

KUNQU OPERA-CHINA



中国昆曲艺术

主编 吴新雷 朱栋霖



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引言

2001年5月18日,中国昆曲艺术被联合国教科文组织宣布列入首批“人类口头和非物质文化遗产代表作”。这表明,昆曲和她所代表的中华传统文化的价值获得了世界公认。“此曲只应天上有,人间能得几回闻?”古老而高雅优美的中国昆曲终于在21世纪初重获知音与赞赏。全国昆剧六团一所重振雄风,各地曲社前呼后应。今年阳春三月,佳音从北京传来,党和国家的领导同志对于抢救、保护、扶持昆曲的具体方针作出了重要批示。6月28日,联合国教科文组织第二十八届世界遗产大会在中国苏州举行,“世界自然、文化遗产”与“人类口头和非物质文化遗产”大放异彩,它的博大精深、凝重深厚的历史、文化、艺术、美学和人类精神价值得到今日社会的广泛认同与关注。保护世界遗产就是保护人类的文明和文明的多样性,就是保护我们人类的资源。传承弘扬中国文化瑰宝——昆曲的工作正在付诸实践。苏州藉着第二十八届世界遗产委员会大会召开的机缘,适时地推出了原创性《长生殿》和青春版《牡丹亭》两部大戏,博得观众热情赞许,在海内外演出盛况空前。在今日“全球化”、国际化时代,它的意义



在于将中国文化精神与中国智慧奉献给新世纪的人类。

昆曲,是我国现存最古老的戏曲形式,也是世界古老的三大戏剧源头之一。她发源于元朝末年苏州地区的昆山一带,原名昆山腔,至今已有六百余年历史。16世纪中叶经魏良辅改革后,昆山腔成为一种格律严谨、形式完备、声腔音乐婉转悦耳柔媚悠长的演唱艺术。又经许多文学艺术家奉献智慧,昆曲艺术成为融文学、戏剧、表演、音乐、舞蹈、美术于一体,富有诗情画意的舞台综合艺术,她集中国古典艺术与美学之大成,是东方艺术的杰出代表。她的丰富、严谨、完整、精深的戏剧艺术体系,成为中国各种戏曲发展的资源,被誉为“百戏之母”;她独特深厚的美学传统与独具神韵的东方风格,数百年来历经沧桑而始终对于人们具有永恒的魅力。

昆曲艺术是中国古代艺术家们天才创造的杰作,也是处于“全球化”时代的21世纪的我们实践文化创新的不竭的资源。

保护、继承、弘扬、发展昆曲的工作任重而道远。继承传统经典剧目与艺术,培育青年演员与发展昆曲艺术,研究中国昆曲的历史与现状,挖掘与整理昆曲的历史资料、文物与遗迹,向21世纪的人们宣传与推广昆曲这一中国文化代表的杰出价值,需要我们为之竭尽全力。

本书意在较全面系统地介绍昆曲历史、艺术及其在当代的发展情况,重探昆曲源流,阐释昆曲奥秘,并以九百幅经典剧照、明清珍本木刻版插图展现昆剧精华,召唤昆曲的历史记忆与舞台生命。

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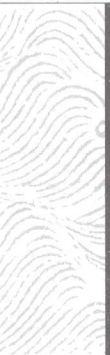


