719/46e9FkKFW8M5kzbMs-FDGYZmE45hWVW10aNYSV0v-T7cXvijKcmywXWbok_7nYHPzwZS4HO55CAXT15NjirhKbQ6iyK8emblr5RL5vmlGdIO8SOpwtNs1XSHuxwA1yVvR-gMFGJRqcs.](https://baike.baidu.com/reference/75719/46e9FkKFW8M5kzbMs-FDGYZmE45hWVW10aNYSV0v-T7cXvijKcmywXWbok_7nYHPzwZS4HO55CAXT15NjirhKbQ6iyK8emblr5RL5vmlGdIO8SOpwtNs1XSHuxwA1yVvR-gMFGJRqcs.)
Figure 4.2. Yueqin. Source: http://pic3.zhimg.com/v2-ea0f356b9917a5dec0c244f6230505f5_1440w.jpg?source=172ae18b.
Figure 4.3. Sanxian. Source: Online for sale.
In terms of props, because Beijing Opera is a live performance, props can only choose common items in life, such as tables, chairs, swords and so on, which will limit the perfect restoration of many play scenes. Therefore, Beijing Opera performance pays more attention to the expression of artistic conception, and the function of props will also change with the needs of the scene. For example, when performing the scene of the emperor's inspection, the ordinary tables and chairs on the stage will be imaged as the dragon chairs. In the banquet scene, the table became a banquet. Besides, props can also be imagined as natural landscapes with entirely different properties. For example, the actor standing on the table represents climbing the mountain. When representing weather changes such as water, fire, wind and so on, flags with matching patterns are used. In a word, Beijing Opera has great restrictions on the use of props, most of which require the audience to imagine the scene to show the story. In contrast, the props in shadow play are finely crafted on puppets, so there is almost no limit to the variety of props used.

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176 The Dragon Chair is a unique piece of gold furniture for ancient emperors. Because the public believed that the emperor was the embodiment of the dragon, the pattern of the dragon is carved on the furniture.

177 “Jingju qiemo” [Peking Opera Props], Zhongguo Jingju [Chinese Peking Opera], April 17, 2019, https://baike.baidu.com/reference/75719/b23aBZYORycI0Cxz3YJxVB6p66CSk8e6v2GyXqshYPk4CplSU0oQP6s_r6ELkUNcXJuUaoyKpr5hKF_2O5rBGgE417YQi1c1rwsPJGZupF-qj5AFcZHpg9R79LuSlz-JN5VESDY.
Transmission Value of Beijing Opera

The stage art of Beijing Opera now constitutes a mature and standardized procedure in literature, performance, music, singing, accompaniment, makeup, facial makeup, etc.\textsuperscript{178} Compared with other operas, Beijing Opera entered the court at the early stage of its formation, which led to the need to show broader life fields and more types of characters. In addition, because the audience is primarily high-ranking officials and dignitaries, there is a high demand for comprehensiveness, outstanding performance skills, and the beauty of stage images. Correspondingly, its folk and local flavor, rough and straightforward style are relatively weak. Therefore, its performance art tends to be a combination of virtual and natural means of expression, which transcends the limitations of stage space and time to the greatest extent, to achieve the artistic realm of "conveying spirit in both form and spirit." This is also one of the fundamental reasons why Peking Opera can become the quintessence of China today.\textsuperscript{179}

Besides its artistic value, Beijing Opera is also one of the important ways for China to publicize traditional culture to the world. It has been more than 100 years since Beijing Opera was introduced to foreign countries in 1919. This process can be divided into three parts. The first phase was from 1919 to 1940. The troupe headed by Mei Lanfang, a famous Beijing Opera performing artist, has performed in Japan, the United States, the Soviet Union, and other places. This is the first step of Chinese opera to go global. It not only embodies the characteristics and

\textsuperscript{178} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{179} "Chinese Peking Opera," \textit{Peking Opera Art} (see chap. 4, n. 168).
cultural connotation of Chinese drama aesthetics, but also eliminates the western prejudice against Chinese drama and even the Chinese at that time and promotes the cultural exchange between the East and the West. It is worth mentioning that Pomona College and the University of Southern California have each awarded Mei Lanfang a doctorate in literature, expressing their admiration for this master of art.\(^{180}\)

The second phase was from 1950 to the end of 1970. With the founding of new China, China has successively sent diplomatic missions to visit overseas, and the Beijing Opera Troupes have followed the missions to perform everywhere, covering India, Myanmar, Venezuela, Colombia, Cuba, Canada, and other countries. During this period, Beijing Opera was mainly used as a means of cultural diplomacy. The third phase is from 1978 to the present. With the implementation of the opening-up policy, China has continuously deepened its cultural exchanges with other countries around the world. The footprints of a new generation of Beijing Opera artists have spread all over the world, further expand the overseas influence of this art.\(^{181}\)


Difficulties and Solutions of Beijing Opera's Overseas Dissemination

Although Beijing Opera has frequently gone abroad in the past decades and has established a certain influence in some countries in Asia, North America and Europe, there are still two major problems in overseas communication.

The first problem is that there is the lack of regular audience. Most foreign audiences watch Beijing Opera out of curiosity about Chinese culture, but lack of in-depth understanding of its artistic and cultural connotation, which also makes it difficult for Beijing Opera to attract overseas loyal audiences. The second problem is the language and cultural barriers. Martial art is a category of Beijing Opera performances. Because of its strong stage appeal and visual impact, it is often selected as the main repertoire for overseas performances. However, this leads to the misunderstanding of foreigners that Beijing opera is kung fu. In addition, foreigners cannot fully understand the singing content of this art, which further affects the effective dissemination of Beijing Opera and the publicity of Chinese culture.\(^\text{182}\)

To solve the problem that Beijing Opera is difficult to spread overseas, Beijing Opera Troupes conducted a survey in the United States in January 2013. They invited 21 adults whose native language was English as experiments, including fifteen Americans, four Canadians and two British. Four experimental methods were arranged to test foreigners' reaction and acceptance of different forms of Peking Opera performances. In Experiment one, the subjects who watched the Peking opera performance were provided with English on-site translation. Every

