

TURANDOT'S HOMECOMING: SEEKING THE AUTHENTIC PRINCESS OF CHINA
IN A NEW CONTEST OF RIDDLES

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ABSTRACT

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The negative portrait of Chinese culture in Puccini's *Turandot* hindered this opera's acceptance in China. Wei Minglun's Sichuan Opera performance *Chinese Princess Turandot* (1995) and Zhang Yimou's collaboration with Zubin Mehta on Puccini's *Turandot* premiere in Beijing, however, brought *Turandot* home at the end of twentieth century. This thesis explores *Turandot*'s transformation and reception in China by analyzing the Chinese cultural representation and authenticity of these two Chinese versions.

To provide a historical context, the thesis traces *Turandot*'s origin from Nizami's *Haft Paykar* (1197) to Puccini's opera. It also includes discussion of varied Chinese adaptations from 1995 to 2010. Ultimately, this thesis investigates issues of Orientalism, Occidentalism, authenticity, and hybridism in *Turandot*'s homecoming. Because the Orientalist image of *Turandot* has been modified by cross-cultural context, I propose that Orientalism and Occidentalism can be distinguished by how a work is made and how it is perceived.

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INTRODUCTION

“Who is the latest musical sensation in China?
(A dead Italian once scorned for his Orientalist fantasies about Asian women.)”¹

Giacomo Puccini’s last opera *Turandot* (1926) had been banned in China for more than seventy years.² The Chinese Communist leaders perceived it as an “unsympathetic and unrealistic” depiction of China.³ *Turandot* herself was regarded as “an invention of European ‘Orientalism,’ in which all things Asian were seen as the other: exotic and intoxicating, barbaric, and cruel.”⁴ In the last fifteen years, however, the *Turandot* story has experienced a revival in China, with performances in various venues using different style and revisions. In 1995, the Chinese playwright Wei Minglun revised Puccini’s plot as *Chinese Princess Turandot* for a Sichuan Opera performance. Three years later, Opera on Original Site Inc. finally performed Puccini’s *Turandot* in its original form in the Forbidden City, Beijing, directed by the Chinese movie director Zhang Yimou. Since those two groundbreaking performances, the *Turandot* story has been adapted to various Chinese operatic forms. (See Table 1)

¹ Barbara Demick, “Beijing has thing for Puccini opera set in China,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 28, 2009, <http://articles.latimes.com/2009/jul/28/world/fg-puccini28> (accessed October 1, 2009).

² There is no clear law or document from the Chinese government saying that the opera was banned in China before 1998. However, several sources from the media state this as a fact: Teresa Poole, “Puccini Opera Returns Home to Beijing,” *Independent*, August 29, 1998, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/puccini-opera-returns-home-to-pekings-1174637.html> (accessed October 15, 2009); Chris Devonshire-Ellis, “China Remembered: *Turandot* at the Forbidden City,” *China Briefing*, August 21, 2009, <http://www.china-briefing.com/news/2009/08/21/china-remembered-turandot-at-the-forbidden-city.html> (accessed October 15, 2009); and Andrew Moravcsik, “In Review: *Turandot*, National Performing Arts Center,” March 21, 2008, <http://www.princeton.edu/~amoravcs/library/turandot.doc> (accessed October 15, 2009).

³ Mei Fong, “Opera: Asian Aria,” *Wall Street Journal*, March 29, 2008, sec. W2.

⁴ Scarlet Cheng, “At Home But Out of Place: Puccini’s Chinese Princess of Darkness, *Turandot*, Arrives in the Forbidden City,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 23, 1998, Calendar, p. 6.

Table 1
Turandot's Revival

<i>Year</i>	<i>Genre</i>	<i>Place</i>
1995	Sichuan Opera	Sichuan
1996	Guangdong Opera	Guangzhou
	Western Opera (in middle kingdom)	Beijing
1998	Western Opera (original form)	Beijing
2000	Henan Opera	Taiwan
2002	TV series (Sichuan Opera)	CCTV
2003	Beijing Opera	Beijing
2008	Western Opera (with new ending)	Beijing
2010	Western Opera	Beijing

Turandot poses three riddles to her suitors in Puccini's opera; in the same way, the story of *Turandot* poses at least three challenges to the Chinese directors in their adaptations. As the suitors must answer the riddles to marry Turandot, the Chinese directors need to negotiate the historical, intercultural, cultural, political, gender, and rhetorical problems to create an authentic Chinese princess. Three challenges confront the directors: how to define the authenticity of the finished product; how to change *Turandot's* Orientalist image; and how to appeal to Chinese audiences.

CHAPTER I. ORIGIN OF THE *TURANDOT* STORY

The *Turandot* story comes from varied sources, including Nizami Ganjavi's twelfth-century narrative poem, *Haft Paykar*⁵, François Pétis de la Croix's *Les mille et un jours*⁶, Carlo Gozzi's play *Turandot* (1761), and Schiller's *Turandot, Prinzessin von China* (1801). The fourth tale in Nizami's *Haft Paykar* is a story of a Russian princess rather than a Chinese princess, while the *Turandot* story serves only the final part of Calaf's adventure in la Croix's collection of Arabic and Persian tales *Les mille et un jours*. Gozzi's *Turandot* established the romance between the Chinese princess Turandot and Calaf as the focus of the drama. Puccini's plot of *Turandot* is based on Gozzi's version, written by Giuseppe Adami and Renato Simoni in 1921. The differences among Gozzi's, Schiller's and Puccini's versions are the three riddles; Puccini also adds a new character, Liù, to Gozzi's version.

Nizami's *Haft Paykar* (The Seven Bellas), 1197

Born in Ganja, Transcaucasian Azerbaijan, Nizami Gunjavi (1141-1209) is best known for his long narrative poems, including *Haft Paykar*. It is a biographical story of the Sassanian ruler Bahrâm, consisting of seven tales with a prologue and an epilogue. Bahrâm finds seven portraits of the princesses of the seven climes (India, China/Turkestan, Khwârazm, Slavonia, North Africa, Byzantium, and Persia) in the palace. He decides to seek the seven princesses as his brides after having saved his country from Chinese invaders. The seven tales are told by his seven brides. The fourth tale, "How Bahrâm Sat on a Tuesday in the Red Dome," told by the Slavonia princess, established the prototype for the *Turandot* story.

⁵ Nizami Ganjavi, *The Haft Paykar: A Medieval Persian Romance* (New York: Oxford Press, 1995).

⁶ Justin Juntly McCarthy, ed., *The Thousand and One Days* (London: Chato and Windus, 1892).

The Slavonian Princess is beautiful, clever, and embodies all the best qualities of a man: “she [is] in form a woman, but in essence, man.”⁷ She hides herself in a place surrounded by talismans with a secret entrance. Only the man who is smart enough to defeat the talisman and discover the entrance can win her hand. A prince [Bahrâm] falls in love with her and decides to win her. Fortunately, he passes the challenges easily: “[He,] like a mountain firm stood fast, shattered one by one the talismans; the fortress breached, and shrank from no condition set.”⁸ Now he only needs to answer the Princess’s four “deep mysteries” to achieve final success.⁹

The princess poses a set of knotty problems. She sends two pearls to the prince and asks her messenger to bring them back quickly. The prince adds three more equal pearls and gives them to the messenger. The princess sends him the crushed pearl dusts mixed with sugar to see what he will do. He uses milk to distinguish the sugar and the pearl dust and returns the same weight in pearl to the princess. After solving this problem, the princess sends him a ring, from her finger. The prince gives the messenger his own ring—a precious ring with an pearl in exchange for the princess’s ring. She finds a similar pearl from her necklace and sends both pearls back to the prince. He joins the two pearls with a “bead of blue” so the third pearl cannot be added upon reception. This time, the princess smiles at the bead and tells her father, “I am satisfied.”¹⁰

Each test has a symbolic meaning. The princess gives him two pearls in the beginning symbolizing that “this life is but two days.” She adds sugar to the pearl dust

⁷ Nizami, 160.

⁸ The short quotations come from Nizami, 169-172.

⁹ Nizami, 168.

¹⁰ Nizami, 171.

to ask, “This life with desire is mixed...who...can separate the two?”¹¹ The prince pours the dust into milk so that the sugar dissolves and the pearl remains. At this point, the princess decides to send him her ring to inform him that she is ready to marry him; and the prince replies with a pearl to signify she will be with him. In the end, the prince joins the two pearls together on a string of beads as his seal of love.

