

Program Booklet

Spring 2013

ICS Graduate Forum

New Perspectives

on

Chinese Oral and Performing Literature

18 March 2013

The Ohio State University
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free and open to the public



Organizer

Institute for Chinese Studies

Co-Sponsors

Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures

Center for Folklore Studies

Graduate Association of Chinese Linguistics

Graduate Students of East Asian Languages and Literatures

Organizing Committee

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*Qiong Yang

*Ziying You (GREALL vice president)

Yutian Tan (GACL president)

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* Our three special presenters, invited to be part of the organizing committee, will have an opportunity to deliver a second rendition of their talks later in the week in San Diego, at the 2013 CHINOPERL Conference, held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies.

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Program

Monday, 18 March 2013. 5:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Hagerty Hall, Room 045 (1775 College Road)

5:00 - 5:15 Food and refreshments
5:15 - 5:20 Welcoming remarks



Session 1. Spoken Drama and Myth-Making Chair: Prof. Kirk Denton, DEALL

- 5:20 - 5:40 **He, Man.** "Made in Academy: Spoken Drama, Participatory Citizens, and Nation-Building in the National Drama School, 1935-1949"
- 5:40 - 6:00 ***Yang, Qiong.** "From Patriot to Poet of the People: Guo Moruo's Historical Play *Qu Yuan* and Its Revisions"
- 6:00 - 6:20 ***You, Ziyang.** "Contested Myth and History: Yao and Shun and Their Beliefs in Hongtong, Shanxi, China"

Session 2. Poetry-Writing and Rhyming Chair: Prof. Patricia Sieber, DEALL

- 6:25 - 6:45 **Li, Mengjun.** "Performing Talent on Walls: Poetry Writing and Transformation of Space in Scholar-Beauty Fiction (1644-1911)"
- 6:45 - 7:05 **Chen, Litong.** "Why Do Some Rhymes Occur More Frequently Than Others? – A case Study of *Yue-Ou*"
- 7:05 - 7:25 **Tsui, Tsz-Him.** "Mandopop Rhymes and Phonology"

Session 3. Love, Humor & Folksong Traditions Chair: Prof. Mark Bender, DEALL

- 7:30 - 7:50 **Tan, Yutian.** "Humor in Peking Opera: A Case Study of *The Phoenix Pavilion*"
- 7:50 - 8:10 ***Gibbs, Levi.** "Singing the Region: Tensions in the Transition from Local to Regional Folksong Traditions in Northern China"
- 8:10 - 8:30 **Su, Lulei.** "Learning to Love: Cultural Models in *The Story of Oriole*"
- 8:30 Closing remarks
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Abstracts

1. He, Man. "Made in Academy: Spoken Drama, Participatory Citizens, and Nation-Building in the National Drama School, 1935-1949"

If spoken drama "stroke a responsive chord" only among an urban and educated minority in the 1920s, its patronage network grew significantly after the 1930s by claiming both urban and rural masses among its supporters. No longer viewed as a bearer of high-class culture, spoken drama in the 1930s served as a channel for communicating with the broad public. This paper aims to explain this shift by examining an influential but unduly overlooked drama network, the National Drama School (*Guoli xiju xuexiao*), which was founded in 1935 in Nanjing and migrated to Chongqing and Jiang'an in the 1940s. By reconstructing the rehearsals, staging processes, and public performances of the Resistance play (*kang-zhan ju*)—*Metamorphosis* and the Shakespeare classic—*Hamlet*, this paper probes: how did the National Drama School link dramatists, student-actors, and local spectators together in a drama network? How did this drama network find a median between the seemingly paradoxical goals of producing participatory citizens and professionalizing performative culture? Similarly, how did it juggle the demands of political agendas, theatrical effectiveness, and artistic pursuits? In short, this paper aims to return the National Drama School to its rightful place at the foreground of spoken drama's popularization, and, by extension, China's national imagination and state building.

2. *Yang, Qiong. "From Patriot to Poet of the People: Guo Moruo's Historical Play *Qu Yuan* and Its Revisions"

The 1950s and 1960s canonization of modern Chinese literature is known for organized production of literary history, editing of existing works, and voluntary cooperation of writers. Although it is convenient to consider that the discipline of literature started in the early PRC period, however, many of the regulating practices actually have their predecessors. This essay will show that the practice of revising works to fit a political model was what Guo Moruo had already done in the 1940s. The writing, staging and revisions of *Qu Yuan* must be understood in the context of the 1930s to 1940s China, when there was a popular interest in the great poet among Chinese intellectuals. Because of the protagonist's historical significance and Guo's personal respect to him, the revisions of Qu's image were also revisions of the ideal Chinese intellectual and the Chinese spirit. These modifications, penned by Guo but reflecting collective opinions, documented shared understandings among pro-CCP intellectuals and people.

