Azalea Mountain and Late Mao Culture

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In a recent memoir essay, the Liaoning writer Liu Jialing paints the mid- and late 1970s as a transitional period in China. He recalls that women with the so-called "Ke Xiang style of hair" (*Ke Xiang tou*) filled Chinese streets in 1975, prefiguring many more social changes to come in the years that followed.[1] Others who lived through the waning years of the Mao era (1949–76) also have remarked on the changing styles of women's hair; the layered cut with curled, immaculate bangs is often mentioned as the look pursued by young women in mid-1970s China. The cut is a far cry from the signature bob of the early twentieth century, and it should not be confused with the clean-cut short hair seen in images of female workers and soldiers in propaganda posters from the entire Mao era, either.[2] The "Ke Xiang style of hair" is almost shoulder length, layered enough to encourage movement. For some, this not-so-subtle change in women's hairstyles signaled a loosening of the political grip on a populace so accustomed to a culture of conformity. One scholar even argues that the lengthened and softer hairdo prefigured the return of the Republican-era star system in the late 1970s.[3]

"Ke Xiang," who came to be a buzzword in mid-1970s China, was none other than the heroic Party representative in one of the last model works (*yangbanxi*) produced in the Mao era, *Azalea Mountain* (*Dujuan shan*). The fact that this fictional Party representative also assumed the role of a fashion icon who inspired a nationwide "hair revolution" epitomizes the peculiar cultural dynamics in late Mao China. While this essay is more than a meditation on the politics of hair, a shared fascination with the length of women's hair was at the very least indicative of a generational yearning for the arrival of a new brand of heroes and heroines who would look somewhat different.

Beaming with a revolutionary resolution typical of the central characters of all model works, and injected with a hint of softer "feminine charm" that was considered refreshing for her time, Ke Xiang, portrayed by the young artist Yang Chunxia, leapt onto the scene of late Mao popular culture with a great deal of visual appeal and auditory persuasion. Her signature haircut aside, the audience was also enchanted by her finely tailored pastel-hued blouses, accessorized by a leather belt accentuating a thin and soft waistline. One contemporary

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commentator noted her pale, slim wrists and slender, willowy figure, calling her a "boney beauty" (*gugan meiren*), in line with the sexy pop icons of today's world, and thereby setting her apart from her "sturdier" counterparts of the Mao era.[4] Ke Xiang's makeup onstage highlighted a pair of brilliantly piercing eyes, made more prominent in the close-up shots of the subsequent cinematic version of *Azalea Mountain*. Perhaps most compelling of all was Yang Chunxia's versatile vocal representation, heard through the radio waves that infiltrated all corners of everyday Chinese life in the early and mid-1970s. A generation of young vocal artists was said to have grown up aspiring to emulate her vocal range and versatile performance style.[5] Ke Xiang/Yang Chunxia's followers were further enthralled by a refined stagecraft that combined dance movements with rigorous acrobatic skills. Yang Chunxia's portrayal of the revolutionary heroine acquired an iconic status at the time, and its popularity would come to signify both the height of a revolutionary mass culture and the demise of an overtly politicized era.

The molding of Ke Xiang as a cultural icon, then, cannot be separated from *Azalea Mountain* being cemented as a key text in a history of operatic reinventions. The overwhelming attention given to the hairstyle of the heroine speaks to the continuing popular appeal of a traditional operatic form thoroughly revamped and repopularized within a tightly controlled system of production, exhibition, and dissemination. The sensuous appeal of Ke Xiang's characterization went hand in hand with the increasing hybridity of the model opera as a cross-fertilized genre.[6] The operatic production and the subsequent cinematic version continued the experimentation in hybridizing and popularizing the tradition of Peking opera that had begun more than a decade earlier and had persisted through some of the most violent years under Mao. In carrying some experiments to their fullest potential, *Azalea Mountain* has been acclaimed as a "thorough" model work and a brilliant conclusion to the enterprise.[7] To be sure, *Azalea Mountain* endorsed the norms set forth by earlier works of the genre, but it also featured a set of innovations that were indicative of the changing artistic taste of a transitional time. This included the development of a set of new stagecraft and props and an even more liberal and fluid use of musical modes or modal systems.

The Making of *Azalea Mountain*

Stressing the blending of a softness in the characterization of Ke Xiang does not mean that her portrayal completely departs from the conventions defined by early model works. Similarly, highlighting the fact that the film version of *Azalea Mountain* embodies the transitional features of late Mao China does not mean that the production strays from the norms and conventions of the model opera as a cultural genre. Changes and innovations, if any, are subtle, and this subtlety is precisely the product of a transitional time.

Like its predecessors, *Azalea Mountain* was long in the making, consistent with Jiang Qing's motto in operatic experimentation: "ten years to mold one play" (*shinian mo yi xi*). In the final film version, the narrative works in the service of a central military strategy devised by Mao after the "white terror" of 1927, in which the Communist Party suffered a huge setback and was at the brink of extinction.[8] The gist of Mao's strategy was to shift the Revolution away from urban centers, to infiltrate the vast rural areas of China, to mobilize the impoverished villagers, to generate organized troops from rural uprisings, and to eventually surround the urban areas with the goal of reclaiming them. A peasant uprising led by a proletarian leader was, then, crucial to the success of the Revolution. The background of the film narrative is the Party's effort to reach out to the remote regions of rural China. Ke Xiang and her husband are sent by the Party to a mountainous region to locate a peasants' self-defense unit led by the martial hero Lei Gang. Ke's husband is killed en route, and she is arrested before contact is made. Meanwhile, the self-defense unit suffers several setbacks, and at the brink of extinction it eagerly searches for Party guidance to help them regroup. The remaining members of the unit, led by Lei Gang, rescue Ke Xiang on the execution ground, in a sequence that recalls a recurrent scenario in martial arts cinema. She then assumes the role of the unit's Party representative. The rest of the narrative focuses on how the peasants gradually come to their revolutionary consciousness, acquire the ability to distinguish friend from foe, learn the basics of guerrilla warfare, and work on self-sufficiency and mass mobilization. Their growth is guided diligently by the heroic Ke Xiang, who meets every challenge with dignity, wisdom, and correct guidance from Mao and his theories. Flowers on Azalea Mountain bloom fiercely throughout the narrative, a symbol of heroic spirit and sacrifice. In the end, as in all other model opera narratives, enemies both outside and within the ranks are exposed and wiped out, and the people of Azalea Mountain triumphantly pose for a mass sculpture onstage (*liangxiang* or *zaoxing*).