Although Nizami’s *Haft Paykar* has nothing to do with China and Tartars as the standard Turandot story does, it sets up the main theme for the later versions: only those who can answer Turandot's riddles can marry her, and those who fail will be killed.

De la Croix’s “Historie du prince Calaf et de la princesse de la Chine” in *Les mille et un jours* (*The Thousand and One Days*), 1710-1712

The collection of Persian tales, *Les mille et un jours*, first appeared in 1710.¹² The author was the Orientalist and diplomat François Pétis de la Croix (1653-1713). La Croix said he heard the stories from an Isfahan collector, a Dervish named Mocles in 1675, which he translated into French. The original Persian version, called *Hazar Yek Ruz* (or *The Thousand and One Days*), might have been adapted by Mocles from certain Indian comedies. There is also a Turkish version, *Al farady baad al chidda* (or *Joy after Sorrow*) in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.¹³

There are six long stories in this collection, and “Prince Khalaf (Calaf) and the Princess of China” is the third.¹⁴ It describes Prince Calaf’s adventure in China. Calaf, the son of an old khan of the Nogäis Tartars, is recognized as the most glorious prince of his century. He surpasses all the princes of his time in appearance, in mind, and in

¹¹ Nizami, 172.

¹² Julia Pardoe, *The Thousand and One Days: A Companion to the Arabian Nights* (Baltimore: Murphy & Co., 1858), Introduction.

¹³ Pardoe, Introduction.

¹⁴ The others are: “The Enchanted Keys,” “Soliman Bey and The Three Story-Tellers,” “The Wise Dey,” “The Tunisian Sage,” and “The Nose for Gold.”

valor—at the age of eighteen—“he had perhaps no equal in the world.”¹⁵ Unfortunately, his country is invaded by the Carizmians, and Calaf and his parents are exiled to Greater Bulgaria, arriving in the territory of the tribe of Berlas.¹⁶ In Berlas, Calaf helps the Khan find his beloved falcon, and thus is permitted to ask the Khan for three favors. He asks the Khan to take care of his parents and to give him the finest horses and a magnificent suit. After having received the horses and the suit, Calaf visit the mighty kingdom of China.¹⁷

He arrives in Beijing and hears about the Chinese princess Turandot from an old woman who receives him. As the woman describes, Turandot is “what troubles his [the king’s] life” the most.¹⁸ Turandot is so beautiful that even the most skillful painters in the East were ashamed of their portrait of her because they could not accurately depict her beauty. She also has a cultivated mind, knows several languages, and is skilled in arithmetic, geography, philosophy, and theology. Nevertheless, “her fine qualities are effaced by an unexampled harshness of soul.”¹⁹ She becomes very ill after the king forces her to marry the Prince of Tibet, so she asks her father to publish an edict declaring that all the princes who wish to marry her must answer three questions. If they answer well, she will agree to marry them; if they fail they shall be beheaded.²⁰

When Calaf hears the story and sees Turandot’s portrait he falls in love immediately:

How is this portrait disordering my senses? Just Heaven! Is it the fate of all those who look at this painting to love the inhuman princess it represents? Alas! I love

¹⁵ McCarthy, 177.

¹⁶ McCarthy, 185.

¹⁷ McCarthy, 191.

¹⁸ McCarthy, 194.

¹⁹ McCarthy, 195.

²⁰ McCarthy, 196.

you [Turandot] in spite of your barbarity, and since it is permitted to me to aspire to your hand I wish from today to try to obtain you.²¹

He enters the palace to meet the king and the princess the next day.

He earns the friendship of the king, Altoum-Khan, by his courage and sincerity. The king tries to convince Calaf to quit the game; however, Calaf replies: “I cannot live if I do not obtain Turandot.”²² He is ready to answer Turandot’s three riddles. The first riddle is “what is the creature which belongs to all countries [,] is beloved by all, and who cannot endure its like?”²³ The second riddle is “who is the mother..., who, after having given birth to her children, devours them all when they have grown up?”²⁴ The third riddle is “What is the tree...the leaves of which are white on one side and black on the other?”²⁵ Fortunately, he answers all the three riddles correctly: sun, sea, and year. Turandot wants to ask him a fourth riddle, but the king stops her; she says then that she would rather die than marry Calaf.²⁶ In response, Calaf promises he will give up Turandot and die if she can guess his name. While Turandot is contemplating how to answer Calaf’s question, her maid Adelma, who was the princess of a tributary to China, volunteers to find out for Turandot. In fact, Adelma has her own plan. She comes to Calaf and tells him Turandot wants to kill him, so she hopes to help him escape from the country. At the same time, Adelma tells Calaf of her royal background and admits her love to him, wishing that Calaf can take her to another country and marry her.²⁷ Calaf refuses but also tells her his name unconsciously. The next morning, Turandot answers Calaf’s question with Adelma’s help; Adelma feels shame and commits suicide.

²¹ McCarthy, 212.

²² McCarthy, 226.

²³ McCarthy, 233.

²⁴ McCarthy, 234.

²⁵ McCarthy, 234.

²⁶ McCarthy, 238.

²⁷ McCarthy, 258.

Turandot's heart softens and admits her love to Calaf, and "they embrace[d] each other again and again, and the tears they shed moved the Chinese and Tartars."²⁸ Finally, Calaf and Turandot marry, and the king invites Calaf's parents to China and helps Calaf rebuild his country. Calaf goes back to his country in the end with Turandot and his two sons.

Although the story is set in China, some elements of the story actually reveal a mixture of Persian-Chinese views. First of all, the princess of China, Turandot, does not have a Chinese name. Turandot is a combination of "Turan" and "dot." Turan is today's Turkistan, which embraces parts of Turkey and China in central Asia; dot (dukht) means daughter. Thus, Turandot is not a name but rather, a term indicating the daughter of Turan, the Turkish-Chinese Princess. Similarly, the names for the king are also undefined. Sometimes he is called "Altoum," sometimes the "King of China," and most times "Khan." Altoum refers to the ancient Turkish king, while Khan is broadly used in central Asia from Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, to India.²⁹ Thus, the names of both the princess and the king do not purely represent Chinese culture. As musicologist Kii-Ming Lo indicates, "Prince Calaf and The Princess of China" in *The Thousand and One Days* is written with Persian *Chinoiserie*.³⁰ Nevertheless, this story seminally establishes a prototype of the story of *Turandot*. In later versions, all the adaptors keep the names of Calaf and Turandot, the three-riddle format, and the basic story line (i.e., Turandot's suitors must answer her riddles to seek her for a wife or suffer death).

Gozzi's *Turandot*, 1761

²⁸ McCarthy, 273.

²⁹ Khan, Dictionary.com. *Dictionary.com Unabridged*, Random House, Inc., <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/Khan> (accessed: January 20, 2010).

³⁰ Kii-Ming Lo and Jürgen Maehder, *The Changes of Turandot* (Taiwan: Cultural Speak Publishing Company, 2004), 26.

Carlo Gozzi (1702-1808) is the first playwright who adapted the story of *Turandot* for the stage. Desiring to revive the use of *commedia dell'arte*, Gozzi developed a new type of play called *fiabe*, by blending fairytale or fantasy with comic stock characters.³¹ He wrote a series of *fiabe*, and *Turandot* (1761) is the most famous and successful one. The story of *Turandot* is based on the third story “Prince Khalaf (Calaf) and The Princess of China” of *Les mille et un jours*.³² In *Les mille et un jours*, the first half of the story covers Calaf’s miserable background, while the second half chronicles his adventure in China. Gozzi’s play focuses only on the second part of the story, in which Gozzi was excited by the complicated and dramatic story of *Turandot*.³³ He writes, “the three enigmas of the Princess...might supply material for two acts of the play, and the problem of solving them might yield a subject for three more.”³⁴

The play begins with Calaf at the gate of Peking (today’s Beijing), which is adorned with the head of Turandot’s failed suitors. Calaf has escaped from Astrahan and come to Peking to join the Chinese army. His former teacher Barach finds him in front of the gate, and the two begin to converse. Their conversation is interrupted by the

³¹ William Ashbrook and Harold Powers, *Puccini’s Turandot: the End of the Great Tradition* (NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 44.