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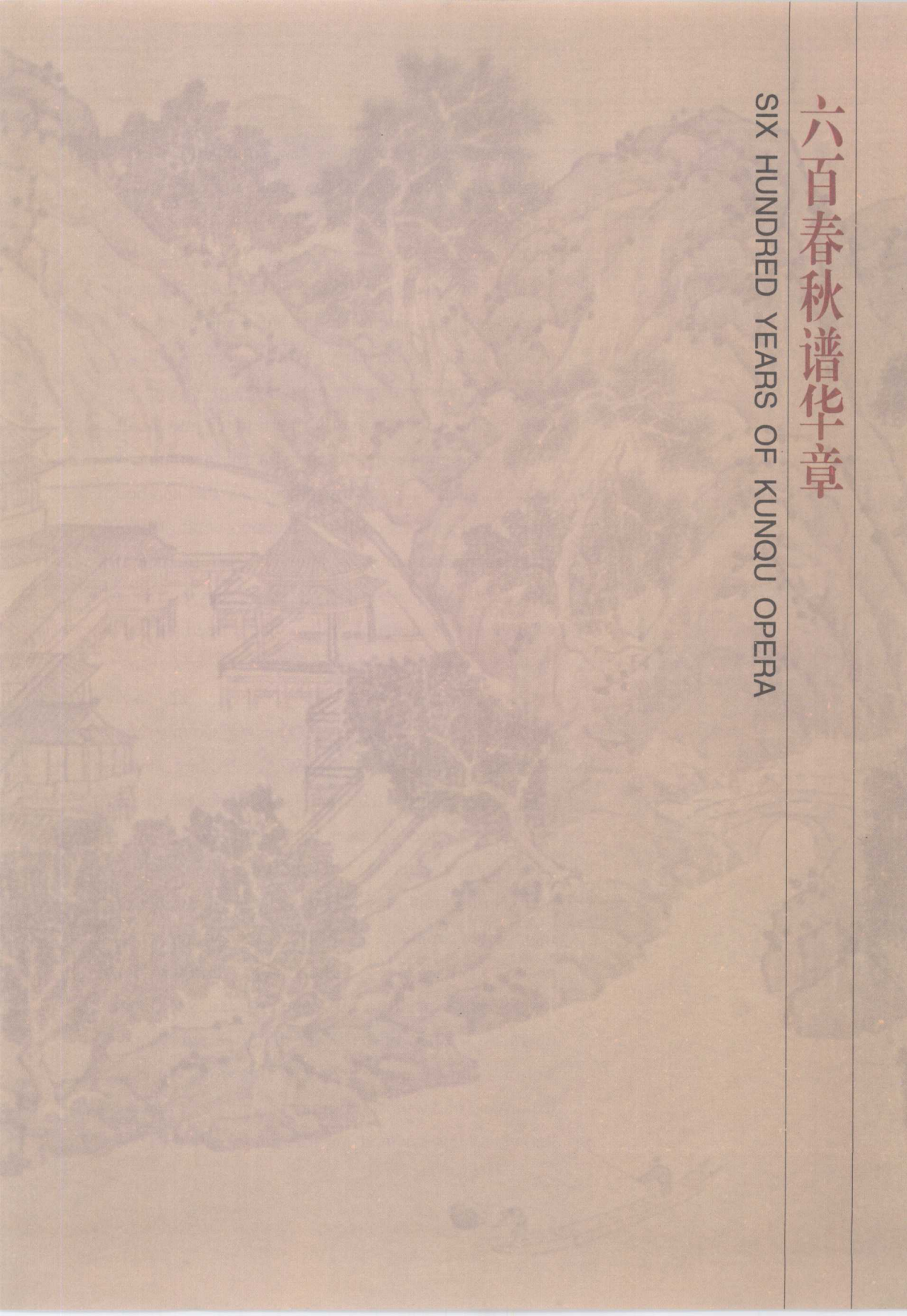
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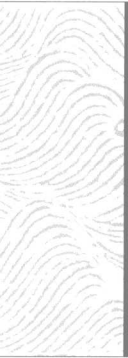
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六百春秋谱化十章

SIX HUNDRED YEARS OF KUNQU OPERA





Kunqu (also known as *kunju*) Opera, which originated in Kunshan of the Suzhou region at the end of the Yuan Dynasty (1279—1368), boasts a history of over 600 years. Once called the “Kunshan Tune”, it was one of the five major opera forms of *nanxi* (southern operas) in the Yuan and Ming Dynasties. In the 16th century, Wei Liangfu, the playwright, transformed the melodies and singing by blending the southern and northern tunes into a soft and elegant music that went with the accompaniment of such musical instruments as the bamboo flute, vertical bamboo flute, bamboo wind organ, three-string lute and *pipa* lute. The performance of *The Laundering of the Silk Yarn*, a play by Liang Chenyu from Kunshan County, won immediate success and it was followed by *The Red Whisk Wand* by Zhang Fengyi from Suzhou County, *The Jade Hairpin* by Gao Lian from Qiantang County and *Burning the Incense* by Wang Yufeng from Songjiang County. The popularity of *kunqu* opera attracted scholars all over the country to try their hands at the theater. As a result, there appeared numerous important playwrights and a great number of memorable “romances” in the Ming and Qing Dynasties. “Romance”, of course, was a term for lengthy plays of 40 to 50 scenes written for *kunqu* opera. At the turn of the 17th century, Tang Xianzu from Linchuan County and Shen Jing from Wujiang County were the most prominent figures. Tang was known for his wit and his four plays called “*Four*