The metamorphosis of *Azalea Mountain* over more than ten years offers a fine example of the model opera as a collective venture. It is a narrative that encompasses multiple genres, including Peking opera, other regional operas, spoken drama, cinema, spin-off radio programs, and a vast amount of other visual and auditory traditions. If model works as a whole are a giant cultural institution, then each of them constitutes a piece of institutional history that speaks to the whole. The making of *Azalea Mountain* is one such narrative of genre migration and transplantation.[9]

The earliest form of *Azalea Mountain* can be traced to an early 1960s script for spoken drama penned by Wang Shuyuan, a writer who worked for the Shanghai Opera Troupe. Its theatrical debut can be traced back to 1963, when it was produced by the second unit of the Shanghai People's Art Theater. This was

followed by an adaptation into Ping opera by the Shenyang Ping Opera Troupe, starring the seasoned artist Han Shaobo. The performance greatly impressed a group of equally accomplished Peking opera artists associated with the Ningxia Peking Opera Troupe, including the director Yin Yuanhe, famed *laosheng* (older male) actor Li Mingsheng (who was to play Wudou, the male lead), and Li Lifang (who was to portray He Xiang, the female lead). The Ningxia production received rave reviews at the National Theatrical Trial Performance Convention in Beijing in 1964. Plans to bring the production onto the silver screen were discussed soon afterward, and the task was assigned to the Changchun Film Studio. But the Ministry of Culture stepped in and ordered that the lead actress, Li Lifang, was to play Fang Haizhen, the lead role in the soon-to-be-produced model opera *Harbor* (*Haigang*), and the plan of bringing *Azalea Mountain* onto film was quickly aborted.[10]

Concurrent with the Ningxia production, the Beijing Peking Opera Troupe also produced its own version of *Azalea Mountain* in 1964, scripted by Xue Enhou and Wang Zengqi. Famed *laosheng* actor Qiu Shengrong stepped in as Wudou, and the legendary Zhao Yanxia, widely known for her portrayal of Sister Ahqing in theatrical performances of *Shajiabang* up to 1964 (replaced by Hong Xuefei afterward), portrayed He Xiang. The eminent Ma Lianliang appeared as Zheng Laowan, a supporting role. The production brought together a distinguished team of actors, but it was halted after just a few performances.[11]

In 1969, the Beijing Peking Opera Troupe renewed its plan to stage *Azalea Mountain*. Under the direct supervision of Jiang Qing and Yu Huiyong, the Shanghai team (Wang Shuyuan and Li Zhongcheng) was flown in to join the Beijing team (Wang Zengqi and Yang Yumin) to manufacture a new script. In what could be called the "youth edition" of *Azalea Mountain*, much younger actors were brought in with the aim of further popularizing the Peking opera production. Zhao Yanxia was now considered too old to play the lead role, too "gentle" and unathletic to appeal to the younger audiences that the production set out to target. In 1971, the young, beautiful, and agile Yang Chunxia from Shanghai was flown in to star in the female lead role, now called Ke Xiang.[12] Her role had gotten younger as well, changing into just "thirty years old" in the new script. Ma Yong'an, a young *hualian* or "painted-face" actor, was cast as the male lead, now called Lei Gang (meaning "thunder" and "masculine") instead of Wudou (meaning "black bean"). He was also made ten years younger in the new script. In addition, Lei Gang was cast as a *jing* (painted-face role) instead of the older male role of the Ningxia version. The Ningxia version of the male lead was now considered too dark and frail; equally inappropriate would be casting the role in the *xiaosheng* or young male role, since the "paler" representation of a *xiaosheng* role would not convey the weathered look and burdened movements of Lei Gang. The traditional *wusheng* or martial male role, with its emphasis on

physicality, would allow little room to convey inner depth and entanglement. After much debate on the pros and cons of the various male roles in Peking opera, it was decided that the male lead of the model opera would appear onstage as a painted-face character without the actual painted face, the so-called *junban*, meaning "thin on the makeup." This role, it was argued, would highlight both physical strength and psychological depth. A younger Lei Gang was thus also made more masculine.[13]

The casting followed many conventions of the model opera, which were in turn indebted to those of the Peking opera tradition. For instance, the role of a kind and self-sacrificing elderly female figure (*laodan*) was adapted for the important character of Mother Du, who appeared as a sort of revolutionized *laodan*. Like traditional older female roles, Mother Du is highly dignified, not only owing to her age but also to her physical prowess and mental superiority. Unlike traditional representations, however, Mother Du does not walk with a long staff, and her strides are exaggerated and firm, like those of a dignified *laosheng* or older male role. Since this was the "youth edition" of *Azalea Mountain*, a young actress in her twenties was cast in the role of Mother Du. Her crisp singing and swift movements changed the image of a frail and grief-stricken old woman into a more vigorous and combative one.[14] Now not only could the young female lead toss and tumble like an experienced acrobat; the supporting role of an older female could also display a certain level of athleticism onstage.

The title of the play was briefly changed into *Duquan Mountain* (*Duquan shan*) but then reverted back to the original, as the visual effect of red azalea flowers was to become a central feature in an incredibly elaborate stage setting that highlighted the layering and depth of the natural landscape.[15] Whereas the original narrative focused on a rural uprising, now the theme of proletarian leadership was brought to the foreground. In a stroke of genius, Ke Xiang's family origin became that of a miners' family in Anyuan, a key locale in the growing revolutionary mythology.[16] Ke Xiang's emancipation into a revolutionary career was portrayed as a direct result of the much mythologized Autumn Harvest Uprising of September 1927.

In the film version directed by the famed Xie Tieli, mass sculptures are skillfully highlighted. Always shot from a side angle, they draw attention to the geometric shapes of the designs and carry the distinctive style of Xie's camera work. Xie directed five model opera films, and in *Azalea Mountain*, his last work in the genre, he had apparently gotten more daring; traces of his own stylistic choices became more evident. Fixed frontal camera positions, common in his other opera films, are rare in *Azalea Mountain*. Point-of-view shots are used much more freely than in earlier features. A range of camera positions highlights the main character Ke Xiang from a variety of angles, with the goal of underlining both her feminine charm and heroic spirit. The camera moves

swiftly through a given scene, creating the illusion of on-location shooting (only to make the viewers realize after a split second that they have been fooled). Shots produce much spatial depth and rely on the meticulous work of the mise-en-scène.

Critics typically regard *Azalea Mountain* as the most successful model opera film, and Xie Tieli seems to agree, calling it his finest achievement. The criteria for such a ranking of artistic achievement are based on the degree of what can be called a process of cinematization (*dianyinghua*). Here a somewhat naive equation is drawn between the cinematic apparatus and the manufacturing of an illusion that appears "more real." Much attention focuses on the amount of resources poured into re-creating a film setting that comes closest to what "nature" might look like. For instance, the bamboo trees in *Azalea Mountain* were shipped from Jiangxi Province and planted on the grounds of the Beijing film studio. The leaves that viewers see on-screen are thereby "real," as opposed to fake ones sprayed with green paint. The waterfall in the far background of the elaborate set was said to be real water, and many gallons of it poured from the fabricated mountain top. Xie Tieli himself calls these efforts a "further cinematization" of operatic performance. He uses the words "depth" (*zongshen'gan*) and "three-dimensionality" (*litigan*), emphasizing how the filmic version was removed from its operatic roots and thereby achieved the goal of making an opera film that was "higher than the stage" (*gao yu wutai*).[17] This idea of "cinematization" and emphasis on "realistic depth" of operatic space has been challenged recently in the young director Zheng Dasheng's critically acclaimed new opera film *The Incorruptible Official Yu Chenglong* (*Lianli Yu Chenglong*, 2009). Zheng came to this project with a knowledge and deep appreciation of the tradition of opera film from the early twentieth century until the 1970s. In citing revolutionary model opera's futile attempt at minimizing the "unrealness" of the stage and exaggerating the "realistic illusion" a camera can generate, Zheng fundamentally challenges the long-held dichotomy between theater and film and between the "real" and the "unreal."[18]