³² Gozzi’s adaptation, however, adds some additional meanings to the story from *Les mille et un jours*. In Gozzi’s revision, he not only reflects his view of life but also his favorable disposition toward the feudal system.³² According to John L. DiGaetani, Gozzi views life as “warfare;” specifically, he refers to the war between the sexes, the natural enemies of males and females. *Turandot* is one of the best examples of this warfare: the princess triggers a battle with her suitors due to her hatred of man. The eternal war between the sexes begins the story of *Turandot*; the only way to end the war is through the power of love. In addition to the representation of the natural war between the sexes, Gozzi also consciously emphasizes his view of the feudal system. He views the division of classes as part of God’s plan, that social order is unchangeable. In *Turandot*, Gozzi carefully shows the relationship between the nobility and the lower class; especially emphasizing every servant’s loyalty. Gozzi adds the character of Barach to the story for this purpose: Barach remains loyal to Timur even when he loses his country and is faced with poverty, appearing dressed in rags. Likewise, Gozzi also shows the generosity of the nobility by revising the ending. He deletes the death of Adelma and, instead, grants her freedom and her own kingdom.

³³ Lo, 23.

³⁴ Lo, 45.

funeral march of Turandot's latest victim. Although Barach has warned Calaf about Turandot's cruelty, Calaf still wants to try his luck to win Turandot's competition.³⁵

Truffaldino (master of the eunuchs), Brighella (master of the pages), and two other Chinese eunuchs open Act II in the Great Hall of the Divan. Gozzi allows the comedians to improvise a scene of how eunuchs hate marriage and how the last prince fails the riddles. A procession ensues, including the Chinese guards, the eight doctors, Pantalone (secretary of Altoum), Tartaglia (grand chancellor of China), and finally Altoum (emperor of China). Altoum tries to convince Calaf to give up on Turandot, but the prince insists that he would rather die than not attempt the challenge. Here Gozzi introduces a new riddle, different from the riddles in the Persian tale. Gozzi keeps the sun and the year as answers for his first two riddles and uses “the lion of Adria (St. Mark)” as the answer to his last riddle [as a reference to Venice, where the play was first performed]. The new riddle is:

Tell me the name of the kingly beast
 Who makes the world tremble and ruins his foes,
 Still mighty today as he was in the past,
 Winged and four-footed, in active repose.
 His hindquarters rest on the restless seas,
 His breast and his forepaws cover the sand.
 His untiring wings will never cease
 To cast their protection over the land.³⁶

Before the end of the second Act, Calaf answers all three riddles correctly. In a twist on De la Croix's plot, Calaf then poses a riddle for Turandot—she must know his name, because she scorned his victory.³⁷

³⁵ Carlo Gozzi, *Translations of The Love of Three Oranges, Turandot, and The Snake Lady*, trans. John Louis DiGaetani (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1988), 46-54.

³⁶ Carlo Gozzi, *Five Tales for The Theatre*, eds. and trans. Albert Bermel and Ted Emery (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 147.

Act III begins in a room of the Seraglio, where the former princess and Turandot's current servant Adelma is grieving. Turandot is contemplating Calaf's test: She does not hate the unknown prince (Calaf), but she dislikes men in general. Zelima, another servant and daughter of Barach and Schirina wants to help Turandot, so she suggests that Schirina may know the prince's name. At the same time, Adelma proposes another plan for Turandot: she volunteers to ask Calaf. In scene five, Barach is surprised to see Timur, his previous king, dressed in rags and coming to Peking to search for his son.³⁸

Act IV takes place in a room with columns in the seraglio. Turandot detains Barach, Schirina, and Timus in order to ask for the unknown prince's name. Timur hopes to be tortured to set Barach and Schirina free. In the end, no one tells Turandot the prince's real name. In another room, Calaf recognizes Adelma as the former Tatar Princess. She urges Calaf to escape with her so she can leave her life of slavery. Although sympathetic for her misery, Calaf rejects Adelma, because he wants to face his own fate and win Turandot's love.³⁹

The final act returns to the Great Hall of the Divan. Turandot enters and declares that she will allow Calaf to leave the court and find another bride even though she knows his name. Calaf is going to kill himself because he does not want to live without her. Turandot stops him and asks him to remain alive for her sake. Their jubilation of love is interrupted by Adelma who claims that she will die if she cannot be with Calaf. Thus, Turandot asks her father to free Adelma from slavery, and Altoum grants her the

³⁷ Carlo Gozzi, *Translations of The Love of Three Oranges, Turandot, and The Snake Lady*, trans. John Louis DiGaetani (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1988), 55-68.

³⁸ Carlo Gozzi, *Translations of The Love of Three Oranges, Turandot, and The Snake Lady*, 69-79.

³⁹ Gozzi, 81-99.

freedom to restore her kingdom. Finally, Calaf wins Turandot and regains his throne in Astrakhan. Turandot states happily:

“God, my former hatred of the male sex is beginning to vanish, and I ask your pardon for my former cruelty. Maybe men are not so bad after all. But please, please, make some sign that you accept me and my repentance.”⁴⁰

With this prayer, she appeals to the audience applaud through receiving God’s acceptance.

Gozzi’s play was also adapted for musical theater in the nineteenth century, with works such as Franz Danzi’s (1763-1826) *Turandot, Singspiel nach Gozzi* (1816) and Theobald Rehbaum’s (1835-1918) opera *Turnadot* (1888). In 1953, German playwright Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956) also adapted Gozzi’s play as *Turandot or The Congress of Whitewashers*.⁴¹

Schiller’s *Turandot, Prinzessin von China*, 1801

Gozzi’s works were introduced in Germany by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-1781), and it was widely translated into German from 1777 to 1779. Gozzi’s works enjoyed great success in Germany and their popularity influenced German writers such as Goethe and Schiller.⁴² Schiller was fascinated by Gozzi’s *Turandot*, so he translated the play into German as *Turandot: Prinzessin von China*, and it was premiered in 1802 at Weimar.⁴³

Schiller’s plot is similar to Gozzi in all the essentials, because it is a translation and not a retelling. There are some minor differences in characters, riddles, and

⁴⁰ Carlo Gozzi, *Translations of The Love of Three Oranges, Turandot, and The Snake Lady*, 106

⁴¹ Henry J. Schmidt, “Brecht’s ‘Turandot’: “Tuis” and Cultural Politics,” *Theatre Journal* 32 (October 1980): 289.

⁴² Lo, 29. When Goethe directed at the Weimar Theatre, he collaborated with Schiller on a set of German plays, including *Turandot: Prinzessin von China*.

⁴³ Heinrich Düntze, *Life of Goethe*, trans. Thomas W. Lyster (New York: Macmillan, 1884), 527.

underlying concepts, however. First, Schiller modified Gozzi's Venetian commedia dell'arte characters. He retains the roles, but they are merely decorative rather than cynical as in Gozzi's version. Moreover, the characters do not improvise in Schiller's play as they did in Gozzi's.

The riddles are also different. Schiller kept the riddle of the "year" as his first one.

His second riddle is:

Canst thou the fragile mirror name,
 Reflecting all creation on its limpid face;
 'Tis closed within a narrow frame,
 Yet compasses high heav'n's blue vault of endless space.
 This crystal is of priceless worth,
 But yet the poor possess it, nor possession pay;
 It is the brightest gem on earth,
 It gives and yet receives its heaven-born brilliant ray.
 What is this mirror bright and clear,
 Free given to all, to all so dear?⁴⁴

The answer is: 'the eye.'

The last riddle is:

What is that thing, held cheap as dust,
 Yet honor'd by the Emperor's hand?
 'Tis made to pierce, with sword's keen thrust,
 But sheds no blood, tho' wounds like sand,
 In number deep inflicts; robs none;
 Enriches thousands; rules the earth;
 Makes life with ease and smoothness run;
 Has founded kingdoms; ended dearth;
 Most ancient cities it has built,
 But ne'er caused war, nor war's sad guilt.
 Answer my question unveils. Look me in the face,
 Avow you're vanquished and deserve disgrace.⁴⁵

The answer is 'the plow.'⁴⁶ Schiller chose the plow as a substitute for Gozzi's Venetian riddle to give his work a Chinese flavor.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Friedrich Schiller, *Turandot: The Chinese Sphinx, A Dramatic Oddity*, Readbookonline.net <http://www.readbookonline.net/read/26512/62801/> (accessed 01/18/2010).

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ashbrook and Powers, 52.