Dreams from Linchuan”, of which *The Peony Pavilion* was the most popular. Shen was known for his music melodies and for the plays called “*Romances from the Jade Studio*”, one of which was *The Gallant Swordsman*. Among the theoretical works during this period were Wang Jide’s *The Melody of Tunes* and Lu Tiancheng’s *The Ranks of Tunes*. Among the plays produced in this period were Xu Fu’s *The Red Pears* and Wu Bing’s *The West Garden*. At the turn of the Qing Dynasty, the Suzhou School with Li Yu and Zhu Suchen as chief representatives absorbed some of the best things from the Linchuan School and the Wujiang School and created an eclectic form that laid emphasis on both wit and melody, thus guiding the way for future development of *kunqu* opera.

In the early years of the Qing Dynasty, a master of *kunqu* was Li Yu from Lanxi, who wrote ten plays and a substantial amount of criticism in his *Sparse Notes of an Inquiring Mind*. His critical reflections that summarized a whole lifetime of his own experiences in the writing, directing and performing of *kunqu* opera made a great contribution to Chinese drama theories.

During the reign of Emperor Kangxi of the 18th century, the two masterpieces of *kunqu* opera were *The Palace of Eternal Youth* by Hong Sheng from the south of China and *The Peach-Blossom Fan* by Kong Shangren from the north. During the reign of Emperor Qianlong, *kunqu* reached its



zenith and saw the plays by Zhang Jian, Jiang Shiquan and Fang Chengpei, as well as books on music scores such as *A Complete Collection of Music Scores and Music Scores from Nashu Studio*. A marked phenomenon of the time was that staging episodes from *kunqu* opera became fashionable. 430 scenes of *kunqu* were collected in the twelve volumes of *Mending the White Fur-Coat* edited by Qian Dechang. During the reign of Emperors Qianlong and Jiajing, regional operas flourished while *kunqu* opera gradually declined. The contemporary critics regarded *kunqu* opera as an art of refinement and regional operas as popular entertainment. Locked in fierce competition with regional operas, *kunqu* opera performances fell in disfavor in the 19th century although new romances continued to come out.

With Suzhou as its centre, *kunqu* opera has over the course of history been spread far and wide, deriving different branches of *kunqu* with distinct artistic features. To the west, it goes via Nanjing to Anhui, Henan and Shanxi; to the north, it goes via Yangzhou and along the Grand Canal to Shandong, Hebei and Beijing; to the south, it goes via Hangzhou to Zhejiang, Jiangxi, Hunan, Guangdong, Yunnan and Sichuan. Thanks to such popular dissemination, *kunqu* has been widely known and practised. While southern *kunqu* is centered around Suzhou, Shanghai, Nanjing and Hangzhou, there are various branches of *kunqu* with their own char-

acteristics, e.g. northern *kunqu*, Hunan *kunqu*, Anhui *kunqu*, Yunnan *kunqu*, Sichuan *kunqu*, Beijing *kunqu*, Ningbo *kunqu*, Jinhua *kunqu* and Yongjia *kunqu*.

In the history of *kunqu* opera, there have been specialized family troupes and professional troupes, as well as amateur associations. In the early 20th century, in Suzhou, the *Quanfu* Troupe inherited the fine traditions of southern *kunqu*, and through its *kunqu* school, nourished a whole batch of artists with the middle name of “*Chuan*” who later formed the *New Yuefu Kunqu* Troupe and the *Xianni Kunqu* Troupe. In north China, the *Rongqing Kunqu* Troupe, the *Qingsheng Kunqu* Troupe and the *Xi-angqing Kunqu* Troupe went on performing tours around Beijing and Tianjin. After the breakout of the Anti-Japanese War, all these troupes were dissolved. The amateur *kunqu* associations alone kept the opera alive.