Seen today, Xie Tieli's attempt at making his film version more "real" than its previous life onstage indeed might appear futile. Cinematized opera does not underscore the realness of the narrative, but it does force the filmmaker to address the often difficult question of how to register the connection between characters and their surroundings. To be sure, despite the elaborate attempt at pouring "real" elements into the space of the narrative, the film version of *Azalea Mountain* is not "higher than the stage," and Xie Tieli could not have completely transcended the conventions of opera film. On the contrary, Xie is at his best when his camera not only captures the highly stylized movements from a variety of angles, but also accentuates the staged quality of them. What he also achieves is a refreshing manner of spatializing sound and sound effects, and by doing so

he places his characters within a distinctive cinematic space that is indeed roomier than the space onstage. We should also note that Xie's meticulous mise-en-scène works seamlessly with a musical style that accentuates hybridity and gender fluidity. In other words, the gender fluidity represented by the image of Ke Xiang as a mid-1970s model of womanhood is captured by a narrative style that also fluidly renders a hybridized musical style as well as a set of hybridized stagecraft.

Voices and Hybridized Musical Style

Recent Chinese scholarship on *Azalea Mountain* has focused overwhelmingly on its musical style. To be sure, the musical experiments of model operas are evaluated differently among scholars. Wang Renyuan, for example, takes a critical view of the liberal use of musical modes in some model works. "There is little wholesome borrowing from the tradition in model works and little consistent use of a single musical mode," declares Wang. "What we do see," he continues, is "a consistent breaking of the tradition and an insistence on mixing and hybridizing [musical modes]." For Wang, the operatic experiments seen in model works are carried to an extreme, so much so that one is left with the impression that all musical modes must be "broken" and "mixed with one another." Wang is evidently dismayed by the result of such experiments, which he claims has forgone the "flavor of purity" (*chunjing de yunwei*) of traditional Peking opera musical style.[19]

Wang's declared affinity with a "purer" Peking opera tradition might not find too much sympathy among a generation of younger scholars, some of whom have taken strikingly different views of the musical experiments in model operas. Liu Yunyan's series of articles on female roles in model operas are apt examples of a different approach to these works. Like many other scholars, she adopts a "two-period theory" in assessing generic transformation in the model opera, the first including such works as *The Red Lantern* (*Hongdeng ji*), *Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy* (*Zhiqu Weihushan*), *Shajiabang Village* (*Shajiabang*), and the second including *Ode to the Dragon River* (*Longjiang song*) and *Azalea Mountain*. The hybridized style criticized by Wang is celebrated as an artistic achievement in Liu's writings. The mixing and hybridizing of musical modes was necessary, Liu argues, because model operas had to deal with a range of female characters beyond the scope of traditional Peking opera. The second wave of model works, in Liu's view, was artistically superior, as the mixing and blending became more fluid and skillful during the latter stage.[20]

Hybridity indeed defines the musical style of *Azalea Mountain*. Musical modes and modal systems are mixed and blended, and gendered codes built into

melodic passages are further upset and reworked. Gender ambiguity is built into the hybridized musical modes throughout *Azalea Mountain*.

In the opening scene, Lei Gang, who has just escaped from prison, and his friends have devised a plan to rescue a condemned prisoner from the execution ground, that is, "to snatch a Communist to lead us forward" (*qiang yige gongchandang linglu xiangqian*), in their own words. The Communist's gender identity, however, remains a mystery until the next scene. What follows is a delightful series of events for the audience of traditional operas, as the film pays homage to the familiar motif of "raiding an execution ground" (*jie fachang*). The dramatic events of "saving the prisoner from under the knife" (*daoxia liu ren*), with its modern variation of "robbing the prisoner from under the gun" (*qiangxia duo ren*), must have been an instant crowd-pleaser, with a guaranteed sequence of martial movements and miraculous switch-of-power dynamics. In this opening scene, the identity of the imprisoned Communist remains a mystery, and anticipation is built up leading into the next scene.

Our first encounter with Ke Xiang happens in scene 2, "Spring Prompts Azalea Blossoms" (*Chun cui dujuan*), and the visual encounter is preceded by an auditory introduction. In the film version, the scene begins with a genre portrait of a rural marketplace, its mise-en-scène reminiscent of a typical setting in a martial arts film, such as King Hu's *Come Drink with Me* (*Da zuixia*, 1966) and *Dragon Gate Inn* (*Longmen kezhan*, 1967). Comparison here does not imply influence. Rather, it highlights parallel developments in cinematic movement at different geopolitical sites.[21] Similar to how King Hu manipulates his camera, Xie Tieli renders parades of townspeople and the space they inhabit as a microcosm of the back roads of China. The open market as the assembly ground of townspeople also has the potential to magically transform itself into a *jianghu* underworld. Vendors and random passersby are martial heroes with hidden talents. The lighting is dim, the sky is overcast, and the camera meanders freely in this opening shot, surveying the turns and corners of this constructed space, creating a sense of impending danger, and prefiguring the spectacular action sequence that is to follow.

A spatial meditation of sounds and voices follows the genre portrait. The acoustic effect of the enemy guards yelling "bring up the Commie" (*dai gongdang*) is rendered as an overhead shot of layers of a courtyard-style temple where the echo of the yelling bounces around (fig. 1). While the camera hovers above, there is a brief pause/silence, prompting the viewer/listener to wonder, "Where is that Commie"? Then the camera cuts to the next shot, where it zooms in at the closed gate of the compound (fig. 2). From the background comes the orchestration of the leitmotif that will later accompany every entrance of Ke Xiang. The recurrent use of the Ke Xiang theme—sometimes in easily identifiable notes, other times more disguised or textured with musical embellishments, and yet other times

Figure 1 An overhead shot of the courtyard-style temple.

Figure 2 A shot of the closed gate of the temple.

fluidly woven into other musical events—is what structures the musical layout of the film narrative.[22]

Following the brief interlude of the Ke Xiang theme, a high-pitched singing voice tears through the empty space behind the closed gate, as if plunging into a world hanging in suspension. The words spill out: "A proletarian stands at ease,

watching the surging giant waves." This disembodied voice creates an uncanny effect, like a ghostly existence that bounces behind the gate and within the walls, in a cinematic space that fails to house it. Therefore when we witness Ke Xiang plunging into view in the next sequence, she seems to have been spat out of a space that was too small to contain either her body or her voice.

