

# On the characterization of Shen Yangzhai in the opera Jiang Jie

**Tianlong Jiang**

*Conservatory of music, Henan University, Kaifeng, China*

**Abstract:** *Since ancient times, there have been many heroines in the history of China. In ancient times, Hua Mulan joined the army for her father and fought against the enemy. Today there are Qiu Jin and Jiang Xueqin who fought the enemy and saved the country and dared the revolution. Among them I admire most regret is revolutionary fighter - Jiang Xueqin. I know her heroic deeds from the opera "Jiang Jie". Jiang Xueqin's integrity, fearless of the heroic spirit of life and death make me impressed. The reactionaries who killed Jiang Xueqin made me even more resentful. Shen Yangzhai is the representative of the villain in the play. His evil image, which is malicious, wily, hiding a sword behind a smile and doing anything to achieve his goal, forms a sharp contrast with Jiang Xueqin. This paper will analyze Shen Yangzhai's status, background, role performance, music and other aspects, and try to restore a "flesh and blood, profound" character image.*

**Keywords:** *National Opera, "Jiang Jie", Characters of Shen Yangzhai, Characters of Xiang Yangzhai*

## 1. Introduction

Opera originated from theater music in ancient Greece and Rome, and is a comprehensive stage drama integrating vocal music, dance, stage, performance and other art forms.<sup>[1]</sup> Opera was introduced into China during the May 4th Movement, and with the efforts of intellectuals at that time, it assimilated and blended with Chinese traditional culture. And gradually took root in China.<sup>[2]</sup> Formed Chinese opera, which we call "national opera". The development of national opera in China can be divided into the following stages: the exploratory period, from 1920s to 1940s. In the middle, represented by the White-haired Girl, the basic aesthetic style was formed from the 1940s to the mid-1950s. From 49 years after the founding of the People's Republic of China to the 1960s, ethnic operas developed unprecedentedly, producing a large number of excellent works, such as Honghu Red Guards and Jiang Jie. Ten years of "Cultural Revolution", the national opera began to decline. However, since the 1970s, with the deepening of reform and opening up, the impact of Western culture and the rapid development of The Times, although there are excellent works of national opera, the external living environment is worrying. The gradual integration of Chinese and western cultures has led to the diversification of Chinese national operas and the divergence of elegance and vulgarities.

Since the creation of "Jiang Jie", there have been 5 versions on the stage. Each edition has its own features and advantages. In particular, the fifth edition of "Jiang Jie", on the basis of absorbing the essence of the first four editions, and with the support and assistance of modern science and technology, gives people a sense of inner reality and impact through the exquisiteness and localization of the characters. In particular, the performance of Shen Yangzhai in the play was internalized and objectified, which gave me a new understanding of this excellent national opera. Therefore, I summarized and summarized my own ideas, which can also be regarded as a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the excellent work Jiang Jie.

## 2. Overview of works

National opera "Jiang Jie", is a popular, beautiful music melody, obvious conflicts, plot ups and downs of the excellent work.<sup>[3]</sup> It is a milestone and has been praised by experts and audiences at home and abroad since it was released in 1964. It is a rare and excellent work in the development history of Chinese national opera.

### **2.1. Background of Creation**

Opera "Jiang Jie" is Yang Yiyan, Luo Guangbin to the documentary novel "Red Rock" as the script of the total creation, produced in the 1960s, by the air political art troupe Yan Su scriptwriting, Jiang Chunyang, Yang Ming, Jin Sha jointly completed the seven-act opera. The play has been repeated four times, and many classic lyrics have been handed down, such as "Praise of Red Plum" and "Embroidering red Flag", which have been widely sung. Has become an indelible mark in the hearts of generations. And the fifth generation of "Jiang Jie" is particularly significant. As a classic red work with far-reaching influence, it not only has a strong cast, magnificent stage sound and lighting effects, and innovative first-class stage choreography to give people a visual and auditory luster and shock. What is more important is that it meets the new ideas and appears in front of the broad masses with brand-new spiritual concepts. It is not only a textbook of life, but also the modern people's longing for and promotion of revolutionary sages and yearning for and calling for lofty spirit. Realized to the art and the national spirit of the strong highlight.<sup>[4]</sup>