\(^{182}\) Ibid.
conversation in the performance was translated into English by professional translators. In experiment two, two screens were prepared for the audiences. One screen played the Peking opera performance, and the other displayed the English subtitles of lines and lyrics. The method of experiment three is the same as that of experiment two, but a process was added. That is, an English manual was given to each audience before the performance begins, which included the plot of the performance, characters, costumes, props and so on. Experiment four added another process to experiment three, that is, explained and displayed the Peking Opera props, facial makeup, scenery, program movements, musical instruments, and other Peking Opera knowledge in English firstly, and provided Peking Opera experience activities, such as trying on costumes, painting facial makeup, and teaching Peking Opera movements.\textsuperscript{183}

After the experiments, some conclusions can be drawn by collecting the feedback of the experimenters. In Experiment one, with the help of on-site English response of lines and lyrics, most subjects could understand the story plot and most lines and lyrics, but they still couldn't understand the relationship between characters, program actions, stage settings and band accompaniment. In addition, 72\% of the respondents indicated that online real-time English translation would affect their viewing of performances. In particular, the translation lags the voices of the actors, which greatly affected the appreciation effect. Nearly half of the respondents said that after their curiosity was satisfied, they might not watch Beijing opera again. In Experiment two, 90\% of the subjects thought that English subtitles were better than on-site

\textsuperscript{183} Ibid.
English translation, so that they could pay more attention to the performance. Although most people can understand the plot, they still don't know the singing, makeup, makeup, and dance of Beijing Opera. Foreigners who watched Peking Opera with the experimental three method said that they could not only fully understand the plot, but also had a strong interest in this art. One-third of them expressed their willingness to continue watching other dramas to learn more about Beijing Opera, and they also wanted to learn Chinese. In the fourth experiment, in addition to understanding the plot, many subjects could ask some valuable questions about the accompaniment of the band, stage setting, costumes and headdress, and even 90% of them showed a strong desire to explore Beijing Opera.\footnote{Ibid.}

The results show that language and culture are the main factors that affect the effective spread of Beijing Opera overseas. Because the more people have in common, the less obstacles or cultural distortions they will encounter in communication. On the contrary, when the cultural differences among members of different groups increase, the possibility of misunderstanding will be greater. Therefore, due to the lack of in-depth understanding of Beijing Opera art and Chinese culture among most foreign audiences, China is strange and mysterious to them, and most of them watch Beijing Opera out of freshness and curiosity.\footnote{Larry A. Samovar, Nemi C. Jain, and Richard E. Porter, \textit{Understanding Intercultural Communication} (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1981), 34-37.} Therefore, some measures can help foreign audiences to overcome language and cultural barriers and enjoy Chinese culture better. For example, in terms of language barriers, the audience can have a basic understanding of the
content and plot of the drama before the performance by playing English subtitles or distributing English translation scripts in advance. In terms of cultural barriers, artists can solve them by popularizing the common sense of Peking Opera and expounding the Chinese humanistic spirit. During the explanation, commentators should not only clarify the relationship between the plot and the characters, but also clarify the cultural differences between China and foreign countries, so that foreign audiences can appreciate the play while knowing Chinese culture.\textsuperscript{186}

\textbf{Protection Policies and Development Measures of Beijing Opera}

As one of China's national quintessences, Beijing Opera has developed and reached a high reputation in the world with its forward-looking development strategy and the government's comprehensive protection policies.

First, from the government's point of view. To support the creation of Beijing Opera, the Communist Party of China and the government have taken many effective measures, such as setting up related awards and funds. With the approval of the State Council, the government established the Beijing Opera Steering Committee of the Ministry of Culture and the China Peking Opera Art Fund in 1992. After that, three national new Peking Opera performances, four Chinese Peking Opera Art Festival, five national stage art projects and eight Chinese Art Festival were held. In addition, the government also strongly supports the evaluation of national key Peking Opera Troupe and sets up several seminars for outstanding young Peking Opera actors.

These measures have played an effective role in encouraging and supporting the creation of Beijing Opera. The formulation of relevant policies and regulations and financial support have also provided fundamental help to the protection of Beijing Opera.  

In addition to policy support, the inheritance and innovation of Beijing Opera Troupe is also critical. In terms of inheritance, because Beijing Opera is a complex and abstract art, it is difficult for young people to understand its singing, lyrics, and connotation. In this case, how to improve teenagers' love for Beijing Opera is particularly important for the protection and inheritance of this art. To solve this problem, the National Beijing Opera Academy, together with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Culture, and the Ministry of Finance, has launched an elegant art-into-campus activity to bring traditional Beijing Opera to campus as a part of students' art and culture learning. To enhance students' understanding of Beijing Opera art, before each performance, the troupe would hold lectures to popularize the basic knowledge and characteristics of this art for students and answer students' questions about Beijing Opera genres, music, professions and so on. Moreover, students were invited to visit the makeup process of actor's backstage and show them the costumes and props used in performances. The activities of traditional art entering the campus are like a key for young people to open the gate of Beijing Opera. In this way, people can understand the charm of Chinese traditional culture, strengthen

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188 “Chuantong Jingju he daxuesheng meiyou juli” [There is no distance between traditional Peking Opera and college students], Jingju Yuansantuan yanchu ceji [Sidelights on the Performance of the Yuan San Troupes of Beijing Opera], Tianjin Network - Daily News, no. 12 (2009): 3.
their understanding, and reduce their sense of distance from Beijing Opera. Cultivating the new
generation's love for Chinese traditional art is an effective way to inherit and protect Beijing
Opera, which plays a vital role in its future development.¹⁸⁹