This first aria sung by our female lead is set in *xipi wawa diao*—a musical mode designed for junior male (*wawasheng*), young male (*xiaosheng*), or acrobatic male (*wusheng*) roles. In traditional Peking opera performances, *xipi wawa diao* is also used by female roles when the narrative calls for them to appear in male disguise (such as the role of Meng Lijun in the famous *Zaisheng yuan* or *Love Reincarnate* narrative). The gender fluidity built into the musical mode provides a fitting framework for the entrance of Ke Xiang. Though she does not appear in male disguise, her vocal style injects a sense of masquerading prior to her dramatic entrance.[23]

Hybridization of musical style in *Azalea Mountain* is also seen in the skillful blending of singing and rhymed prose speeches. The famous aria from scene 3 called "Home in Anyuan" (*Jia zhu Anyuan*) is a case in point. The aria is set in the *erhuang* mode, with variable meters. Parts of the aria are set in *fan erhuang*, which is most suitable for conveying a tragic personal story and almost always reserved for the lead role in Peking opera. Told in a female voice, the narration of the personal story captivates Ke Xiang's audience both on- and offscreen. The hybrid singing style does not betray her female identity; rather, it sets a new standard for a reconsideration of what constitutes "feminine voice," a particular formula that takes hybridity as its very foundation.

Ke Xiang's narrative begins with a set of rhymed lines, written in the style of the uneven lines of the song lyrics:

> Hard to tell all the bitterness I experienced,
> All the wrongs I suffered . . .

The script then calls for her to slowly sit down and begin to sing. This and the following interludes and body movements are all captured faithfully by Xie Tieli's camera. On-screen, we see Ke Xiang commanding an audience, all male soldiers, intrigued by her persona and surrounding her in earnest anticipation (fig. 3). She then begins to sing, in *fan erhuang* set to *zhongban* or "medium meter," a mode and pace most suitable for the unfolding narrative, and the camera slowly zooms in for a close-up shot of Ke Xiang's captivating face (fig. 4):

> My home was in Anyuan close to the river Ping.
> Three generations of miners, like beasts of burden,
> My folk sweated out their guts but still went hungry
> In that hell on earth where all seasons are the same.

Figure 3 A seated Ke Xiang commands an audience and begins to tell a personal story.

Figure 4 A close-up shot of Ke Xiang's captivating face while telling her personal story.

Still in *fan erhuang*, the pace moves up a notch to *yuanban* or "standard meter," and the script also calls for her to stand up, commanding a more intensified moment of telling and listening (fig. 5):

A strike came: my dad and big brother fought the bosses,
They failed, were shot down, staining the wasteland with their blood.

Figure 5 Ke Xiang stands up and continues her storytelling in an intensified tempo.

Then the black-hearted mine owners
Fired our hut and burned alive
My mother, little brother, and little sister—
My whole family wiped out, with no bones or ashes to collect.

This extreme narrative elicits strong reactions from the audience onstage, which dictates a change of musical mode. Still set in *erhuang* but now delivered in a *yaoban* or "shaking meter," a freer mode of expression, Ke Xiang continues with a message of enlightenment and mobilization:

Like a sudden storm the Autumn Harvest Uprising,
A bright lamp to show the way, lit up my heart.
I saw we must take up arms to win liberation;
I joined the army, the Party, to fight for the poor.

Then a final switch of pace, in faster (but not rushed) and spirited *liushui* or "flowing-water meter," the closing lines demonstrate Ke Xiang's fluency in the discourse of mobilization, cementing the message of revolutionary resolution:

Workers and peasants are brothers
Taking the same revolutionary road;
We must wipe out wolves and jackals there,
Fight on until the enemy is destroyed!
Until the enemy is destroyed.[24]

Here the basic melodic contour of traditional Peking opera *erhuang* is preserved, but free variations in the form of alternations and accelerations enrich the design

of this crucial aria. The personal narrative told here is nothing short of shocking. A blood-drenched history of the mining town of Anyuan is crafted. The personal aspect of the narrative highlights a history of extreme brutality: no trace is left of Ke Xiang's family—"no bones or ashes"—and thus no chance of a proper burial. This is even more heinous than the killing itself. Politics then becomes personal. And personal histories are told in conjunction with the call for revolt and the imperative for collective uprising. A proletarian revolution thus shares the same goal as rural uprisings. With her masterful storytelling, Ke Xiang wins a ticket into the rural community precisely because she herself boasts a personal history of total devastation equal in emotional impact to that of the suffering of the peasants.

The narrative told in the aria follows a familiar pattern, beginning with sorrow, anguish, and deep pain, followed by a coming to consciousness midway through narration, and ending with a heightened tone of revolutionary aspiration and determination. Allusions to some of the most classic mottoes of Mao's grassroots revolution are skillfully incorporated to build on the affective power. The upheavals of the narrative are aided by a fluid musical mode, with a fast-changing pace and smooth connections. The "impurity" in *Azalea Mountain*'s musical style is certainly rendered fluidly and seamlessly in its key arias.

A new standard of femininity is cemented in this musical hybridization. What has been celebrated as Yang Chunxia's versatile vocal representation must include her ability to capture a wide range of vocal styles and meters, most notably her seamless blending of the weightiness of the voice of a *laosheng* or older male role and the dignified tone of a *qingyi* or blue-cloth female role—two of the most respected character types in Peking opera tradition, each honored for its moral superiority and musical finesse. The power of female persuasion is at its best when Yang Chunxia also blends in the crispness of junior male chanting for added youth and agility, complete with highly stylized rhymed prose speeches that are strategically placed to enhance a poetic tempo.

Movements and Hybridized Stagecraft

Musical fluidity aside, Ke Xiang/Yang Chunxia's movements onstage are another seamless piece of patchwork. All the major arias in *Azalea Mountain* are sung by Ke Xiang/Yang Chunxia. The molding of Ke Xiang as a revolutionary legend goes hand in hand with the molding of Yang Chunxia as a mid-1970s cultural icon. For this, Yang was said to have paid a dear price. She was abruptly removed from her work and life in Shanghai and put through a two-year rigorous training program in Beijing, from which she emerged with a changed body and a different voice. She dropped twenty pounds from her already slender figure as a result of the grueling training and filming schedule, forcing Xie Tieli to use more low-

angle shots to make her look sturdier and to create an illusion of physical prowess and mental superiority. The effort was only partly successful, as her thin wrists and willowy waist often belie the words of iron and steel spilling out of her arias. Ke Xiang's visual softness contrasts with her heroic toughness at various moments in the performance. This dichotomy could well be part of the camera's design, with the goal of crafting a hero who is also a popular icon. Yang's role is by design a hybrid formula: a combination of *qingyi* (blue-cloth female role) and *wusheng* (martial male role) in movement, she sings in a mixed style of *xiaosheng*, *laosheng*, and *qingyi* modes. This modeling and recasting departs from her years of training in the *qingyi* role and study under the tutelage of Yan Huizhu, the most important female disciple of Mei Lanfang.