### **2.2. Plot Description**

Performed on the eve of liberation, underground communists Jiang Xueqin (i.e., Jiang Jie) with the important instructions of the CPC Sichuan provincial party committee, the pier and the enemy to leave mountain city in north Sichuan to guerrillas, wit and way accidentally's sacrifice to hear of the news of her husband song-tao peng, this does not make her stop road of the revolution, but turn grief into strength, to the north Sichuan. There, at the instruction of the provincial Party Committee, she led the masses in a firm struggle against the Kuomintang reactionaries. And at this time, Shen Yangzhai as a representative of the reactionary forces have noticed her, through a variety of means blockade guerrillas. Due to the betrayal of internal traitor Fuzhigao, Jiangjie was arrested. At this time when the Kuomintang and the Communist civil war period, the enemy wanted to achieve the elimination of the Communist Party in Chongqing by persuading Jiang Jie to surrender, but was strongly opposed by Jiang Jie. After the enemy failed to persuade surrender exposed the nature of the Wolf, Jiang Jie tortured, forced Jiang Jie to submit. But Jiang Jie would rather die than surrender. And Chongqing is about to be liberated at this time, at the last moment, the enemy cruel Jiangjie sent to the execution ground. Died heroically on the eve of the liberation of Chongqing.

### **3. Character characteristics of Shen Yangzhai**

Shen Yangzhai, a character in the opera "Jiang Jie", is based on Zhou Yanghao, a Kuomintang officer. As the chief villain of the play, Shen Yangzhai's character image is not as ferocious as most of the villains, and the director hopes to restore the real and rational character. Place the character in a specific context, position, time, place, and the situation he faces and the people and things he deals with. The comprehensive portrayal of Shen Yangzhai as a gentle and unrestrained outside, laughing, approachable image, but the inner is a sinister and insane figure. Get rid of the outer surface, dig the inner essence. As the agent of Chongqing juntong spy, in Chongqing black iron prison, he killed a large number of patriots and innocent people, the result is still unable to obtain the information that he wants. In the face of the PLA crossing river eve, he regardless of the people's life and death, tight blockade of the river, to the people ruthless, to the Communist party would rather kill the wrong never let go. But he is not a reckless and stupid person, in his tight blockade and careful planning, he finally found a breakthrough. Found lurking in Chongqing, and coerced and cajoled him into mutiny. In The mouth of Fu Zhigao, he learned the trail of Jiang Jie and the Communist Party Chongqing contact point. The decision was made immediately to surround Huaying Mountain. And Jiang Jie for the overall situation, unfortunately arrested. In the face of Jiang Jie, Shen Yangzhai clearly realized that coercion and inducement cannot make its yield. So he came to persuade her to surrender with a pretence of benevolence and righteousness. The most fatal is that he used the basic love of family and people to hit the emotional school. Hypocrisy for Jiang Jie grievance, hope Jiang Jie for their own consideration, thought that this means, can make Jiang Jie yield. Can backfire, so that Jiang Jie more firm faith. Thus, Shen Yangzhai's ugly face came out. The so-called human love is not, the implementation of the ordinary people unimaginable torture Jiang Jie. In order to force Jiang Jie to submit, Jiang Jie's ten fingers on a bamboo stick. When Chongqing was about to be liberated, Shen Yangzhai did not relent to the Communists represented by Jiang Jie. He took the resentment of the Communist party will be cruel Jiang Elder sister and a large number of Communists killed...Full of human feelings, love, peace, happiness, and finally two hands are stained with innocent people and patriots of blood donation. In this play, Shen Yangzhai's ugly face and insidiousness can be

stated through the following aspects.