Finally, Schiller revised the characters of Turandot and Calaf to reflect his philosophy of freedom and morality. Schiller believed that a beautiful object must be represented with a form of freedom; but when the object is a human being, it must also be moral.⁴⁸ Schiller has Turandot explain that her cruel behavior stemmed from her notions of freedom and morality:

I am not cruel. But I want to live with freedom.
 This is the only right I want.
 The right is even for people in the lowest class,
 Even when we were still in Mother's body,
 As a princess, I need to insist.
 In Asia, I see women are discriminated,
 Cursed by the slavery cangue,
 For the same sex people who are tortured,
 I need to revenge the pride males⁴⁹

In other words, Schiller uses his knowledge and observation of the unequal status of the sexes in Asian culture to explain Turandot's cruelty.

Schiller's portrayal of Calaf also supports his ideas of freedom. In Gozzi's version, Calaf falls in love with Turandot at first sight and decides to enter into the competition of riddles. In Schiller's adaptation, however, Calaf does not participate because of Turandot's beauty, but because he wants to change his own miserable life. Exiled in China, he desires his own freedom. Although he admits Turandot is beautiful when he sees her portrait, he does not immediately fall in love with her. He becomes obsessed with Turandot later, when she defends her character. He falls in love with her because of their common desire for freedom.

⁴⁷ Lo, 33. The riddle of the plow referred to the *chinoiserie* of the eighteenth century. The plow was used in Chinese worship ceremonies, and it was also a symbol of fortune, safety, and health. According to musicologist Lo, Schiller might have been influenced by *Fortunate Union*, the most popular Chinese novel in Europe in the eighteenth- and the nineteenth- centuries. In the German translation of *Fortunate Union* by von Murr, the use of plow was described clearly.

⁴⁸ Emil Carl Wilm, *The Philosophy of Schiller in Its Historical Relations* (SC: BiblioBazaar, 2009), 124.

⁴⁹ Friedrich Schiller, *Turandot: The Chinese Sphinx, A Dramatic Oddity*, Readbookonline.net <http://www.readbookonline.net/read/26512/62801/> (accessed 01/18/2010).

Operatic Adaptations of Schiller's Play

In 1809, Schiller's plot was combined with incidental music by Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826). In this work, Weber reused the theme of his *Overtura Chinesa* (1804) containing a tune he discovered from the second volume of Rousseau's *Dictionnaire de musique* (1786), an "Air Chinois."⁵⁰ Schiller's play was also adapted by Carl G. Reissiger in his opera *Turandot, tragikomisches Oper nach Schiller* (1835) and by J. Hoven in *Turandot, Prinzessin von Schiras* (1838). Reissiger did not alter Schiller's plot, while Hoven's *Turandot* is a princess of Schiras rather than China. He also eliminates the female roles of Schirina (Barach's wife) and Zelima (another servant of *Turandot*), and the male roles of Timur (Calaf's father). Hoven only retained one *commedia dell'arte* character in his version.

Although Gozzi's *Turandot* was the first complete drama based on the story of Calaf and the Chinese Princess, Puccini was initially attracted by Andrea Maffei's Italian translation of Schiller's German adaptation. Thus Schiller's play also plays a seminal role in Puccini's operatic adaptation.

⁵⁰ Ashbrook, 53. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Dictionnaire de Musique* (Geneva: Minkoff, 1998), Planche N.

CHAPTER II. PUCCINI'S OPERA *TURANDOT***Genesis**

The libretto of Puccini's *Turandot* is the work of two librettists from Verona: Giuseppe Adami (1879-1946) and Renato Simoni (1875-1952). Adami had already worked with Puccini on three operas before *Turandot*: *Il tabarro*, *La rondine*, and *Due zoccolotti*.⁵¹ After the premiere of *Il trittico*, when Puccini started to contemplate the subject for his next opera, Adami recommended that Simoni join in the collaboration.⁵² In 1920, Puccini, Adami, and Simoni had their first meeting in Milan, where Simoni mentioned Gozzi's tragic-comic fable, *Turandot*, to Puccini. Before Puccini left Milan for Rome, Simoni gave him a copy of *Turandot* so that he could read it on the train. The copy, however, was not Gozzi's version but an Italian translation of Schiller's *Turandot*.⁵³ A few days later, Simoni received Puccini's letter from Rome:

I've read *Turandot* and I don't think we should abandon this subject... Simplify it as regards the number of acts so as to make it run smoothly and effectively; and above all heighten the amorous passion of *Turandot* which she has smothered so long beneath the ashes of her pride... All in all, I consider *Turandot* the most normal and human of all Gozzi's works. In short, a *Turandot* filtered through a modern brain—yours, Adami's and mine."⁵⁴

Interestingly, though the version Puccini read was written by Schiller, he still considered *Turandot* to be Gozzi's work.⁵⁵

⁵¹ In fact, Puccini never even started composing *Due zoccolotti*.

⁵² Simoni was not only the author of Carlo Gozzi's biography but also wrote the play *Carlo Gozzi* (1903). Ashbrook and Powers, 59, and Julian Budden, *Puccini: His Life and Works* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 423.

⁵³ Ashbrook and Powers, 60. Schiller's play was translated by Italian poet, translator, and librettist Andrea Maffei (1798-1885).

⁵⁴ Giacomo Puccini, *Carteggi pucciniani*, ed. Eugenio Gara (Milano: Ricordi, 1958), 490.

⁵⁵ In fact, before Puccini composed *Turandot*, the same subject had already taken by his predecessors: Atonio Bazzini (1818-1897) and Feruccio Busoni (1866-1924). Bazzini was Puccini's teacher. *Turanda* (Milan, 1867), his only stage work, actually shifted the story from China to Persia. Busoni, Puccini's contemporary, had worked on *Turandot* for sixteen years. In 1905, he initially composed incidental music for Gozzi's play; twelve years later, he wrote his own opera on the same subject. So far there is no indication that Puccini or his librettists had read the two earlier librettos. Due to the different focuses of

Puccini had framed his ideal *Turandot* before Adami and Simoni started writing the plot. He mentioned his initial thoughts about this work in a letter to Adami in 1920. First of all, he hoped to use Chinese folk melodies and represent Chinese instruments on stage in order to obtain the “local color” of China.⁵⁶ Speaking of revising Gozzi’s plot, he wished to add a new character in order to “give the story a touch of charm.”⁵⁷ And finally, he decided to keep three *commedia dell’arte* characters.⁵⁸ All these ideas can be found in the final version of *Turandot*: the *Mo-Li-Hua* melody from Chinese folk song, the additional character of Liù, and the three bureaucrats Ping, Pang, and Pong.

Imbroglia

At first, the process went smoothly. By the middle of May 1920, Adami and Simoni submitted the first act of *Turandot* to Puccini, and the second act was completed by July. After that, problems started emerging regarding Turandot’s emotional shift. Puccini was dissatisfied with Adami and Simoni’s draft:

I had imagined a different denouement. I had thought [Turandot’s] yielding would be more gripping, and I would have wanted her to erupt in expressions of love before the people...excessively, violently, shamelessly, like a bomb exploding.⁵⁹

Puccini wished to emphasize “the repression and release” of Turandot’s pride.⁶⁰ Thus, he wanted to exaggerate Turandot’s transformation on the stage more dramatically. However, such a dramatic shift needed to be motivated through a reasonable process. Adami and Simoni struggled for more than two years with this problem, and they never did resolve it.

these three operas, Budden believes Puccini’s *Turandot* “owes nothing to his Italian predecessors.” See Budden, 425-26.

⁵⁶ Budden, 426.

⁵⁷ Budden, 426.

⁵⁸ Budden, 426.

⁵⁹ Ashbrook and Powers, 63.

⁶⁰ Ashbrook and Powers, 61.

A related issue concerned the number of acts. Puccini and his librettists planned to write a three-act opera from the beginning. The completed two-act version was to end with Calaf's solution to the three riddles; the third act was to concern Turandot's transformation from an icy princess to a woman in love. When Puccini read the two-act version, he wanted her to yield immediately after the riddles were solved. He felt that a new act would weaken the dramatic effect. Puccini and his librettists were undecided on the issue for two years until, in 1922, Puccini thought of the character of Liù as a solution.

The Role of Liù

Liù is a character created by Puccini who does not exist in any previous versions of *Turandot*. She is a conflation of Turandot's two servants, Adelma and Zelima. She is in love with Calaf, as was Adelma. As Calaf's servant, she is loyal to Calaf as Zelima was loyal to Turandot. Most importantly, Liù is "an effective and feminine contrast" to the haughty Turandot.⁶¹ In other words, Puccini created Liù to contrast with Turandot in terms of personality, class, and power. He defined Liù's role as a "*piccola donna*," rather than a "[fully] realized character."⁶² Thus, in Puccini's early plan, Liù did not play an important role. She only appears in the first scene with Timur to persuade Calaf not to join the competition.