Molding Yang Chunxia's Ke Xiang into an iconic figure also required bringing in the best talents in a range of art forms and styles. Famed *wusheng* Wang Guiqing was brought in to tutor her in acrobatic movements. Yang's agility onstage was the result of this crash training. The husband-and-wife team of Zhu Lin and Diao Guangtan, masters of spoken drama from the Beijing People's Art Theater, was brought in to coach her in prose speeches. This last set of training sessions brought *Azalea Mountain* back to its origins in the institution of spoken drama.[25]

All this diverse training and deliberate molding is reflected in Ke Xiang's dramatic entrance in scene 2. Xie Tieli's filming tempo enhances the anticipation of a dramatic entrance. At the conclusion of the first aria, set in *xipi wawa diao* as discussed earlier, the entrance of Ke Xiang is further delayed. The camera fixes on the closed gate, which pops open and releases a stream of enemy guards. In the script, the arrival of this group of guards is described as flowing out of the gate, splitting into two sides, or "two dragons emerging out of the water" (*er long chushui*), a military term adopted into Peking opera vocabulary. On-screen, the movements of the guards are indeed presented as crawling animals, as we witness two streams of darkish creatures marking the entryway of our hero (fig. 6).

The guards are all lined up while the door remains open; the vegetation in the courtyard visible through the doorway suggests the depth of the space within. The stage is set for a different sort of body to emerge—a bright, beautiful, and resilient one. By the time we finally see our heroine, she plunges onto the scene, completing her fast-paced and high-pitched singing, continuing to spill out words now set to *xipi huilong* or "*xipi* undulating-dragon meter," a short and choppy pace and a rather rare mode and meter combination.[26] Ke Xiang appears as a fierce-eyed young woman in chains, her head held high. Wearing a nearly spotless white shirt (with traces of blood and rips strategically placed), she strides out of the temple in typical *laosheng* or older male style and turns to toss back her

Figure 6 Enemy guards crawling around the entryway of Ke Xiang.

Figure 7 Ke Xiang emerges, striking a heroic pose.

hair, revealing an immaculate face. Having crossed the threshold, she halts and strikes a pose, with the chain stretched and held against her upper torso (fig. 7).

Here the thick metal chain is a stand-in for the traditional water sleeve (*shuixiu*), but a far cry from it. Some of Ke Xiang's movements are indeed reminiscent of the techniques of manipulating water sleeves (*shuixiu gong*). As she repeatedly gathers the chain and swings it toward her enemies onstage, however,

the prop turns into a weapon, one that generates sound effects following every movement, with a metallic ding-ding-ling-ling added to the existing sound effect. With a weighty object, the effect of the movements cannot be further removed from the conventions of the water sleeves.

To be sure, Ke Xiang is not the first central character in model opera works featured with a chain on an execution ground. Li Yuhe in *The Red Lantern* and Hong Changqing in *The Red Detachment of Women* (*Hongse niangzijun*) are both staged similarly. But Ke Xiang's movements are much more elaborately choreographed and fluid, and the manipulation of a metal chain as a standard stage prop is brought to a whole new level, coming closest to the traditional techniques of water sleeves.[27]

Typically there are six ways to manipulate a water sleeve in traditional Peking opera: *gou*, to retract; *dan*, to let go of retracted sleeve; *tiao*, to swing upward; *chong*, to swing vertically upward; *shuai*, to fling gathered sleeve out; and *da*, to fling sleeves back and forth.[28] All six techniques are used by Ke Xiang in this opening scene. She retracts her chain, but the gathering of the thick metal requires the coordinated effort of both her hands, with both hands eventually cupping the chain to complete the motion. To *dan*, that is, to let go of the gathered chain, takes on a particular visual and sound effect. She then swings the chain upward, straight ahead, or back and forth, implying its use as a weapon and generating additional visual and sound effects. The script provides detailed instructions for this metal prop, including lifting the chain (*ti lian*), swinging the chain (*liao lian*), cupping the chain (*peng lian*), supporting the chain (*tuo lian*), and shaking the chain (*zhen lian*). In place of the traditional way of the water sleeves is what I will call the "new way of the chain," or *lianfa*.

There are other relatively "softer" props in Ke Xiang's ensemble. Her frequent use of a white scarf draped around her shoulders in the later scenes is similar to that used by Fang Haizhen, the lead role in *Harbor*, also a female Party representative. Paul Clark calls this a modern stand-in for traditional props such as handkerchiefs and sleeves.[29]

Possibly the most innovative aspect of *Azalea Mountain*'s stagecraft is the overwhelming attention given to the heroine's hair. *Azalea Mountain* was certainly not the first or only model work that focuses attention on the hairdos of important female roles. Wu Qinghua in the revolutionary ballet *The Red Detachment of Women*, in her tormented previous life, appears with her long hair braided and almost taped to her chest. Ballet movements do not disturb this secured prop a bit. When she reappears in the next scene, transformed into a woman soldier, her short hair is controlled by a cap securely fastened on her head, like the other soldiers. The transformation of the heroine's hair embodies a born-again narrative, but no movement of the prop itself is allowed throughout the performance. As a contrast, more hair manipulation is seen in *The Red Lantern*, in which the young Li Tiemei is seen with her signature long and thick braided hair, which

she sometimes flings toward her back and sometimes holds tightly in front of her chest like a stand-in for a weapon. Hair movements are crucial in scenes where she is featured. An even more interesting example of the politics of hair is seen in the other revolutionary ballet *The White-Haired Girl* (*Baimao nü*). The transformation of Xi'er's hair carries the plot. Its metamorphosis from long dark braids to a full head of dramatic silver white and back to dark hair in the end is a narrative in itself that carries central visual interest. The narrativity in women's hair changes finds it finest example here.[30] But the white-haired girl is not a Party representative. Her sorrow and traumatic body transformation are portrayed as the evil doings of an old society. Similarly, Tiemei in *The Red Lantern* is not a central character. In her journey toward a total dedication to the collective cause, her hair functions as a weapon much like her stage father's two famous props: the red scarf that can be either flung back or held out in his hands, and the heavy metal chain that accompanies him to the execution ground. There is nothing fluid or playful in Tiemei's hair manipulation; the long, dark, and thick braids thrust in front of her torso are first and foremost a vivid reminder of the sacrifice called for in a bloody revolution.