The other important factor is innovation. An invariable Beijing Opera cannot survive in
this changing society. Therefore, to inherit and develop Beijing Opera and Chinese culture, the
opera inheritor must keep pace with the times and innovate constantly, which requires them to
have a high level of knowledge and skills, and to review and cultivate the next generation
inheritors while innovating all aspects of Beijing Opera. Considering that most young people
cannot fully accept traditional drama performances, Beijing Opera should add some elements of
a new era to meet their needs and interests, such as innovating the expression form and script
content of music, integrating some hot spots of current affairs, etc. In addition, the Beijing Opera
Troupe should always pay attention to practical problems and adjust this end. For example, many
grass-roots people have reported that the cost of performances by famous Peking Opera actors is
too high. If Chinese traditional drama wants to achieve better development, it is necessary to be
close to the masses. Appropriately reducing the ticket prices can make Beijing Opera more
common. Besides, many theaters prohibit children under the age of 12 from entering because of
the comfort of the overall performance environment, which will prevent children from
cultivating the opportunity of appreciating Beijing Opera from childhood, which is not

¹⁸⁹ Bao Haixia, “Feiwuzhi wenhua yichan Jingju de baohu jianyi” [Suggestions on the protection of intangible cultural heritage
Beijing Opera], Undergraduate diss., (Zhejiang Normal University: 2013).
conducive to the inheritance of art in the long run.\textsuperscript{190} In general, the successful protection of Beijing Opera is the result of joint efforts of many parties. On the one hand, the government needs to provide policy and financial support for traditional art and introduce it into schools as a part of students' art and culture study. On the other hand, the troupes should constantly innovate, so that the art of Beijing Opera can keep pace with the times and keep its vitality.

\textsuperscript{190} Ibid.
Chapter 5 The Protection, Development, and Future of the Shadow Play

With the development of China's social economy and the significant changes in people's daily habits, the Chinese Shadow Play, as one of the intangible cultural heritages globally, is facing the danger of disappearing. The aging of audiences and actors, the lack of successors in skill inheritance, and the insufficient support of the government have all become disadvantageous factors to crush this art. In this chapter, the author will elaborate on the current situation of the Chinese Shadow Play. By analyzing UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage protection policy and the successful experience of Beijing Opera development, this paper will explore feasible ways for the survival and growth of the shadow play from the angles of the government, inheritors, and the performance itself.

Analysis of Shadow Play's Dilemma from Various Aspects

The protection and inheritance of the Chinese shadow play are facing many problems. The first problem is the severe shrinkage of the shadow play market, which is caused by three factors: social development, outdated content of the shadow play performance, and the impact of policies. With the change in people's modern life, the infusion of western culture, and the popularity of film, the traditional shadow play performance can hardly meet the demands of contemporary young people for visual impact. In addition, the popularity of the Internet has also facilitated people to watch various types of films and television works online, hindering people's
enthusiasm for going to the theatre to watch operas in person. In terms of shadow play performances' content, most traditional plays are adaptations of divine dramas and fables. Although some groups have added colorful props and beautiful lights, the plot is still somewhat old-fashioned and cannot be related to modern life. This is because many folk shadow play groups do not have the financial ability to develop innovative new scripts, nor do they have enough professional ability to change the traditional performance and singing methods. Therefore, most actors can only survive by continuing the ancient artistic tradition, which is a critical obstacle attracting young audiences.\(^{191}\) In terms of policy, as the Chinese government vigorously promotes Mandarin, more young people give up learning dialects and even think that speaking dialects is backward. However, most shadow plays are sung in local dialects. Young people may not understand, which hinders their enthusiasm for watching the opera.

The downturn of the shadow play market directly led to a sharp drop in the number of Chinese shadow play groups. In the 1950s, there were more than 1500 troupes in Hunan province and over 900 in Hebei province. Now they have dropped to over 200 and 80 respectively, and this situation is generally similar in other parts of China. In addition, society's demand for shadow play performance has decreased, leading to the problems of unstable work and low salaries of opera actors.\(^{192}\) Take Xiangdong Shadow Play Troupe in Changli County, Hebei Province, as an example. The average performance time is about 100 days per year, which

\(^{191}\) Wei Liqun “Zhongguo Piyingxi de tianye diaocha yu chuancheng baohu wenti” [Field investigation and inheritance protection of Chinese Shadow Play], \textit{Xiqu tanjiu} 83 [Drama Research], no. 8 (2014): 5.
\(^{192}\) Ibid.
means that a shadow play troupe is unemployed for an average of the two-thirds period each year. In terms of income, the actor's salary is decided by the basic salary and performance commission. Their basic salary is between 1800 and 2000 RMB per month, and the commission for each performance is about 100 to 200 RMB, which is related to the actors' performance skills and qualifications.\textsuperscript{193} In this case, the average annual income of a shadow actor is about 50,000 RMB, lower than the lowest standard of the yearly income of Chinese families. [Table 5.1].

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|}
\hline
Class & Annual Income (unit: 10,000 RMB) \\
\hline
Very Poor & < 8 \\
Lower Class & 8-15 \\
Middle Class & 16-30 \\
Upper Class & 31-100 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

The second problem is that the aging trend of shadow play artists is severe. Nowadays, 90\% of the play-actors are over 60 years old, and there are very few young and middle-aged artists. Moreover, most well-known actors are too old to continue the performances, and some even can't move freely. When it comes to puppet carving artists, their average age is over 50 years old, only a few in the age group of 40 to 50 years old, and fewer under 40 years old with high-level carving skills. In this case, passing on the skills to the next generation seems the only

\textsuperscript{193} Zhang Xiangdong, June 2021.
way to develop the shadow play.\textsuperscript{194} However, due to the shrinking market and low income, many young people are unwilling to engage in related industries. As a result, even many in-service actors have lost hope for developing this art. The shadow play scholar, Wei Liqun's questionnaire survey of actors in 2014 shows that less than 30% of the actors think shadow play can develop. Still, most people believe that art can only be barely maintained without the case of development.\textsuperscript{195}