In November 1922, Puccini thought of Liù again when he was struggling with Turandot's transformation. He suggested Liù's death to Adami and Simoni: "I think Liù must be sacrificed to some sorrow, but I do not see how to do this unless we make her

⁶¹ Nicholas John, *Turandot: The English National Opera Guide 27* (UK: Calder Publications, 1984), 59.

⁶² Giacomo Puccini, *Carteggi pucciniani*, ed. Eugenio Gara (Milano: Ricordi, 1958) p. 495 and Ashbrook, 69.

die under torture... Her death could help to soften the heart of the Princess.”⁶³ Thus, in 1923 Puccini decided to keep the three-act structure for *Turandot* and include the scene of Liù’s sacrifice. The first two acts remained true to Gozzi’s scheme of the story. Due to Puccini’s elimination of Adelma, Zelima, Barach, and Schirina, the opera does not contain the full third and fourth acts of Gozzi’s plot. Puccini only kept Turandot’s torture of the Prince’s beloveds in the third act.

Synopsis and Revisions

The first act takes place in front of the Peking palace and begins with a Mandarin announcing the stipulation of the competition. In the meantime, the Prince of Tartary (Calaf) recognizes his father Timur and his servant Liù in the crowd. The crowd talks about the Chinese princess Turandot’s three riddles and the cruel competition: the winner can marry her, but the loser must die. That night, the crowd watches as one of the failed suitors, the Prince of Persia, is decapitated. Turandot appears and imperiously gestures the order of the execution. During the execution, the Prince of Tartary immediately falls in love with Turandot’s beauty and decides to participate in the competition. The three ministers Ping, Pang, and Pong cynically urge the Prince to give up Turandot and go back to his own country. Timur and Liù also plead for the prince to desist. Nevertheless, the prince still strikes the gong three times to announce his participation. Timur, Liù, and the three ministers all lament his stubbornness in seeking death.⁶⁴

The second act begins with the three ministers. Ping, Pang, and Pong are recalling their hometown and complaining about their bureaucratic lives. They

⁶³ John, 59; Ashbrook and Powers, 63.

⁶⁴ Burton D. Fisher eds, *Puccini’s Turandot* (Opera Journeys Publishing, 2002), 29-31, <http://0-www.netlibrary.com.maurice.bgsu.edu/Reader/> (accessed January 20, 2010); Lo, 101-119.

ironically indicate that their actual job is to prepare for either a wedding or a funeral.

The Emperor Altoum enters and again urges the Prince to withdraw because he does not want to see more men die for his daughter's hand in marriage. Turandot appears in the palace and explain to her that her cruelty is an act of revenge for her ancestor Lou-ling's terrible fate. Lou-ling was a princess who was killed by the Tartars due to her refusal to marry their king. To avoid repeating Lou-ling's miserable fate, Turandot wishes to keep her pride and purity by controlling her suitors. Immediately, she starts the first riddle:

Nella cupa notte vola un fantasma iridescente.
 Sale, dispiega l'ale sulla near, infinita umanità!
 Tutto il mondo lo invoca, tutto il mondo lo implora!
 Ma il fantasma sparisce con l'aurora per rinascere nel cuore!
 Ed ogni notte nasce ed ogni giorno muore!

Translation:

An iridescent ghost flies in the dark night.
 It spreads its wings on humanity!
 The whole world invokes it, and the whole world implores it!
 But the ghost disappears with the dawn to be reborn in the heart!
 Every night it is born, and every morning it dies.)⁶⁵

The Prince answers 'hope.' Turandot cynically says hope usually brings disappointment.

She confidently gives the second riddle:

Guizza al pari di fiamma, e non e fiamma!
 E tal volta delirio!
 E febbre d'impeto ardore! L'inerzia lo tramuta in un languore!
 Se ti perdi o trapassi, si raffredda!
 Se sogni la conquista, avvampa, avvampa!
 Ha una voce che trepido tu ascolti, e del tramonto il vivido baglior!

Translation:

Though not a flame, it darts like a flame!
 It is a fire with intense heat!
 Its exertion makes it weaken!
 If it is lost, you become chilled!
 If it is conquered, it inflames you!
 You listen to its voice with fear,
 and it glows like the setting sun!⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Fisher, 34.

⁶⁶ Fisher, 35.

The Prince answer the second riddle correctly, it is ‘the blood.’ The crowd hails the Prince’s victory. Turandot scorns them and poses the last riddle:

Gelo che ti da foco e dal tuo foco piu gelo prende!
 Candida ed oscura!
 Se libero ti vuol, ti fa piu servo.
 Se per servo t’acchetta, ti fa Re!
 Translation:
 The ice that inflames you and makes you more frigid!
 It is dispassionate and obscure!
 If you want to be free from it, it makes you subservient.
 If you serve it and it accepts you, you become King!⁶⁷

The Prince smiles and answers ‘Turandot.’ Turandot is shaken that her riddles are solved and is hostile to the Prince. Although Turandot pleads to her father, Altoum insists she keep her oath; Turandot must marry the Prince. The Prince does not want to force Turandot, so he offers a proposal in the end of the second act: if Turandot can learn his name by sunrise, he will give up the marriage. Worse, he will be beheaded.

The third act opens with Timur and Liù, captured by Turandot, undergoing torture to reveal the Prince’s name. Yet they are unwilling to reveal it. Turandot asks what strength lays in Liù’s heart that so supports her loyalty. Liù replies that the strength comes from the power of love, and she will save the Prince’s life in order to help him accomplish his dream to marry Turandot. Then she stabs herself with a dagger and dies. The Prince laments Liù’s death and Timur curses Turandot for her cruelty.⁶⁸

The Never-ending Opera

Although Puccini finally decided on the three-act structure, Simoni and Adami still could not write the ending that Puccini wanted. Puccini was not satisfied with the verses for the duet of Turandot and Liù from Simoni, and at the same time he had been

⁶⁷ Fisher, 36.

⁶⁸ Fisher, 37-39.

very ill.⁶⁹ Finally, in October 22, 1924, Puccini wrote in one of his last letters, “Simoni’s verses are good and seem to be just what are wanted and what I had dreamed of.”⁷⁰ Puccini died on November 29 with *Turandot* completed only up to Liù’s death in the third act.

In order to complete *Turandot*, Toscanini, Puccini’s best friend and the decided conductor of *Turandot*, asked Franco Alfano to complete the opera with the sketches Puccini left. After Liù’s death, however, the problem of how to turn Turandot’s pride into love still remained. In Gozzi’s plot, Turandot repents when Calaf attempts suicide to prove his love for her. According to Puccini’s sketches and his early letters to his librettists, he wanted to have a different ending to soften Turandot’s heart. To be more effective on the stage, “Calaf must kiss Turandot and show how much he loves her”; Puccini thought this would be more “gripping.”⁷¹ Thus, Alfano followed Puccini’s wish to show Turandot’s “amorous passion” behind her pride. Calaf’s kiss seemed to melt Turandot’s heart. In Alfano’s ending, Calaf kisses Turandot in spite of her reluctance. Turandot is transformed from an icy princess to a passionate woman by this kiss. Nevertheless, she still commands Calaf to leave. The Prince decides to put his destiny in Turandot’s hand, so he tells her his name, “Calaf, son of Timur.”⁷² In the final scene, Turandot announces Calaf’s victory and declares the Prince’s name: ‘love.’ The crowd acclaims the two lovers.

Although Alfano’s ending has been seen as a completion of Puccini’s unfinished work, in 2001, Italian composer Luciano Berio wrote another ending for *Turandot* based

⁶⁹ Ashbrook and Powers, 86.

⁷⁰ Ashbrook and Powers, 88.

⁷¹ Budden, 431. Giacomo Puccini, *Epistolario*, ed. Giuseppe Adami, 272.