Even with little playfulness, model works before *Azalea Mountain* as a whole had already challenged the traditional techniques of hair manipulation (*shuaifa gong*).[31] Like the manipulation of water sleeves, hair manipulation in the Peking opera tradition was considered a body movement skill to be mastered by the actors of male roles. Women's headdresses could dangle, but female roles were rarely allowed to manipulate their hair, certainly not in full motion. For male roles it was a different case. A general or warrior who has lost a battle, a high official who has been demoted, or a lover who has lost a loved one would appear on stage without a helmet or cap. A fine example is the famed Peking opera artist Li Shaochun's portrayal of Lin Chong in *Wild Boar Forest* (*Yezhu lin*), which premiered in 1950 and was made into an opera film in 1962. In the play, Lin Chong's long hair gathered in one bundle was swung or flung to demonstrate an internal world in turmoil.[32]

By employing the traditional techniques of hair manipulation to a much fuller extent, *Azalea Mountain* revived some of this tradition, albeit with a dramatically different effect. Hair manipulation is written into the script of *Azalea Mountain* deliberately and extensively, particularly in the second scene's introduction of its extraordinary heroine. The meticulous scripting of the heroine's hair sets *Azalea Mountain* apart from all other model works produced during the same period. The heroine is to either "swing her hair" (*shuai fa*) or "straighten up her hair" (*zheng fa*). Each striking of a pose (*liangxiang*) is accompanied by hair movements.

In scene 2, what Ke Xiang uses most frequently are motions of flinging (*tiao*) and swinging (*shan*).[33] In her initial appearance at the threshold, she flings her hair backward to reveal her face. And she does this by using the strength of her

entire upper torso. Her body first appears sideways; by flinging both her body and her hair, and by extending the heavy metal chain across her entire upper torso, we get a complete frontal view of her heroic presence (fig. 7). Throughout the rest of the scene, we see her swinging her hair left and right, like a musical accompaniment to her different poses. The brilliantly choreographed sequence calls for her to manipulate the heavy metallic chain and her softly swinging hair simultaneously. Both serve as expressive extensions of her wounded but still agile body, forming an interesting contrast in sound and visual effect. The interplay of the two props becomes one of the highlights in Xie Tieli's filmic rendition.

Conclusion

The "hair story" that began this article should also serve as a conclusion. The most spectacular display of the acrobatic potential of Ke Xiang's hair is presented in scene 2. In the following scenes, the softly flowing prop continues to elicit visual interest, but its importance gives way to the camera's focus on another perhaps more central feature of the heroine's face—her eyes. This happens following the previously discussed aria "Home in Anyuan" in scene 3, when a key lesson in class and class consciousness is being told. Central to Maoist discourse on continuing revolution, this lesson of political vigilance sneaks in at every possible moment throughout the opera. Hair movement is at its minimum when the camera's focus is on the heroine's eyes. One ought to be able to tell friend from foe. Eyes need to be sharpened. Here the reference to eyes is not just metaphorical but literal, as the eye methods (*yanfa*) of Peking opera conventions are not only key to characterization, but also take on political symbolism in this context. The light in the eyes is greatly enhanced in Xie Tieli's filmic rendition, where the camera zooms in on Ke Xiang's intense facial expression (fig. 4). Clarity of vision is conveyed by close-up shots of her wide-open, glistening eyes. After all, playfulness with the hair can only go so far. Compared with the ideological weight placed on the heroine's eyes, hair as a prop can be distracting at best and even frivolous at some moments. When the film delivers its central political messages, Ke Xiang's hair remains tightly controlled, without any possibility of going astray. Here the camera's shift of focus carries a great degree of deliberateness. Despite all its delightful play with camera angles and point-of-view shots, the filmic rendition of *Azalea Mountain* fits squarely within the body of model opera films that were so much the products of their time.

Xie Tieli's camera work enhances the visual effectiveness of a set of new and old stagecraft and, in doing so, politicizes the body in a most effective manner. Art and politics cannot be separated. Political directives yield artistic experimentation; and artistic experiments, be it under the directives of Jiang Qing and Yu Huiyong, or in the defiant hands of Xie Tieli holding the camera, are political by nature. The disembodied voice, the fluid musical modes, the dramatic hair

manipulation, and the finely choreographed movements that seem to mark Ke Xiang as a heroine of a new age were in the end a further politicization of the female body in this last stage of Maoist culture.

NOTES

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1. See Liu Jialing, "Qishi niandai houqi" [The late 1970s], *Shanghai wenxue* 3 (2001): 72. In this memoir essay, Liu mentions that after the screening of the opera film *Azalea Mountain* in 1975, the streets in the city of Shenyang were filled with young women wearing the hairstyle of the film's central character.

2. For a discussion of the controversy surrounding the bob of the May Fourth era, see Sun Lung-kee, "The Politics of Hair and the Issue of the Bob in Modern China," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture* 1, no. 4 (1997): 353–65. For a discussion of representative female images in propaganda posters of the Mao era, see Harriet Evans, "'Comrade Sisters': Gendered Bodies and Spaces," in *Picturing Power in the People's Republic of China: Posters of the Cultural Revolution*, ed. Harriet Evans and Stephanie Donald (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), 63–78. For a historical view of women's changing dress and hairstyles in the course of the twentieth century, see Antonia Finnane, *Changing Clothes in China: Fashion, History, Nation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 157–60, 227–56.

3. See, for instance, Ding Ning, "Yinmu faxing shi: 1975–1981" [A history of hair on the silver screen: 1975–1981], *Dangdai dianying* 5 (2008): 124–25.

4. See "Mancheng jinshi Ke Xiang tou" [Cities are filled with Ke Xiang style of hair], penned by a blogger named "Annie," at http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4c4ae4ed0100c2e8.html (accessed January 15, 2010).

5. See, for instance, "Yu Lan xingzou zai yingshi he xiju zhijian" [Yu Lan: Straddling between film/television and opera], *Xin wanbao*, October 29, 2005. A second and third generation of Ke Xiangs have been fostered in recent decades in Peking opera troupes of major Chinese cities. Nicknamed "Little Yang Chunxia," Yu Lan is widely considered one of the most successful "impersonators." In re-creating Ke Xiang in a 2001 reincarnation of *Azalea Mountain*, Yu Lan is said to have emulated every single move, gesture, and intonation of Yang Chunxia's original creation, an achievement credited to her childhood spent listening to repeated radio broadcasts of famous arias from *Azalea Mountain* sung by Yang. Other vocal artists such as Wei Wei and Sheng Xiaoyun have claimed similar experiences growing up. Also see "Yingshi hongxing cheng 'xiao Yang Chunxia'" [Popular film star becomes Little Yang Chunxia], *Xinmin wanbao*, September 7, 2005.

6. The sensuous appeal of model works has been noted by several scholars. See, for instance, Xiaomei Chen, *Acting the Right Part: Political Theater and Popular Drama in Contemporary China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai`i Press, 2002), 32–37.

7. Pan Peicheng, "Xiqu dianying *Dujuan shan* deshi tan" [Success and failure in the opera film Azalea Mountain], *Zhongguo xiqu xueyuan xuebao* 29, no. 3 (2008): 70–73.