The third problem is that it is difficult to pass on skills. There are different lyrics in traditional shadow play performance, and the singing tunes and techniques are complex. All of these require actors to practice basic skills all year round, which is difficult for young people to master in a short time. In terms of puppet carving, it also requires a lot of complicated techniques. The choice of raw materials and the craftsmen's carving skills are very demanding, which beginners can only achieve after decades of practice. Therefore, most of today's craftsmen have mastered the most basic carving skills but cannot make lifelike puppets like their predecessors. In this case, to improve efficiency, some junior carvers gave up learning carving skills but used machines to do mass production. However, the puppet made by the devices is simple in form and lacks details. In the long run, the large-scale use of machines will hinder the enthusiasm of beginners to learn puppet carving skills, leading to the gradual loss of critical handicraft skills as intangible cultural heritage.\textsuperscript{196}

\textsuperscript{195} Wei Liqun, \textit{Field Investigation}, 7 (see chap. 5, n. 191).
\textsuperscript{196} Ibid., 8-9.
The fourth problem is the loss and severe damage of the props in shadow play. Recently, many vendors have been committed to buying shadow play heritage in large quantities, such as shadow puppets, scripts, musical instruments, etc., and then selling them overseas at high prices, resulting in fewer props for shadow play left locally. In addition to human factors, natural factors are also important reasons for the decrease of shadow puppet props. For example, in July 2021, there was a catastrophic flood in Germany. After the flood, thousands of Chinese shadow play works and many precious materials collected by German biologist Dr. Christian Riedel were buried in the mud. Although volunteers from all over the world came to the local area to participate in the emergency repair, most puppets could not be repaired due to severe damage. [Fig. 5.1].

197 Ibid., 9.
198 Xinran Sun and Huiya Wu, “Wo zai ke long xiu wenwu: Zhongde lianhe Piying xiuufu zhiyuan huodong de yitian” [I was repairing cultural relics in Cologne: a day of Sino German joint shadow puppet restoration volunteer activity], German News (European Times German Edition, September 2, 2021), https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/sdySiyFTEJq0GDLq2aBwCw.
199 Wei Liqun, September 2021.
Shortcomings of Existing Measures

The Chinese government has issued some policies and measures to help the inheritance and development of the shadow play to meet these challenges. For example, with the approval of the cultural department, the Beijing Intangible Cultural Heritage Development Foundation was established in 2013 to provide financial support for the development of a series of Chinese
traditional intangible cultural heritages such as the shadow play. In addition, to protect the inheritors, the government has also established subsidy policies for shadow play inheritors at the national, provincial, and municipal levels. If shadow play artists meet the corresponding assessment standards, they can apply for additional subsidies.

However, this policy has some apparent disadvantages: the process of applying for a grant is very long and cumbersome, and the conditions to be met are too high, resulting in most people being unable to meet the requirements. For example, the applicant must complete a certain number of shadow play performances within the specified time and publish academic articles in authoritative journals. However, due to the depression of the shadow play market and the Covid epidemic's impact, it is difficult for applicants or groups to complete many performances. Moreover, some elderly artists are too old to conduct high-intensity performances. In the academic aspect, except for relevant scholars, most drama actors only have performance skills, but do not have enough academic or theoretical background to publish scholarly articles. In addition, the subsidies granted by the government are not enough to support the new drama creation and the lives of inheritors, resulting in many older artists still needing the support of their children. To be specific, national shadow play inheritors can receive 20,000 RMB a year if

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they meet the assessment requirements. However, provincial inheritors can only receive 6,000 RMB, and municipal inheritors have no financial subsidies.201

With the government's approval, some art schools set up special shadow play performance classes to teach students knowledge and skills. According to the skill category, the classes are divided into singing, shadow puppet performance, and puppet carving classes. In this case, students can selectively and systematically learn specific skills.202 However, the unified training for students will lead to their singing skills and styles being too formatted and lack of ability to master the progress of drama performance and adapt to changes. Moreover, many performance skills taught orally by senior artists are not included in the teaching materials, so they are likely to disappear with the death of the old actor. In addition, although academic courses are also offered in such art schools, the level and ability of teachers are relatively low, leading to the low cultural literacy of most shadow play students.203 The Chinese government pays more attention to protecting intangible cultural heritage than before. Shadow puppet troupes also adhere to innovation in the dilemma, looking for a road suitable for developing this art. However, the current policies and measures are not perfect enough to help this art inherit and develop.

201 Wu Yutong, “Guojiaji feiyi chuanchengren buzhi shengzhi meinian 2 wanyuan” [The subsidy for national intangible cultural heritage inheritors increased to 20,000 RMB per year], CPPCC network, (Heilongjiang: Morning Post, September 8, 2016), http://www.rmzxb.com.cn/c/2016-09-08/1024342.shtml; Zhang Xiangdong, June 2021.


203 Wei Liqun, Field Investigation, 6.
UNESCO's Guidance on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is an international organization that aims to contribute to building a culture of peace, poverty eradication, sustainable development, and intercultural dialogue through education, science, culture, communication, and information. According to the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (referred to as Convention), intangible heritage can be embodied in five aspects: oral tradition and expression, performing arts, social customs, rituals, and festival activities, knowledge and practice about nature and the universe, and traditional crafts. As an oral tradition and expression, Chinese Shadow Play was selected into the representative list of human intangible cultural heritage in 2011. Therefore, the Organizing guidance on protecting intangible cultural heritage has essential reference value for developing shadow puppet art.

The Convention guides the protection of intangible cultural heritage at domestic and international levels. At the national level, the State Party should make efforts in four aspects: first, ensure the creation, maintenance, and inheritance of the communities where the heritage is located, and actively mobilize relevant groups and individuals to participate widely in the formulation and implementation of plans and policies. Second, ensure that Heritage-related

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communities, groups, and individuals are the primary beneficiaries at the spiritual and material levels. Third, confirm that heritage protection plans and policies respect ethical considerations and do not deviate from the background of the heritage or change its essence to harm the viability of intangible cultural heritage. Fourth, promote the cooperation between sustainable development experts and cultural brokers and adequately integrate the protection of intangible cultural heritage into plans, policies, and programs both inside and outside the cultural and art community.  