⁷² Fisher, 40.

on Puccini's sketches. Berio incorporates Puccini's existing sketches and omits the texts for which Puccini left no musical ideas. He also quotes Wagner's, Mahler's, and Schoenberg's music into the work.⁷³ Although Berio has been considered a modernist, many critics praised Berio's new ending as more akin to Puccini's musical style than Alfano's. According to British critic Andrew Clements, composers such as Debussy and Stravinsky influenced Puccini's late style, so Berio's modernist background serves as an advantageous "historical perspective."⁷⁴

A clear change in Berio's version lies in the ending. Alfano ends *Turandot* with climactic chorus singing that represents the crowd praises Turandot and Calaf's marriage. Berio, however, quotes *Tristan* in Turandot and Calaf's love duet and gives the couple an open ending.⁷⁵ As Berio indicates, *Turandot* remained unfinished not only because of Puccini's death but also because of the "intractable libretto," which makes the opera impossible to end happily due to its "indescribable vulgarity."⁷⁶ Thus, Berio remade a more "open and reticent conclusion" which is "less deterministic, less obvious... ."⁷⁷ After Calaf kisses Turandot and sings the love duet with her, both stage and music becomes darker and darker, and "the silence is further prolonged" until audience

⁷³ Roger Parker, *Remaking the Song: Operatic Visions and Revisions from Handel to Berio* (CA: University of California Press, 2006), 106.

⁷⁴ Andrew Clements, "I Think It's Over: Puccini's great opera Turandot has at last been given the ending it deserves, says Andrew Clements," Guardian.Co.UK, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2002/jun/08/artsfeatures> (accessed January 28, 2010).

⁷⁵ Andrew Clements, "I Think It's Over: Puccini's great opera Turandot has at last been given the ending it deserves, says Andrew Clements," Guardian.Co.UK, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2002/jun/08/artsfeatures> (accessed January 28, 2010).

⁷⁶ Roger Parker, *Remaking the song: operatic visions and revisions from Handel to Berio* (CA: University of California Press, 2006), 100.

⁷⁷ Roger Parker, *Remaking the song: operatic visions and revisions from Handel to Berio* (CA: University of California Press, 2006), 100.

applause.⁷⁸ The first performance of this new ending was given in Las Palmas by conductor Riccardo Cahill in 2002.⁷⁹

Two years ago, *Turandot* received its third ending from Chinese composer Hao Weiya. On the 150th anniversary of Puccini's birth, the National Performing Arts Center in Beijing invited Hao to compose a new ending for *Turandot*—an “authentic” Chinese ending for an opera about a Chinese Princess. Hao included Chinese instruments with the *Mo-Li-Hua* theme in the last twenty minutes of the opera.⁸⁰ Most importantly, he wrote an aria for Turandot that allows her to express internal emotion before she softens her heart and admits her love to Calaf. This ending, however, was not well-received because Hao did not follow Puccini's sketches “as closely as his predecessors.” This new ending has only been performed once in China in 2008.⁸¹ Nevertheless, this new ending was meaningful to Chinese audiences because it is the first and only ending written by a Chinese composer.

⁷⁸ Alan Rich, “*Turandot*'s Last Riddle,” *Opera News* 67 (March 2003): 38-41, Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed February 6, 2010).

⁷⁹ Roger Parker, *Remaking the song: operatic visions and revisions from Handel to Berio* (CA: University of California Press, 2006), 99.

⁸⁰ Andrew Moravcsik, “In Review: Beijing—*Turandot*, National Performing Arts Center,” *Opera News Online*, March 21, 2008, <http://www.metoperafamily.org/operanews/review/review.aspx?id=2286> (accessed December 20, 2009).

⁸¹ Moravcsik, “In Review: Beijing—*Turandot*, National Performing Arts Center.”

CHAPTER III. CHINESE PRINCESS TURANDOT FROM 1995 TO 2004

Puccini's last opera *Turandot* was banned in China for decades because it negative portrait of China. Since a Sichuan opera adaptation in 1995, however, the *Turandot* story has experienced revitalization in China. Chinese playwright Wei Minglun's adaptation of Puccini's *Turandot* was a pioneering work that significantly influenced *Turandot*'s homecoming in China. His Sichuan opera, *Chinese Princess Turandot*, premiered in 1995, and was the first performance of *Turandot* in a Chinese operatic form. Wei not only received great acclaim in China and introduced the story of *Turandot* to Chinese audiences, but also broadened the repertoire of Chinese operas and established a prototype for later adaptations of other Chinese operatic forms.

Wei and His Feminist Views

Wei is a famous playwright of Sichuan Opera and has won awards in several Chinese drama festivals.⁸² His talent and creativity earned him the nickname, “the ghost of drama,”⁸³ and he plans for his gravestone to read, “a ghost is worth researching.”⁸⁴ Known for retelling historical stories with feminist views, his acclaimed revisions include *The Fourth Daughter* [Si Gu Niang], *Pan Jinlian*, *Chinese Princess Turandot*, and *Sichuan Good Women*. These stories are not his original writings; rather, his versions are presented through a feminist perspective. For example, Pan Jinlian, one of the most unchaste women in Chinese history, was scorned for her infidelity to her husband. Wei attributes her behavior to her miserable life. She married a stranger to escape poverty and was trapped in a loveless marriage; thus she was

⁸² Gui-Shiang Chen, “A Review and Analysis of Wei Ming-Luen’s Sichuan Opera *Chinese Princess Turandot*,” *Theatre Research and Communication* [Xi Qu Yan Jiu Tong Xun] (2007), 123.

⁸³ Ming Hong, “Wei Minglun: A ‘Ghost’ Is Worth Researching,” *HeFei Evening News*, February 23, 2002, http://news.xinhuanet.com/book/2003-01/22/content_702762.htm (accessed December 21, 2009).

⁸⁴ Ming Hong, “Wei Minglun: A ‘Ghost’ Is Worth Researching.”

powerless to remain faithful out of her need for true love. Wei's progressive view of Pan launched a new discussion of this historical woman. Similarly, in *Chinese Princess Turandot*, Wei revises the character of *Turandot* to reintroduce the story to Chinese audiences.

Wei's View of *Turandot*

Wei began writing the plot of *Chinese Princess Turandot* in 1992 and its premiere was given by the Zigong Chuanju Opera Troupe in Sichuan three years later. He conceived the work as “a Chinese story imagined by Westerners, but also can be a foreign fantasy recreated by Chinese.”⁸⁵ Accordingly, Wei believed the negative portrait of China in *Turandot* was a Western “fantasy,” so he hoped to “recreate” *Turandot* from a Chinese perspective to make it more authentic. His revision had three goals: “independent thinking, exclusive discovery, and unique representation.”⁸⁶ To prepare revising, he not only studied Puccini's plot, but also studied the earlier versions of *Turandot*, from the Persian tale, to Gozzi's, Schiller's, and Bertolt Brecht's plots.⁸⁷ Wei interprets all the previous plots as Western fantasies, showing Westerners' interests in Eastern culture but also their misunderstanding and stereotyping of the East. The misrepresenting of Chinese culture in the story of *Turandot* hindered the appreciation of

⁸⁵ Liao, Quan-Jing. “The Return of Turandot: The Grinding Process of Two Dramas—About the Si-Chuan Opera *Chinese Princess Turandot*.” *Chinese Theatre* (1995), 19-21.

⁸⁶ Jing-Hua Zhang, “Wei Minglun Explain the Mystery of Turandot,” *Sheng Ho Daily News*, September 2, 1998, <http://www.gmw.cn/01shsb/1998-09/03/GB/726%5ESH16-316.htm> (accessed January 14, 2010).

⁸⁷ *Turandot or The Congress of Whitewashers* was Bertolt Brecht's last play, written during 1953-1954 and premiered in 1969. It was based on Gozzi's plot and consists of ten scenes with all different lengths. Chapter I, 12. Henry J. Schmidt, “Brecht's ‘Turandot’: ‘Tuis’ and Cultural Politics,” *Theatre Journal* 32 (Oct., 1980): 291.

the story by the Chinese.⁸⁸ Therefore, Wei adapted Puccini's frame of the story but created a completely different core conception in his *Chinese Princess Turandot*.