8. See, for instance, Phillip Short, *Mao: A Life* (New York: Henry Holt, 1999), 179–284.

9. An early example of the scholarship on the metamorphosis of model works is Bell Yung, "Model Opera as Model: From *Shajiabang* to *Shagabong*," in *Popular Chinese Literature and Performing Arts in the People's Republic of China*, ed. Bonnie McDougall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 144–64. Also see Barbara Mittler, "Cultural Revolution Model Works and the Politics of Modernization in China: An Analysis of *Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy*," *The World of Music* 45, no. 2 (2003): 53–81. A vast number of secondary sources in Chinese have also been published in recent years. See, for

instance, Di Jiannong, *Hongse wangshi: 1966–1976 nian de Zhongguo dianying* [Reminiscences in red: Chinese cinema from 1966 to 1976] (Beijing: Taihai chubanshe, 2001). Also see Shi Yonggang and Zhang Fan, eds., *Yangbanxi shi ji* [Historical records of the eight model operas] (Beijing: Zuojia chubanshe, 2009). In a rush to publication, some of these recent Chinese sources have relied heavily on anecdotal evidence and produced many conflicting accounts.

10. See Yuan Chengliang, "Xianxue ranjiu dujuan hong: Geming xiandai jingju dujuan shan quzhe wenshi ji" [The blood-stained red azalea: The tormented birth of the revolutionary model Peking opera Azalea Mountain], *Dangshi bocai* 12 (2005): 9–11.

11. A 1964 recording of the Beijing production was released on cassette tapes by Zhongguo guangbo yinxiang chubanshe in 1991.

12. There has been much discussion of the reasons behind the name changes. Some say that Jiang Qing did not like the fact that the leading female role took the same last name as General He Long. Others suggested that Mao's second wife was surnamed He and Jiang Qing as his third wife could not tolerate "her heroine" being named after her real-life rival. See Yuan Chengliang, "Xianxue ranjiu dujuan hong," 10. Despite the change of the heroine's last name, her given name, Xiang, remained unchanged. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the watery association of the character Xiang (it has a water radical and is the name of a famous river in the Hunan Province) is meant to hint at the character's connection with Jiang Qing herself (the last name Jiang has a water radical and means "river"). Jiang Shuiying, the name of the female Party representative in another model opera of the same period, *Longjiang song* (*Ode to the Dragon River*), literally reads "river, water, heroine." The direct association between Jiang Qing and the central female characters in these later model works cannot be missed. See Shi Yonggang and Zhang Fan, *Yangbanxi shi ji*, 226–32.

13. See Yuan Chengliang, "Xianxue ranjiu dujuan hong," 10.

14. See Yuan Chengliang, "Geming xiandai jingju *Dujuan shan* dansheng ji" [The birth of the revolutionary Peking opera Azalea Mountain] in *Hongse jingdian dansheng de taiqian muhou* [On the stage and behind the scenes in the production of revolutionary classics], online publication available at http://www.readnovel.com/novel/19390/10.html (accessed August 30, 2009).

15. The brilliant redness of azalea flowers was a recurrent theme in the visual culture of late Maoist China. The acclaimed cinematography in the feature film *Shanshan de hongxing* (*Sparkling Red Star*, 1974) is a fine example.

16. Elizabeth Perry discusses the mythologized origins of Chinese revolution and their visual testimonies in her essay "Reclaiming the Chinese Revolution," *Journal of Asian Studies* 67, no. 4 (2008): 1147–64.

17. See the interview with Xie Tieli collected in *Wutai yu yinmu zhijian: Xiqu dianying de huigu yu jiangshu* [Between stage and screen: Memories and narratives of opera films] (Beijing: Zhongguo wenlian chubanshe, 2007), 3–11. My gratitude to Judith Zeitlin for providing this source. *Azalea Mountain* is also briefly mentioned in another interview with Xie titled "Xie Tieli fangtan ji" [Interview with Xie Tieli], *Dangdai dianying* 1 (1999): 30–36.

18. See Mu Qing, "Xianfeng yu jiushu: Guan xiqu dianying *Lianli Yu Chenglong*" [The avant-garde and salvation: Watching the opera film The Incorruptible Official Yu Chenglong], *Wenhuibao*, July 4, 2009. Also see Zheng Dasheng's own filming notes, "*Lianli Yu Chenglong* pianchang shizhu" [Tidbits from the shooting scene of The Incorruptible Official Yu Chenglong], published in *Shijie dianying zhi chuang* [Window to World Cinema] 5 (2009), available online at http://www.sfs-cn.com/node3/node1821/u1a1412338.html (accessed March 6, 2010).

19. See Wang Renyuan, "Shibai de moshi: Jingju yangbanxi yinyue pingxi" [A model of failure: A musical analysis of model Peking operas], *Xiqu yishu* 2 (1997): 48–54. While this article takes a rather critical attitude toward the musical composition of model works, in Wang's subsequent book, published seven years later, he appears to have toned down the criticism and focused more extensively on musical experiments in model works. See Wang, *Jingyu yangbanxi yinyue lungang* [Theories and discussions of musical composition in model Peking operas] (Beijing: Renmin yinyue chubanshe, 2004). For a discussion of musical composition of Peking opera in general, see Elizabeth Wichmann, *Listening to Theatre: The Aural Dimension of Beijing Opera* (Honolulu: University of Hawai`i Press, 1991).

20. See Liu Yunyan, "Jingju danjue changqiang fazhan zhong de liang ci gaofeng" [Two peaks in the evolution of musical modes of female roles in Peking opera], *Yuefu xinsheng* 3 (2006): 47–51; and "Xiandai jingju yangbanxi zhong danjue changqiang de yinyue chuangxin" [Innovations in musical modes of female roles in model Peking operas], *Zhongyang yinyue xueyuan xuebao* 2 (2006): 88–100. Also see Liu, *Xiandai jingju yangbanxi danjiao changqiang yinyue yanjiu* [Studies of musical modes of female roles in model Peking operas] (Beijing: Zhongyang yinyue xueyuan chubanshe, 2006).

21. To similar effect, Chris Berry and Mary Farquhar have argued that opera films and martial arts cinema have both benefited from Chinese dramatic traditions. See Berry and Farquhar, "Operatic Modes: Opera Film, Martial Arts, and Cultural Nationalism," in *China on Screen: Cinema and Nation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 47–75.

22. For a study of the leitmotif in *Azalea Mountain*, see Liu Congming, "Xiandai Jingju *Dujuan shan* zhong de Ke Xiang yinyue zhuti" [The Ke Xiang theme in the modern Peking opera Azalea Mountain], *Huangzhong* 4 (2003): 33–41.

23. For a discussion of musical modes for male roles in the Peking opera tradition, see Yu Wanzeng, "Bitan Jingju xiaosheng" [On the young male role in Peking opera], *Zhongguo Jingju* 7 (2008): 53–55. For a technical discussion of the blending of musical modes in the creation of Ke Xiang's vocal style, see Liu Congming, "Xiandai Jingju *Dujuan shan* zhong de Ke Xiang yinyue zhuti," 33–41.