At the international level, the Convention points out that channels for mutual exchange of information and experience and working mechanisms for mutual assistance can be established through international cooperation and assistance. At present, there are many forms of international aid, including the provision of experts and professionals for countries with intangible cultural heritage in crisis; Train all kinds of relevant personnel; Help develop guidelines and measures; Establish and operating infrastructure; Provide equipment and skills; Other financial and technical assistance, such as donations or low-interest loans. Although the shadow play is a unique form of artistic expression in China, drama art's performing skills and development policies in other regions or countries still have practical reference value.

In addition, the Convention also provides guidance from other aspects, such as policy and education. First, in terms of policy, the government should formulate a general guideline for

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207 Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Development at the National Level, vol. 2, 2020 (Oxford: Baseline Arts Ltd), 64-76.

heritage protection, play its due role in society, and incorporate heritage protection into planning.

Second, one or more institutions in charge of preserving intangible cultural heritage in their territory should be designated or established. In this proposal, the subject of establishing institutions is not limited to governments, but according to China's national conditions, officially launched or authorized institutions are more authoritative. Third, encourage scientific, technical, academic research and research methods to provide theoretical guidance and technical support for the comprehensive protection of cultural heritage. Fourth, the government should adopt appropriate laws and administrative policies to provide places and space for activities and performance of intangible cultural heritage to promote their inheritance. In terms of education, intangible cultural heritage should be respected and promoted in society mainly through educational programs to publicize and disseminate information to the public and provide training programs to heritage-related communities and people. In addition to heritage, it is also necessary to promote education in the protection of natural places and memorial sites essential for expressing the culture and publicizing the threats and seriousness of such heritage. Among them, the media can play an influential role in publicity, which should be used reasonably.²⁰⁹

Protection, Transmission, and Development of Chinese Shadow Play

Through the previous analysis of the current situation and difficulties of Chinese shadow play, it can be concluded that the current shadow play is facing the threat of extinction. To save this precious Chinese traditional cultural heritage, the author gives reasonable measures for the protection of shadow puppet art from three aspects: protection, inheritance, and development, combined with UNESCO's guidelines for the protection of intangible cultural heritage and the successful experience of Peking Opera inheritance.

Protection

In all work related to intangible cultural heritage, protection is the premise and foundation for the maintenance and development of art. For the shadow play art, protection can start from four aspects: policy protection, physical protection, art protection, and the preservation of the environment and community related to the cultural heritage.

For the policy protection, as mentioned in the previous section, the government has indeed made some efforts to protect the art of shadow play, such as setting up the intangible cultural heritage foundation, and providing subsidies to the inheritors. However, these policies are not enough to save the art. For example, the government has not promulgated relevant laws to punish the behaviors that hinder or destroy the protection and dissemination of intangible culture and art. At present, the number of foundations is too small, and the subsidies is not enough to support the development of shadow play troupes in different areas. As a result, in the
first recommendation, according to the suggestions on Other Protection Measures in the Convention, the government should formulate general policies for the protection of cultural heritage and introduce relevant laws to severely punish all acts that interfere with or damage the protection and publicity of cultural heritage. The government should also set up special institutions and archives in different administrative regions to protect their cultural heritage and provide more financial assistance for their development. In this process, Guangzhou Cantonese Opera Art Museum could be a good reference, which has collected various related opera costumes, documents, materials, etc., providing strong support for the development of the drama.\footnote{Han Shuang, “The Museum of Cantonese Opera Art / Architectural Design and Research Institute of SCUT + Architectural Design and Research Institute of Guangdong Province,” ArchDaily (ArchDaily, November 4, 2019), https://www.archdaily.com/898889/the-museum-of-cantonese-opera-art-architectural-design-and-research-institute-of-scut-plus-architectural-design-and-research-institute-of-guangdong-province.} In addition, local governments should authorize and support non-governmental cultural heritage protection institutions, and encourage the active participation of heritage related individuals, people, and communities.\footnote{Ibid., 9.}

The second is the physical protection related to shadow play art. Although the shadow play is an intangible cultural heritage, this art also includes a series of physical heritage, which should be collected and properly preserved. In this process, relevant institutions need to collect the shadow play scripts in different periods scattered among the people, and preserve the performance props, shadow puppets, accompanying musical instruments, puppet production materials, etc. These heritages not only represent the history of the shadow play art, but also
show the superb carving skills of carver predecessors and the methods of ancient people to depict characters, so they have cultural and research value. Besides, it is also very important to protect the literature related to shadow play art, such as shadow play modeling records of different styles, puppet modeling paper manuscript, folk activities of shadow play in different periods, and traditional inheritance methods, which provide a valuable theoretical basis for the protection and development of this heritage.\textsuperscript{212} It is worth noting that since shadow play is a folk performing art and there are not many official records related to it, institutions should focus on the folk and go deep into the grass-roots level to comprehensively investigate and collect all related information.\textsuperscript{213}

The third is the protection of shadow play art skills, including scriptwriting, singing, accompaniment, skills of making and manipulating puppets, performance ceremony, inheritance system, ideological connotation, etc. Besides, puppet repair technology is also an essential skill to prolong its lifespan due to the impermanence of the shadow puppets' materials. All of these are essential elements of a shadow play and are mastered by puppet carvers and shadow play actors. Therefore, the protection of inheritors is the foundation of the protection of shadow play culture.\textsuperscript{214} In promoting the income generation and sustainable life of inheritors, the Convention makes valuable recommendations, that is, encourages States parties to take appropriate legal and financial measures to provide more opportunities for cultural heritage

\textsuperscript{212} Wei Liqun, \textit{Field Investigation}, 10. (see chap. 5, n. 191).
\textsuperscript{213} Liqun Wei, September 2021.
\textsuperscript{214} Wei Liqun, \textit{Field Investigation}, 10.
related communities, groups, and individuals to generate income and maintain their livelihoods, to ensure the sustainable practice, dissemination, and protection of cultural heritage.\footnote{Safeguarding Intangible Cultural, 70 (see chap. 5, n. 207).}