### **3.1. Character characterization of Shen Yangzhai**

There are many villains in this play, but they are all very realistic. It is because of the contrast of the villain that the image of Jiang Jie is more extraordinary. Therefore, the villain of the play most of the portrayal of very obscene, such as: Tang Guishan, Fuzhigao and so on. As the number one villain in the play, he has become unusually elegant, abandoning the stereotype of bared teeth and exaggerated villains in people's minds. He turned to a very sophisticated image to interpret the character. And such a role has more connotation, more shaping power, more can show the heart of the role.

In many plays, some superficial, exaggerated performance is difficult to explain the deep, dramatic tension of the character. High intensity of inner drama is required to accurately interpret the character's image. And Shen Yangzhai is exactly such a role. As the chief villain of the play, he is the core force to contrast and foil the positive characters. And as the identity of the character, cannot be too exaggerated performance, otherwise it will lose the due steady, also cannot express the lack of heat. Therefore, it is extremely important to get it right. The sixth scene of the play can be used to explain that Shen Yangzhai did not use stiff torture, but to retreat through the means of playing emotional cards, induced Jiang Jie to yield. Through simple and direct emotions to attract the attention of the public, so as to arouse the hearts of the masses of the people. So Shen Yangzhai has a very strong dramatic tension here. On the basis of not pompous, Shen Yangzhai's insidious performance benefits check-in.

### **3.2. Induction of Shen Yangzhai**

Jiang Jie is an excellent and mature opera work. The emotional line is very clear and clear, Jiang Jie on the party of the revolution of the firm, perseverance and Shen Yangzhai on the communist party of the eradication of spare no effort to form a sharp contrast. In the sixth field, Shen Yangzhai used people's initial feelings to Jiang Elder sister for a strong emotional induction, xiao of the feeling to move the reason, to the body. This is also the climax of the play, where Shen Yangzhai hides his Wolf nature and becomes elegant and emotional.

### **3.3. The inner drama of the characters in the play**

The drama's emotional ups and downs, especially Jiang Jie and Shen Yangzhai's scenes. It's all about performing through strong inner tension, fighting with just the right inner movement. The inner drama brings strong inner power to the development of the whole situation. In the sixth game, for example, Shen Yangzhai attempts to use emotion as a chip to shake the will of the collapse of Jiang Jie, which is the most exciting moment of the plot. It is through the character's inner exploration and display that the actor can bring the audience into the realm of integration with the opera.

## **4. The portrayal of characters in three verses**

"Jiang Jie" a play, is the center of the interpretation of Jiang Jie. Therefore, the roles outside of Jiang Jie are limited. The use of music in this play is just right, and the import of Sichuan opera characteristics is very clever. Without losing local characteristics, the plot will be explained and developed.<sup>[5]</sup>

### **4.1. "The Situation is So Chaotic"**

Because of the role identity, age needs, Shen Yangzhai's voice color presents a low, resolute, vigorous characteristics. As the first song of Shen Yangzhai in the whole play, the characters are portrayed to the limit. The whole section uses narrative music form, more close to the oral music trend, to depict the audience a senior kuomintang spy crafty image.

### **4.2. "You Have to Think Twice"**

This verse appears in global scene six of the exhortation. As the climax of the canto, there is some sharp contrast. Although similar to the previous paragraph in narrative, in the face of Jiang Jie's "indifference", Shen Yangzhai tries to induce Jiang Jie to surrender through gentle singing. Shen Yangzhai starts with the most basic and direct feelings of human beings. Shen Yangzhai and Jiang Jie desalination of class sex, Jiang Jie will be tricked into the crowd shared human love above. Through the

family, children's fetters and tricked Jiang Sister. Therefore, the smooth rhythm, colloquial rhythm and tone, and the tone of narration all the time show the warm and delicate emotions of the characters and express their inner mood. Very vivid portrayal of the character image.