24. Translations are based on Martin Ebon's rendition of the script, with minor changes. See Ebon, *Five Chinese Communist Plays* (New York: John Day, 1975), 282. The original script as well as the full score was published by Renmin wenxue chubanshe in Beijing in 1973. Musicologists in China often single out this particular aria to highlight the musical fluidity that comes to define the designs of melodic passages in *Azalea Mountain*. See, for instance, Cao Jiayun, "Jicheng yu chuangxin de dianfan: Cong yinyue jiaodu fenxi xiandai Jingju *Dujuan shan* zhong 'Jia zhu Anyuan' changduan" [An example of continuity and innovation: An analysis of the aria Home in Anyuan in the model opera Azalea Mountain from a musical perspective], *Xiqu yishu* 2 (2002): 70–73.

25. The art of stage dialogue defined in Chinese modern spoken drama traditions has been an orally transmitted tradition and there exists little literature that theorizes its principles. More research in this area is called for. See Feng Xijun, "Shidai, yuyan, taici" [Historical time, language, and stage dialogue], *Xiju* 4 (1995): 23–26.

26. Wichmann, *Listening to Theatre*, 91.

27. For a discussion of traditional Peking opera costumes, including the techniques of the water sleeves, see Alexandra B. Bonds, *Beijing Opera Costumes: The Visual Communication of Character and Culture* (Honolulu: University of Hawai`i Press, 2008). Also see Li Yusheng and Wu Kejing, "Tan 'wu gong wu fa'" [On five techniques and five methods], *Zhongguo Jingju* 11 (2007): 4–8.

28. See Luo Yun and Ming Qiaoling, "Changxiu shan wu: Qiantan xiqu 'shuixiu' yishu" [Long sleeves fit for dance: A discussion of the art of the water sleeves in theatrical traditions], *Zhongguo xiqu* 10 (2001): 28–29.

29. See Paul Clark, *The Chinese Cultural Revolution: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 49.

30. For a discussion of the politics of hair in contemporary Chinese cinema, see Guo Chunlin, "Toufa de gushi: Shenti de zhengzhi" [Stories of hair: Body politics], *Tongji daxue xuebao* 18, no. 5 (2007): 90–99. Also see Yang Liu, "Toufa de bianma: Zhongguo dangdai dianying de toufa xushi" [Decoding hair: Narratives of hair in contemporary Chinese cinema], *Dingying pingjie* 6 (2009): 7–8.

31. Other operatic traditions would allow female roles to be freer in using hair as a prop, such as the actress Wang Wenjuan's spectacular use of her hair in the last scene of *Zhui yu* [Chasing the Fish Spirit], a 1959 Yue opera film directed by Ying Yunwei.

32. For a discussion of the spectacular stagecraft in *Wild Boar Forest*, see Wang Yuzhu, "Guang qian yu hou, meili yongcun: 'Baihu tang' yishu tese qianxi" [Everlasting charm in front of the limelight: An analysis of the White Tiger Hall scene], *Zhongguo Jingju* 6 (2008): 30–32.

33. The hair manipulation techniques in traditional Peking opera can be summed up in ten categories: *da*, to fling hair gathered in the back to the front; *tiao*, to fling hair draping in front of the face to the back; *shan*, to swing hair on one side of the face to the back; *dai*, to swing hair in the back to one side of the face; *xuan*, to swing the hair in large circles in front of the body; *pan*, to swing the hair on either side of the face into overhead circles; *dou*, to shake the hair and to create a wavelike movement; *rao*, to circle the hair, either in the air, or around the body; and *bai*, to use the strength of both head and neck to swing the hair in front of the body. See, for instance, Liu Fangzheng, "Cong *Huapi* tan shuaifa gong" [From Painted Skin to a discussion of the hair method], *Xiqu yishu* 2 (1994): 39–42.

Glossary

Anyuan	安源
bai	摆
Baimao nü	白毛女
chong	冲
Chun cui dujuan	春催杜鹃
chunjing de yunwei	纯净的韵味
Da zuixia	大醉侠
da	打
dai	带
dai gongdang	带共党
dan	掸
daoxia liu ren	刀下留人
dianyinghua	电影化
Diao Guangtan	刁光覃
dou	抖
Du	杜
Dujuan shan	杜鹃山
Duquan shan	杜泉山
er long chushui	二龙出水
erhuang	二黄
fan erhuang	反二黄
Fang Haizhen	方海珍
gao yu wutai	高于舞台
gou	勾
gugan meiren	骨感美人
Haigang	海港
Han Shaobo	韩少波
He Xiang	贺湘
Hong Changqing	洪常青
Hong Xuefei	洪雪飞
Hongdeng ji	红灯记
Hongse niangzijun	红色娘子军
hualian	花脸
Jia zhu Anyuan	家住安源
Jiang Qing	江青
jianghu	江湖
jie fachang	劫法场
jing	净
junban	俊扮

Ke Xiang	柯湘
Ke Xiang tou	柯湘头
laodan	老旦
laosheng	老生
Lei Gang	雷刚
Li Lifang	李丽芳
Li Mingsheng	李鸣盛
Li Shaochun	李少春
Li Tiemei	李铁梅
Li Yuhe	李玉和
Li Zhongcheng	黎中城
lianfa	链法
liangxiang	亮相
Lianli Yu Chenglong	廉吏于成龙
liao lian	撩链
Lin Chong	林冲
litigan	立体感
Liu Yunyan	刘云燕
liushui	流水
Longjiang song	龙江颂
Longmen kezhan	龙门客栈
Ma Lianliang	马连良
Ma Yong'an	马永安
pan	盘
peng lian	捧链
qiang yige gongchandang linglu xiangqian	抢一个共产党领路向前
qiangxia duo ren	枪下夺人
qingyi	青衣
Qiu Shengrong	裘盛戎
rao	绕
Shajiabang	沙家浜
shan	闪
shinian mo yi xi	十年磨一戏
shuai	甩
shuaifa gong	甩发功
shuixiu gong	水袖功
ti lian	提链
tiao	挑
tuo lian	托链

Wang Guiqing	王桂卿
Wang Renyuan	汪人元
Wang Shuyuan	王树元
Wang Wenjuan	王文娟
Wang Zengqi	汪曾祺
wawasheng	娃娃生
Wu Qinghua	吴清华
Wudou	乌豆
wusheng	武生
xiaosheng	小生
Xie Tieli	谢铁骊
Xi'er	喜儿
xipi huilong	西皮回龙
xipi wawadiao	西皮娃娃调
xuan	旋
Xue Enhou	薛恩厚
Yan Huizhu	言慧珠
yanfa	眼法
Yang Chunxia	杨春霞
Yang Yumin	杨毓珉
yangbanxi	样板戏
yaoban	摇板
Yezhu lin	野猪林
Yin Yuanhe	殷元和
Yu Huiyong	于会咏
yuanban	原板
yunbai	韵白
Zaisheng yuan	再生缘
zaoxing	造型
Zhao Yanxia	赵燕侠
zhen lian	振链
Zheng Dasheng	郑大圣
Zheng Laowan	郑老万
zheng fa	整发
Zhiqu Weihushan	智取威虎山
zhongban	中板
Zhu Lin	朱琳
Zhui yu	追鱼
zongshen'gan	纵深感