Although intangible cultural heritage development foundations have been established in some regions of China to provide subsidies for the creation and basic life of local shadow puppet art inheritors, the insufficient level of subsidies and difficult application requirements have added difficulties to the applicants. As mentioned above, the applicant needs to complete a specified number of shadow puppet performances and publish academic articles to prove their contribution to the dissemination and development of shadow puppet art. At present, national, and provincial shadow puppet inheritors can only receive subsidies of 20,000 and 6,000 RMB each year after passing the application assessment.\footnote{Wu Yutong, “The subsidy for inheritors,” CPPCC Network (see chap. 5, n. 201).} To solve the problem of difficult application and better support shadow puppet inheritors, relevant foundations should reduce the application requirements, such as reducing the demanding for the number of performances during the epidemic and reducing the academic requirements for inheritors with low academic background. The amount of subsidy should also be appropriately increased to make up for the economic pressure caused by inflation at this stage, and the subsidy restrictions on municipal heirs should be liberalized. The foundation can also cooperate with the media to appeal to the public for donations, to reduce the financial pressure of the foundation. In this process, the State shall authorize relevant institutions to supervise the approval and subsidy implementation, to ensure
that the applicant is the main beneficiary. Besides, based on the suggestions put forward in Chapter III and Article 13 of the Convention, the State Party should take measures to establish intangible cultural heritage literature institutions.\textsuperscript{217} It is suggested that the Chinese government can set up a special shadow play art museum to preserve the collected written and audio-visual materials, or hand over some of the materials to a Shadow Play Art Troupe or art schools that offers shadow play teaching, to achieve the purpose of education. In this process, institutions can also record videos of local artists' singing and puppet operation skills, and record intangible cultural heritage in a tangible way to protect it.\textsuperscript{218}

The fourth is the protection of the ecological environment of shadow play art. What intangible cultural heritage protection really needs is the living inheritance and the self-viability that enables it to be inherited. Heritage can have sustained and stable vitality only if it is kept in the middle of people's daily production and life in a living form.\textsuperscript{219} Chapter III, Article 13 of the Convention points out that the State shall provide places and spaces for activities and expression of cultural heritage to promote the inheritance of such heritage.\textsuperscript{220} Therefore, it is very important to protect the birthplace, community, and traditional performance venues of shadow play art.


\textsuperscript{218} Wei Liqun, Jidong Shadow Play, 222.

\textsuperscript{219} Wei Liqun, Field Investigation, 11.

\textsuperscript{220} Convention for the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 9 (see chap. 5, n. 209).
Transmission of the Art

In the process of the shadow play’s transmission, two aspects can be started from: skill inheritance and cultural inheritance. Inheriting skill means cultivating a new generation of shadow play actors. Inheriting shadow play art and its representative culture needs to cultivate a new generation of audience's interest in shadow play and create a stable market.

The traditional inheritance of shadow play is carried out in the form of master with apprentice. The master is generally served by senior actors in shadow play troupes, which is also the main means for the troupe to train actors in the past. In most cases, the disciples would stay at the master's home during their study period, so that the master can guide and supervise them at any time. Therefore, they are closer than the traditional relationship between teachers and students, more like the relationship between family members. However, this informal teaching method will cause some disadvantages, such as unsystematic teaching content and low efficiency. First, the shadow puppet artists at that time were not professional teachers. Most of them taught students according to their own learning experience and memory, so the teaching content was not systematic. Besides, artists always had heavy performance tasks, they could only use scattered time to teach students, which will lead to low teaching efficiency and cannot train too many students at one time.\(^{221}\)

Today, this traditional teaching model has been changed. Many art schools have set up special shadow play courses, and the classes are divided into singing classes, puppets

\(^{221}\) Zhang Xiangdong, June 2021.
manipulating classes, puppet carving classes, etc. according to the different skills taught, to meet the students with different interests.\textsuperscript{222} Although this unified teaching method can ensure systematic and comprehensive teaching content, it leads to the formatting of the students' singing skills and styles, resulting in the lack of flexibility of the performance. Moreover, many of the performance skills of shadow puppet predecessors have not been included in the course, so there is a risk of loss.\textsuperscript{223} In addition, because such schools pay more attention to the cultivation of students' drama major, the academic level of most teachers is low, which is not conducive to the improvement of students' academic quality.\textsuperscript{224}

About such issues, the Convention makes relevant recommendations, that is, improving the ability of teachers to teach cultural heritage and to develop guidelines and manuals for this purpose.\textsuperscript{225} To solve the problem of students' rigid performance skills, first-line shadow puppet artists can be hired to teach regularly in schools to share performance skills and live performance experience. In terms of students' academic issues, the drama schools should employ professional drama teachers and academic teachers simultaneously and pay attention to the cultivation of students' comprehensive quality.

In terms of the inheritance of shadow play culture, the modes of communication can be divided into two types: on campus and off campus, to popularize China's intangible cultural

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item\textsuperscript{222} “Enrollment profile,” \textit{Tangshan Art School} (see chap. 5, n. 215).
\item\textsuperscript{223} Wei Liqun, \textit{Field Investigation}, 6.
\item\textsuperscript{224} Jiu Hao (Member of China Song and Dance Troupe, 2010 Graduate of Tangshan Art School) in discussion with the author, July 2021.
\item\textsuperscript{225} \textit{Raising awareness about intangible cultural heritage}, 50 (see chap.5, n. 215).
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
heritage for different groups of people. In school publicity, the Convention puts forward several suggestions: schools should carry out intangible cultural heritage teaching in the curriculum according to local specific conditions and promote interdisciplinary scientific, technological, and artistic research activities; Carry out summer camps, cultural heritage tourism, or travel to show the natural places and memorial places required by the heritage, to support people's full experience of intangible cultural heritage.226

It is worth mentioning that Beijing Opera has been successfully introduced into campuses as an important category of China's intangible cultural heritage. With the permission of the government, the troupe enables students to understand the charm of Beijing Opera and cultivate their love for Chinese traditional art by performing plays, holding lectures, displaying opera related costumes and props on campus. In this case, the successful publicity of Beijing Opera can provide a reference for the publicity of shadow puppet art on campus.227 In addition, intangible cultural heritage institutions can also compile different cultural heritages into pamphlets and distribute them to schools and universities to let students have a basic understanding of Chinese traditional culture and heritage. Shadow puppet troupes can regularly go to colleges for performances and lectures, so that students can experience the charm of shadow puppet art on site. In this process, the government should take corresponding legal measures to ensure that the