#### **4.3. "Drown your Chiang Dynasty in Laughter"**

This paragraph appears in the sixth paragraph of the overall situation, which is another duet between Jiang Jie and Shen Yangzhai after the persuasion to surrender. The use of rhyme technique in the play makes the image of the characters more vivid and deeply rooted in people's hearts. At this moment is the play's most intense, the characters are the most crazy stage. The emotional progression had reached its climax. When singing at this time, the speed of speech is accelerated, the syllables are full of rhythm, and the language style is more colloquial. The addition of rhyme and white technique in the opera can better reflect the conflict and conflict in their hearts. Shen Yangzhai as the villain of the insidious, angry and cunning. The contrast of various techniques in this canto promotes the development and ups and downs of the plot. Can make the audience spontaneity experience is and evil contest, feel Jiang Sister at this moment of the heart entanglements and tangled after the fortitude and tenacity, while the villain Shen Yangzhai evil, cunning and shameless, performance incisively and vividly. Taking away the logic, Shen Yangzhai's hypocrisy is gradually torn apart, and his real evil and ferocious are revealed step by step to the audience, which has been shocked to the core of the heart.

#### **4.4. The important relationship between the canto and the plot in the paly**

Shen Yangzhai's three verses are closely linked and full of dramatic tension, presenting the intensity of the plot and the wonderful psychological changes of the characters vividly, and presenting the human nature in front of the audience most directly. Affecting the audience's inner needs and desires, bring the audience the most direct shock and impact. The characters' vocals vary according to the intensity of the plot. In conciliation and compromise, when Shen Yangzhai is cajoling Jiang Jie, the music rhythm is obviously faster, the lyrics are compact, and the audience's heart brings a sense of tension and anxiety. In order to ease the tension and bring relief to the audience's heart, the plot was developed and the rhythm and melody of the singing section was slowly eased down. Then appeared Shen Yangzhai not to force, began to lure. It not only brings climax to the development of the whole play, but also makes the plot very dramatic and logical. At the same time, lighten the atmosphere between performances. In this field, Shen Yangzhai's decoy is very rich in decoy ability with humanity's universal love as the starting point. It is not only the need of the plot, but also targeted to the characters in the play and the audience to watch a very attractive emotional traction. Make the villain's inner activities more prominent, but more can foil jiangjie's perseverance, wisdom, fearless revolutionary spirit of life and death. The inner description of the villain is extremely important, making each episode fascinating and thought-provoking.

### **5. Conclusion**

In shaping the character image, the grasp of details determines the success of the portrayal of the character. As for the whole play, it is far from enough to only focus on the portrayal of positive characters. What is needed is an overall grasp of the rhythm, logical thinking and the foil of character images of the whole play. Therefore, in the whole opera, the portrayal of the negative characters plays an extremely important role in setting off the positive characters, in the development of the plot, and even in the integrity and artistry of the whole opera. Such is the case with Shen Yangzhai in the opera "Jiang Jie". He is neither a pure gangster nor a reckless person whose emotions are revealed in his face. He is a senior official of the National government, and he has some extremely deep secrets. Therefore, the villain Shen Yangzhai's nefarious, insidious and vicious, crazy with elegant and very sophisticated performance, more with Jiang Jie to form a sharp internal contrast. So that the drama of the whole drama tension to achieve unprecedented effect. More can highlight the portrayal of the actors, actors acting and the depth of the drama. In short, the tension of the drama and the ups and downs of the plot need not only the full interpretation of the positive characters, but also the emotional foil of the negative characters. The inner depiction of the villain and the deep interpretation of the interpretation, the tension and drama of the whole play some indispensable importance. And "Jiang Jie", as a rare excellent work in Chinese history, it can fully explain the inner drama of the villain. Can be called a classic red opera. It not only truly restores the heroic deeds of Jiang Jie, but also adds a thick and heavy color to the development of China's national opera. Since its creation, "Jiang Jie" has experienced several iterations, enduring. Reposes several generations to the revolutionary sages' pursuit, to the lofty spirit's longing and the call. In terms of

artistry, it accords with the category of western aesthetics and the color of Oriental heroism, and has realized the strong highlighting of art and national spirit.

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