The new core used is the Chinese concept of 'love.' Wei believes only love can break all the barriers in *Turandot*: including the cultural barrier between the West and the East; the historical barrier in which Turandot has been viewed as a cruel Chinese princess; and the social barrier between the powerful princess and the exiled Calaf. More importantly, Wei believes "Turandot is in every Chinese family."⁸⁹ Turandot is not an icy and cruel princess but the wayward Chinese daughter found in every family. Thus, he hopes Chinese audiences will appreciate this drama as they relate this character to people in their own lives.⁹⁰

Sichuan Opera Tradition

The success of this production can be attributed to Wei's witty balance of tradition and innovation. He retains many Sichuan operatic traditions in *Chinese Princess Turandot* such as its format and the use of special effects. Sichuan opera is a regional operatic form in southwestern China sung in Sichuan dialect, containing a particular performance format. It always begins with an instrumental introduction serving as an opera overture. The introduction, usually slow and lyrical to establish the appropriate mood, helps to provide more contrast to the middle dramatic passages. Following the overture, gongs announce the opening scene.⁹¹ The scenes are

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Jing-Hua Zhang, "Wei Minglun Explain the Mystery of Turandot," *Sheng Ho Daily News*, September 2, 1998, <http://www.gmw.cn/01shsb/1998-09/03/GB/726%5ESH16-316.htm> (accessed January 14, 2010).

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ministry of Culture, P.R.China, "Sichuan Opera," under "Chinese Culture," http://www.chinaculture.org/gb/en_madeinchina/2005-12/05/content_76647.htm (accessed August 10, 2009).

organized into a three-part format: instrumental music—singing—dancing.⁹² In addition to the beginning ‘overture,’ Sichuan Opera has other similarities to Western operatic forms (e.g. Singspiel and ballad opera), such as spoken dialogue, recitative-like and aria-like passages, and humor. All of these elements of Sichuan opera can be found in Wei’s *Chinese Princess Turandot*.

Sichuan opera is also well-known for its special effects: “face-changing” and “spitfire” (see Illustration 1). Face-changing is a sudden change of facial make-up to represent a change in character; while in spitfire, actors actually spit fire to attract attention. These traditional attributes can be found in this production as well. In contrast to the three riddles in Puccini’s opera that only need to be answered orally, the riddle scene in Wei’s plot is a spectacle. In the scene of the second riddle, Turandot closes her eyes and demands that the suitor perform something so unusual that she is forced to open her eyes. The suitor decides to perform a “spitfire.”

Illustration 1: Spitfire⁹³



⁹² Ministry of Culture, P.R.China, “Sichuan Opera,” under “Chinese Culture.”

⁹³ Wang Dingchang, “Sichuan Opera Spitfire Performance,” Xinhua Net, September 10, 2004, http://www.zj.xinhuanet.com/special/2004-09/10/content_2847540.htm (accessed January 10, 2010).

The Innovative Plot

Table 2
Comparison of Puccini's and Wei's Productions

	<i>Puccini</i>	<i>Wei Minglun</i>
<i>Title</i>	<i>Turandot</i>	<i>Chinese Princess Turandot</i>
<i>Genre</i>	Opera	Sichuan Opera
<i>Time</i>	1926	1995
<i>Language</i>	Italian	Sichuan dialect
<i>Riddles</i>	1. Hope 2. Blood 3. Turandot	1. Move a heavy metal weight 2. Attract Turandot to open her eyes. 3. Defeat Turandot in martial skills.
<i>Characters</i>	Calaf	Mr. Anonymous
	Ping, Pang, Pong	Dwarf Minister

Desiring to give Sichuan opera a new look in a traditional form, Wei revised the story (see Table 2). The first act begins with Turandot's self-portrait. In front of the portrait, Turandot's servants are praising her nobility and beauty, while her suitors are discussing her coldness and cruelty. Two pairs of contrasting characters enter the stage to start the competition. The first two characters are the etiquette officer and the executioner. The etiquette officer is in charge of Turandot's wedding, while the executioner beheads those who fail. The other two are suitors with contrasting characters: a prince from Jinling [Jinling Gong Zi] and an eccentric from Dunhuang [Dunhuang Guai Ke].⁹⁴ In fact, the emperor did not expect suitors to come and enter the competition for marrying Turandot, so he wanted to withdraw the plan. Turandot, however, appears on stage and insists that the competition begin. Turandot gives the Jinling prince the first challenge: lifting a heavy treasured tripod. Unfortunately, the

⁹⁴ Wei carefully chose Jinling and Dunhuang as their hometowns, a great distance from the palace, denoting how wide the event had spread and how many brave men Turandot attracted.

prince fails to lift it; so the eccentric takes his turn. He is strong enough to pass this challenge easily; however, he fails the second challenge of forcing the princess to open her eyes when he performs ‘spitfire.’ At the end of this act, both suitors are awaiting execution.

The second act takes place on an island as he is waiting for his servant Liù to bring his alcohol.⁹⁵ Mr. Anonymous [Wu Ming Shi] sings a poem he wrote to express his ideal of love. When Liù returns, Mr. Anonymous expresses his appreciation for all her help. Liù replies that everything she has done is to repay Mr. Anonymous for his kindness in taking care of her, teaching her to read, and training her in martial arts skills. After their exchange of flattery, Mr. Anonymous reminds Liù to keep his royal background a secret. When Mr. Anonymous begins to drink, Liù tells him that she brought him a portrait of a beautiful woman (Turandot). Liù warns Mr. Anonymous of Turandot’s cruelty before she shows him the picture. Mr. Anonymous becomes less interested in seeing the beautiful woman, but finally he agrees because of the offer his servant made to obtain the portrait. He is entranced by the vision immediately. He describes, “The first sight blows me away”;⁹⁶ “the second sight makes me get addicted to it”; and “the third sight I fall in love with her!”⁹⁷ He starts to imagine his romantic meeting with Turandot and unconsciously kisses Liù. Liù is embarrassed but enjoyed the kiss; however, when Mr. Anonymous decides to immediately find Turandot, she

⁹⁵ In Wei’s adaptation, he never gives a name for the role of Calaf but just calls him ‘Mr. Anonymous.’ Making Calaf anonymous can be seen as a way of keeping his royal background a secret. In Chinese culture, anonymity also suggests lacks of identity and social status for those who do not even own a name; thus, anonymity can better contrast the social barrier between Turandot and this unknown man. Furthermore, living without a name also signifies Mr. Anonymous’s poetic personality, a wish to live outside of the regular social system: he does not even want a name.

⁹⁶ In the plot he says [xin chi shen wang], a Chinese slang to describe a person who is allured to something he/she wishes to have.

⁹⁷ Minglun Wei, *Pan Jin-Lian: Wei Minglun’s Three Plays* [Pan Jinlian: Wei Minglun ju zuo san bu qu] (Taiwan: Elite Books, 1995), 210.

becomes extremely disappointed and angry with him. Even though Liù warns him about the impending danger, Mr. Anonymous bids farewell to Liù, gets on a boat, and leaves the island at the end of the second act.

The setting of the third act returns to the palace. Turandot is practicing martial arts, and the dwarf minister is fawning over her. The emperor enters and asks her about her sword. She explains that it is a double rapier which combines male and female swords [ci xiong shuang jian]. The emperor refers to the rapier metaphorically, “you should break the male sword and only keep the female one.” Turandot asks “how do I break it?” The emperor replies “just uses the female sword to cut the male one.”⁹⁸ The rapier is useless if broken, and the emperor wants Turandot to open her mind to the possibility of happiness through love with a man. While Turandot is thinking about her true feeling towards men, the dwarf minister announces the new suitor, Mr. Anonymous, who has entered the palace.

Turandot and Mr. Anonymous are attracted to each other from their first meeting. Turandot is surprised by Mr. Anonymous’s appearance and realizes not all men are ugly and dirty. Mr. Anonymous is impressed by Turandot’s extreme beauty and is motivated to win her heart. He tells the emperor and Turandot that he wants to win the competition and experience “the consonance of beauty” with Turandot.⁹⁹ For him, beauty is not only limited to physical appearance, but extends to the beauty of nature and the beauty of a good heart. Mr. Anonymous thinks that Turandot has only physical beauty but lacks other beautiful qualities. Thus, he hopes to win Turandot in order to soften her cruel heart, as well as to enjoy the beautiful nature with her.

⁹⁸ Wei, 217.

⁹⁹ Wei, 225.

Turandot is irritated and immediately gives three challenges. Mr. Anonymous easily passes the first two challenges. He lifts the tripod; he forces Turandot to open her eyes by asking her to read the word written on his hand.¹⁰⁰ Before Turandot announces the third challenge, her father enters the palace and stops her. The emperor asks her to postpone the last challenge until the next morning, to allow Mr. Anonymous to rest.