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226 Ibid.
227 “Beijing Opera and college students,” Performance of the Yuan San Troupes (see chap. 4, n. 188).
education system promotes self-respect and mutual respect for individuals, communities, and groups, and cannot alienate people from intangible cultural heritage in any way.\textsuperscript{228}

In the popularization and publicity of shadow play art to the public, the media plays a vital role. By analyzing the instructions given by the Convention in using the media to improve people's attention of intangible cultural heritage, the author summarizes several methods and measures suitable for the dissemination of shadow play art. First, the media should promote the public's understanding of intangible cultural heritage as a means of cultivating social cohesion and sustainable development. In this process, the media should guide the public beyond the pure appreciation of shadow play entertainment performances, but to deeply understand the Chinese traditional culture and thought carried by cultural heritage. Second, encourage the audio media to produce high-quality radio and television programs and documentaries, improve the visibility of shadow play art and highlight its role in contemporary society. Third, encourage the media to contribute to raising public awareness of the diversity of shadow play art expression, especially through the production of special programs or products for different target groups. Based on the different scripts and performance styles in different regions, shadow play will show various effects, such as the exciting martial arts plot, the historical plot showing the people's living conditions in different periods, and educational fables. Young people may prefer to watch dramas with a more dramatic martial arts theme. The older generation tend to watch the plot showing their young life. Children are more suitable to watch fables with simple plot and humor.

\textsuperscript{228} Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage, 67-68 (see chap. 5, n. 207).
Therefore, making shadow play theme programs suitable for audiences of different ages can better stimulate the public’s interest in shadow play art and let them understand the diversity of shadow play heritage forms. Fourth, encourage the media to use the existing networks to support the community’s heritage protection, or hold forums at the local and national levels to promote information sharing within the community, such as measures to protect and develop different kinds of cultural heritages. Fifth, encourage the media to carry on shadow play art in other informal ways, such as making interactive programs and games for young people, stimulate their interest and lay a foundation for young people to actively understand Chinese traditional culture.229

*Development*

Carrying forward the intangible cultural heritage is the goal of protecting and inheriting this heritage. Balancing cultural heritage protection and industrial development, and coordinating the relationship between protection, inheritance and development are the core of heritage development.230

In the process of protecting intangible cultural heritage, helping relevant practitioners to obtain productive employment is the premise of promoting the sustainable development of heritage. However, to further open the market, it is necessary to reform the adaptability of

229 *Raising awareness about intangible cultural heritage*, 52-53 (see chap.6, n. 216).
traditional art to meet the needs of modern society. However, in the process of reform and innovation of shadow play, stakeholders who adhere to different views are divided into different factions. Conservatives who advocate completely retaining the traditional form of shadow play believe that the premise of protecting intangible cultural heritage is the protection of its "original ecology". The development and continuation of any national culture and art is also based on tradition. Therefore, the reform of heritage may lead to the loss of traditional culture. The reformers believe that innovation is an important way to ensure the vigorous vitality of intangible cultural heritage. They insist on examining shadow play from the perspective of market economy. Only by innovating drama content and forms of expression and making it close to the trend of the times, can they further open the market of young people and obtain more capital income.\textsuperscript{231}

In fact, overemphasizing the protection of the original ecology of cultural heritage will lead to the stagnation and obsolescence of cultural development. However, too much emphasis on the innovation of the cultural industry may lead to the loss of tradition and foundation of culture. Therefore, it is essential to balance the protection and industrial development of intangible cultural heritage. Different cultural forms need different treatment methods. For some classic or endangered shadow play styles and forms of expression, complete protection is needed to ensure their inheritance and facilitate future research. Meanwhile, shadow play troupes and relevant institutions should also create new plays that keep pace with the times and adapt to

\textsuperscript{231} Ibid., 10-11.
contemporary humanistic concepts, ways of thinking, and life rhythm based on tradition, to attract young audiences.\textsuperscript{232} 

Taking Xiangdong shadow play troupe as an example, head Zhang Xiangdong reformed shadow play performance in three aspects. First, in shadow puppet modeling, he exaggerated the traditional puppet image to make it more vivid. Secondly, in the aspect of musical instrument accompaniment, he bravely added modern and western elements to the traditional performance accompaniment. In performing the script of Journey to the West, bullfighting music is added to the story of the battle between the monkey king and the ox demon king, which makes the scene more humorous and vivid.\textsuperscript{233} In terms of performance form, Zhang Xiangdong integrates modern technology into shadow puppet performance, such as using various props to simulate river, fire, and other scenes to make the performance more realistic. Furthermore, inspired by fairy tales, Xiangdong shadow play troupe has created a series of new shadow plays suitable for children to further expand the audience of shadow play art.\textsuperscript{234} 

In addition to the reform of the content and form of shadow play performance, some measures should be taken to further expand the popularity and influence of this cultural heritage, such as holding various shadow play related competitions and awards to stimulate the attention of the public and the participation enthusiasm of actors. At present, shadow play art related awards and competitions include National Puppet Shadow Play Golden Lion Award, 

\textsuperscript{232} Ibid. 
\textsuperscript{233} Journey to the West is one of the four traditional masterpieces in China. Monkey King and ox demon king are classic characters in the book, which are created based on monkeys and bulls respectively. 
\textsuperscript{234} Zhang Xiangdong, July 2021.
International Puppet Award, Guangling Cup, etc. These competitions and honors have played a positive role in improving the living standards of shadow play practitioners, industry pride and promoting benign competition in the industry.