This paper will examine the historical background of the writing, staging and revisions of *Qu Yuan*. It asks in what manners political considerations, performing requirements and reception influenced Guo's play writing. The paper will illustrate that historical play was an important way through which intellectuals spoke to politics and interacted with the people. Pro-CCP intellectuals perceived theater as a "people's" art, not only because it is educational, but also because it is a collective art form.



3. *You, Ziyang. "Contested Myth and History: Yao and Shun and Their Beliefs in Hongtong, Shanxi, China"

The Chinese term *shenhua* 神话, is an indirect translation, via Japanese, of the Western term myth (Ma 1992; Ye, 2005; Liu 2006, 18-19). Yet, in pre-modern China there was no vernacular or indigenous concept which totally corresponded to that term. At the beginning of the twentieth century, when Chinese scholars began to build a modern discipline of Chinese mythology, they attempted to derive a concept equivalent to western "myth" from Chinese classical texts and historical documents. This examination process led these scholars to "mythologize" parts of historical texts into a new genre of *shenhua*.

I problematize this intellectual process of constructing "myth" in modern China and will draw on the methodology of ethnography to study the living "myth" traditions in a local community in Hongtong, Shanxi, in northern China. This particular case study centers on living traditions of worship of Yao and Shun, which according to historical records and local traditions are the ancestral kings in ancient China. I will utilize locals' points of view to interpret written and oral narratives concerning Yao and Shun that are reified by scholars as "myths", and explore the dynamics of the construction of preliterate history in a Chinese local context. In particular, this paper examines local meanings of Yao and Shun's stories, with a focus on how locals conceptualize Yao and Shun, how they conceive themselves through the reconstruction of contested ancient history, and what they desire through their reconstruction. In shifting the focus from the study of ancient texts to a methodology interrogating the living community, local people's understandings and interpretations of "mythical" figures like Yao and Shun become crucial in de-essentializing the reification of what we called "myth" in Chinese.



4. Li, Mengjun. "Performing Talent on Walls: Poetry Writing and Transformation of Space in Scholar-Beauty Fiction (1644-1911)"

The poetic sub-genre called *tibishi* (poems written on walls), which flourished in the Tang dynasty (618-907) and declined in later dynasties, has become a common plot device in plays and stories of the late imperial period. My study examines the use of *tibishi* in two scholar-beauty novels, namely, *Ping Shan Leng Yan* (earliest preface dated 1658) and *Bai-gui zhi* (earliest extent edition printed in 1807). The first example shows how the writing of poetry was used as a way of talent performing, serving to promote poetic talent and form a newly defined community of genius among writers and readers in scholar-beauty fiction in the early Qing. The second text shows how the authority of talent established in early scholar-beauty novels was challenged and modified later in novels of the same genre. It seeks to answer such questions as what motivates, enables, and justifies women's writing poetry on walls in the public space in fiction; what kind of relationship is it between the reception and circulation of *tibishi* and the point of its spatial origin; does the location of the writing influences the form and content of the writing; if so, how is it different; how does the inscription transform the nature of the immediate space and thus redrawing the previous social and gender boundaries; and, potentially, what social and historical factors might have led to the change between the two novels as described above.

5. Chen, Litong. "Why Do Some Rhymes Occur More Frequently Than Others? – A Case Study of Yue-Ou"

Yue-ou 粵謳 is a songbook written in early 19th century. It is one of the earliest colloquial Cantonese documents. This paper aims to explore the factor that may affect the occurrence frequency of rhyme groups. An intuitive hypothesis is that the occurrence frequency of a given rhyme group is related to the occurrence frequency of the characters belonging to that rhyme group in *Yue-ou*. This paper analyzes 110 songs in an electronic version of *Yue-ou* (Zhao and Chen 1985). Calculation shows that both the Yang 陽 and Yin 陰 rhymes are used in 55 lyrics. This suggests that rhymes from the Yang rhyme groups and Yin rhyme groups are used equally in *Yue-ou*. Statistical tests also show that there is no significant difference in sum of character frequency between the Yin and Yang rhyme groups. Two figures will be presented to show the correlations between rhyme occurrence (X) and character frequency (Y). In the two rhyme groups as a whole, $Y = 3.27 + 132 * X$ ($P < 0.001$); individually, in the Yang rhyme group, $Y = 3.55 + 175 * X$ ($p = 0.003$), and in the Yin group, rhyme group, $Y = -2.26 + 179 * X$ ($p = 0.001$). These regression models and fitted lines suggest that the more frequently characters in a rhyme group are used, the more occurrences of rhymes from this given rhyme group will be observed in the text.