Besides, as a world intangible cultural heritage, the development of shadow play should not only stay in China, but also promote its overseas development and expand its international influence. It can also be used as a diplomatic way to let the world understand East Asian culture. However, the art of shadow play is facing the same problems overseas as China, such as the damage of puppets and objects; the loss of puppetry manipulating skills and singing skills, etc. Beyond that, how to effectively spread shadow play art overseas is another difficult problem. The results of the overseas dissemination experiment of Beijing Opera mentioned in the fourth chapter show that language and culture are the main reasons that hinder the international development of Chinese drama. To alleviate these problems, the successful dissemination of Beijing Opera can provide a reference for the development of shadow play. Before each shadow play, theater staff can explain and display the props, puppets and accompanying musical instruments needed for the performance in English or a local language, and distribute the instructions on the performance repertoire, plot, and characters to the audience. In the process of

235 “Muou piying yanyuan jinshiijiang duokui” [Puppet shadow puppet actor won the Golden Lion Award], Zhongguo Gongchandang xinwen [Communist Party of China News], (Hunan: Ribao, October 9, 2014), http://cpc.people.com.cn/n/2014/1009/c87228-25792909.html; The International Puppet Federation, founded in 1929, is a non-governmental international organization and cultural branch of UNESCO The International Puppet Federation holds a general assembly and International Puppet Festival every four years in a city of its Member States, enjoying a high reputation in the field of world art. “Guoji muou lianhui” [International Puppet Federation], Baidu Encyclopedia, (Wenhua chuantong wang, June 16, 2012), https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E5%9B%BD%E9%99%85%E6%9C%A8%E5%81%B6%E8%81%94%E4%BC%9A/5920235?fr=aladdin#reference-[1]-8773305-wrap.
explanation, they should place emphasis on explaining the background of the plot and combing the relationship between the plot and the characters. More importantly, it is necessary to clarify the cultural differences between China and foreign countries, so that local audiences can enjoy the performance after they have a basic understanding of Chinese culture. In addition, during the performance, an additional electronic screen can be prepared to synchronously display appropriate subtitles of lines and lyrics, to facilitate the audience's understanding. The above measures can minimize the misunderstanding of foreign audiences due to language barriers and cultural differences and help to cultivate loyal audiences for shadow play internationally.\footnote{Siqing, et. al., “Peking Opera in the world,” Theory and Modernization (see chap. 4, n. 181).}
Conclusion

Intangible cultural heritage is an essential part of cultural heritage, representing tremendous historical and artistic achievements of a nation or an ethnic group. Moreover, intangible cultural heritage is of great significance for studying the evolution of human civilization, showing the diversity of times and cultures.237

However, in modern society the protection and inheritance of many precious aspects of intangible cultural heritage face different challenges. Through the investigation and analysis of the present situation of shadow play in eastern Hebei province, the development dilemma of intangible cultural heritage in China is mainly caused by three factors: the impact of modern culture; Traditional culture, and education are insufficient; Government support is inadequate. The development of contemporary society has led to earth-shaking changes in people's lifestyles. People's enthusiasm for traditional art is gradually replaced by new forms of entertainment, such as movies and video games, etc. As a result, conventional artistic performances such as shadow play are getting less attention. In addition, China's current educational system and assessment methods attach great importance to cultivating students' scientific knowledge and academic ability, ignoring the primary education of traditional culture. Therefore, most young people do not understand the cultural connotation and national spirit carried by intangible cultural heritage, let alone take the initiative to watch or learn the art and culture. In this case, the market for

intangible cultural heritage gradually shrinks and is marginalized in people's lives. This has further led to a decline in the income of artists and practitioners in many related fields, making it difficult to find young people who are willing to inherit traditions and gradually losing pathways for the development of the art. Besides, although the government has made some efforts to support intangible cultural heritage, such as establishing cultural heritage foundations and providing financial assistance, this help is not enough to save the declining trend of many intangible heritages.

To address the above problems, the author takes shadow play as the research object and puts forward concrete suggestions on the development of shadow play art from three aspects: protection, transmission, and development. In terms of protection, the author suggests that art can be comprehensively protected from five elements, physical objects (including shadow puppets and traditional scripts), historical records, skills, inheritors, artistic ecological environment, etc. In the process of protecting skills, the puppet restoration technology may be even more essential due to the impermanence of the puppet-making materials, it can greatly prolong the life of the puppet. In general, the government should establish shadow play archives to preserve these precious objects and technologies, refer to the Guangzhou Cantonese Opera Art Museum mentioned in the previous chapter.

In terms of transmission, the author suggests reforming the education system. Professional art colleges should provide inheritors with systematic guidance on art background, theory, performance skills, and the teaching of scientific and academic knowledge, etc. In
schools and universities, performances and lectures focused on traditional Chinese culture and art, such as shadow play, should be added so that students can have a basic understanding of China's intangible cultural heritage and cultivate interest. In development, both domestic and foreign platforms should be fully utilized. Increasing relevant professional competitions and activities in China can raise people's awareness of the shadow play and enhance opportunities for practitioners in this field. Overseas, we can reduce foreigners' misunderstandings of shadow play performance due to language barriers and cultural differences by utilizing translation, interaction, and explanation. In addition, shadow play can also be used as a diplomatic means to publicize Chinese culture and spirit.

It is worth noting that innovation is the core of the continuous inheritance and development of intangible cultural heritage in modern society. Only by keeping pace with the times can traditional drama art reflect people's spiritual and cultural changes in the new era and ensure the vitality and freshness of art. However, innovation does not mean breaking away from tradition. On the contrary, the reform should seek a balance; that is, while retaining the tradition of intangible cultural heritage, it should integrate modern or international elements and expand audience diversity. Therefore, how to balance the tradition and innovation of intangible cultural heritage in the reform may become the focus of attention of researchers in the field of intangible cultural heritage protection and development in the future.

Taking Chinese shadow play as an example, this thesis discusses the situation and challenges of intangible cultural heritage in modern society and puts forward comprehensive
recommendations for its future development. However, intangible cultural heritage exists all
over the world, representing the precious cultures and historical traditions of different ethnic
groups. Therefore, the thesis also aims to arouse public attention to intangible cultural heritage
and encourage more people to participate in its protection and transmission.
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