6. Tsui, Tsz-Him. "Mandopop Rhymes and Phonology"

This talk explores the use of Mandopop lyrics as data for phonological analyses. Such data were often overlooked by phonologist studying Standard Mandarin, giving way to more "traditional" sources (Bao 1990, Lin 1989, Wang & Chang 2001). I argue that such lyrics are not only a convenient source of data, as they are easily retrieved online, but are also representative samples of the phonological grammar in Standard Mandarin, since they are popular across Chinese communities. Two studies of Mandopop rhymes, one on the status of medial glide in Mandopop rhymes, and another on the encoding of phonological similarities in lyrics, will be reported as examples. In the first study, I found that medial glides in Standard Mandarin do not participate in rhyming patterns in Mandopop. Therefore, there is no evidence for assigning the medial glide, along with the vowel nucleus and coda, under the rime structure (contra Wang & Chang 2001). In the second study, the frequencies of rhyme pairs in Mandopop lyrics were used as a measure of phonological similarity. Rimes that differ in their nasal codas, such as *an* and *ang*, were found to be much more similar than those that differ in their nucleus vowel, such as *an* and *in*. These results show that consistent phonological patterns are present in Mandopop lyrics, and thus such lyrics may indeed be used as reliable sources of data.

7. Tan, Yutian. "Humor in Peking Opera: A Case Study of *The Phoenix Pavilion*"



Humor research has contributed greatly to the study of linguistic pragmatics; however, it is a subject that has been escaped the attention of Chinese linguists. This is even more so in the case of Chinese opera. Chan (2006) is one of the few exceptions, which presents a linguistic study of humor in a Cantonese opera, *Shen Si Guan* 审死官 'The Judge Goes to Pieces.' This paper attempts

to fill the gap in conducting a study of humor in the scene, *Fengyi Ting* 凤仪亭 'Phoenix Pavilion,' in the Peking opera *Lü Bu yu Diao Chan* 吕布与貂蝉 'Lü Bu and Diao Chan,'

where Lü Bu breaks up with his adopted father, Dong Zhuo 董卓, over the beauty, Diao Chan 貂蝉. The criteria for humor for this study is defined based on Chan (2006, citing Schultz 1976): "a) Does the event elicit laughter or smiling? b) Was it produced with the intention of soliciting laughter or smiling?" After careful exploration, three types of strategies, including both non-verbal and verbal manifestations of humor, can be found in this opera scene. These are: 1) costumes and make-up of the actors, particularly those playing the clown (*choujue* 丑角) role; 2) manner of performance, usually accompanied by exaggerated body actions and rich facial expressions; and 3) word play, such as puns, conversational jokes and deliberate mistakes, which often lead to misunderstanding in action.

8. *Gibbs, Levi. "Singing the Region: Tensions in the Transition from Local to Regional Folksong Traditions in Northern China"

During the 1980s, folksingers at a regional song and dance troupe in northern China lamented the fact that there weren't enough songs available to adequately represent the region on stage. Spurred by such a deficit, singers sometimes found it necessary to "enlarge" (*fangda*) local, often humorous and somewhat bawdy, festival tunes into somber, majestic songs that represented the entire region. In the process, tensions between local and regional identities often emerged, with singers from one section of the region often unfamiliar with tunes from other sections. The negotiations back and forth between local and regional identity continue to be played out in performances even today, and point to tensions inherent to the constructed nature of regional representations. This paper examines selected case studies of songs sung by the "Folksong King of Western China," Wang Xiangrong, his relationship with the emerging regional identity in Northern Shaanxi province, and how he negotiates regional, local, and national identities in different performance contexts today.



9. Su, Lulei. "Learning to Love: Cultural Models in *The Story of Oriole*"

Yuan Zhen's *The Story of Oriole* is the original text for the later developed script *The Story of the Western Wing* which was repeatedly performed on stage. *The Story of Oriole* contains a number of cultural models consisting of recurrent figurers in Chinese literary history, such as the Holy One, Sima Xiangru, and so forth. By displacing themselves with these positive cultural models of romance, Student Zhang and Oriole first learn to express their love towards each other in the poetic exchange. Further, their meeting privately in the Western Wing echoes the recurring legend of "Meeting the Holy One." After Student Zhang's betrayal, they start accusing each other by referring to negative images and unfavorable allusions, such as Daji, Deng Tuzi, and *tousuo* (lechery flirtation), even though there is little resemblance in reality. In this sense, cultural models become an important device for the protagonists to negotiate their subjectivity with the surroundings. Their emotions and feelings are accordingly projected onto antithetical sets of cultural models. In addition, the protagonists even take actions by imitating the behavior of the selected legendary figures, such as silence, and meeting in private. Therefore, this research proposes that the concept of "cultural models" not only helps us understand the structure and development of *The Story of Oriole*, even the later *The Story of the Western Wing*, but also helps to shed new light on the puzzling question of if this story is a tragedy or just a "weird drama."



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