The third challenge is martial arts, which contains two parts: archery and short spears fighting. While Turandot and Mr. Anonymous compete in archery, Liù comes to the palace to find Mr. Anonymous. This occurs at the beginning of the fourth act. Inside the palace, Turandot and Mr. Anonymous cannot find the bird after they shoot their arrows. Outside of the palace, Liù fails to beg the guard to allow her to see Mr.

Anonymous; however, she accidentally received permission from the dwarf minister to enter the palace. Liù finds the bird, and the dwarf minister allows her enter the palace. Turandot and Mr. Anonymous continue to the final part of competition: fighting with short spears. Mr. Anonymous wins, but Turandot is reluctant to admit her loss. Thus, Mr. Anonymous suggests another test for her. If she can discover his name, he will accept death. If she does not, she must leave the palace with him. While Turandot is worrying about the new test, the dwarf minister tells Turandot that Liù is in the palace.

Although Turandot promises to give Liù a great amount of money, Liù refuses to reveal Mr. Anonymous's true name. Rather, she calls Turandot "sister in law" to satirize her unfaithfulness. She also compares herself with Turandot. Liù says, "Princess, the royalty, does not need to keep the promise to marry the winner; but me, as a

¹⁰⁰ Mr. Anonymous wrote Liù's name n his hand before leaving the island to make her happier.

common woman, will keep the promise instead!”¹⁰¹ Liù does not want to be used by Turandot and the minister, so she commits suicide. Turandot is shocked at Liù’s sacrifice; she tells Mr. Anonymous to come to see Liù before she dies. Liù says her last words to Mr. Anonymous: She is willing to die for him, because she wants him to win Turandot and be happy. Mr. Anonymous laments Liù’s death and recalls their happy times at the end of the act.

The final act begins with the emperor and the dwarf minister. The emperor is worried about both Turandot’s guilt and Mr. Anonymous’s sadness at Liù’s death. Turandot is terribly ill and no doctors can cure her. Mr. Anonymous refuses to marry Turandot and only wants to have Liù back. In the meantime, Turandot realizes she loves Mr. Anonymous. That night, she gets drunk and hears the music of the bamboo flute. She recognizes that Mr. Anonymous is the performer of the grieving melody. She finds him in the garden and confesses her love. Nevertheless, Mr. Anonymous still mourns Liù’s death, and he cannot accept Turandot’s love. As he returns to the palace, the Jinling prince and the Dunhunag eccentric appear. Mr. Anonymous is surprised that the two failed suitors are still alive. The two suitors explain that Turandot was merciful and did not kill them. Mr. Anonymous again thinks of Liù and says “you guys are still alive; but where is my Liù?”¹⁰² He sighs, then he hears a girl’s voice answering, “Here she is.”¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Wei, 247. Liù had promised Mr. Anonymous to keep his background a secret, so she cannot tell them anything.

¹⁰² Mr. Anonymous says “*nǐ mēn ér rén jiān zài, wǒ de liú ér nē?*.” Wei, 258.

¹⁰³ Turandot says “*liú ér lái yē!*” Wei, 258.

Turandot appears on stage wearing Liù's servant clothing and says "I became Liù... . Turandot is no longer a prideful princess....but the two have become one."¹⁰⁴ Turandot tells Mr. Anonymous that she wants to take the place of Liù and follow Mr. Anonymous for the rest of her life. She leaves the palace secretly with him, so her father cannot stop them. At the end of the story, the emperor learns of Turandot's escape plan; fortunately, he says, "I wish your happiness. I just came to say goodbye!"¹⁰⁵ In the end, Turandot and Mr. Anonymous leave the palace and freely travel, discovering the beauty of nature together.

Wei's revision of Puccini's plot plays a significant role in *Turandot's* homecoming, not only because he makes the story palatable for Chinese audiences by incorporating Chinese concept of ethic and love,¹⁰⁶ but also because he shows that Chinese traditional operas can explore broader repertoire.

Later Performances

Wei's *Chinese Princess Turandot* was premiered by Zigong Sichuan Opera Troupe and received critical acclaim throughout the country in 1995.¹⁰⁷ In 2002, Chinese Central Television Station (CCTV) invited Wei to arrange this drama as a three-episode program. To attract a larger audience, they hired one of the most famous Sichuan opera actresses, Liu Ping, to play the role of Turandot. The production included splendid

¹⁰⁴ Wei, 259.

¹⁰⁵ Wei, 259.

¹⁰⁶ In Puccini's opera, after Liù dies, Calaf still wishes to marry Turandot without any hatred or guilt. In Wei's adaptation, however, Calaf was angry with Turandot's cruel and refuse marriage until Liù and Turandot becomes one at the end. For Chinese people, Puccini's Calaf is not as ethic as Wei's.

¹⁰⁷ For example, "Wei Minglun does not only intelligently retain Sichuan opera tradition, but also adds a touching charm in his revisio." Cing Tian, "*Turandot and Chinese Princess Turandot's* Competition of Discourse Power," *Method 9* (1998). "[Wei] provides a wider room for audience to imagine" by his creative ending. Yu Hua, "Good Woman and Bad Woman Written by Wei Minglun," April 25, 2001, People.com. <http://人民网.cn/BIG5/wenyu/66/134/20010425/451720.html> (accessed December 20, 2009).

staging and beautiful costumes, retaining not only the traditional music of Sichuan opera but also including considerable Western music. According to CCTV's introduction of this TV show, they searched for "four beauties": the beauty of the actress, the beauty of the structure, the beauty of the music, and the beauty of the story."¹⁰⁸ With this goal in mind, Wei made five more revisions of this new production. The TV show enjoyed great success and spread the name of Turandot even further.

In 2004, the television actress Liu Ping led the Liu Ping Sichuan Opera Art Troupe to perform this drama again with a new setting. To distinguish it from the Zigong Troupe production, Liu Ping's Troupe wanted to appeal to younger audiences. Not only did they revise the plot, music, and staging, they also created new costumes and selected performers strictly by their appearance. They wished to create a beautiful modern production which could be visually appealing to young people. This production earned international praise. They were invited by the Sydney Opera House to perform this drama in Australia at the end of 2004. It was the first time the Sydney Opera House staged a Sichuan opera performance.¹⁰⁹

Other Adaptations

Wei's *Chinese Princess Turandot* has been adapted to different Chinese operatic genres since 1996, including regional genres of Guangdong Opera, Henan Opera, and Beijing Opera (see Table 3).

¹⁰⁸ China Central Television, "Sichuan Opera Television Series," under Theatre, CCTV, <http://big5.cctv.com/gate/big5/www.cctv.com/opera/20041008/102320.shtml> (accessed January 5, 2010).

¹⁰⁹ Women of China Staffs, "Liu Ping: A Dreamer of Sichuan Opera [chuan ju zhui meng ren]," *Woman of China* 3 (March 2005), <http://qkzz.net/Announce/announce.asp?BoardID=15200&ID=422380> (accessed December 16, 2009).

Table 3
Timetable of *Turandot's* Adaptation in China

<i>Year</i>	<i>Genre</i>	<i>Place</i>
1995	Sichuan Opera	Sichuan
1996	Guangdong Opera	Guangzhou
2000	Henan Opera	Taiwan
	Guangdong Opera	Hong Kong
2002	TV series (Sichuan Opera)	CCTV
2003	Beijing Opera	Beijing
2004	Sichuan Opera	Sichuan

Guangdong Opera (1996/2000)

Guangdong opera is a regional opera in the south of China from Guangzhou to Hong Kong, and it is sung in Guangdong dialect. The story of *Turandot* has been adapted twice for Guangdong opera: the first was based on Wei's play; the second was based on Puccini's plot. The first adaptation was in 1996 by Guangzhou Guangdong Opera Troupe and premiered in Guangzhou.¹¹⁰ Hong Kong playwright Qu Wen-Fang wrote the second adaptation in 2000; it was performed by Yingwah Guangdong Opera Troupe and received its first performance in Hong Kong.¹¹¹

Henan Opera (2000)

Henan Opera is a regional theatre from Henan province, in east central China. The National Guo-Guang Opera Company from Taiwan adapted *Chinese Princess Turandot* in 2000, and it premiered in Taipei. The troupe director Wei Guo-Tai indicates, "The inspiration to adapt Wei's plot for Henan Opera was from the two

¹¹⁰ Hongxia Yi, "On the *Chinese Princess Turandot* and Chinese opera's Import and Innovation," Guangzhou Huadu Culture and Arts Library, <http://www.huadu.gov.cn:8080/was40/detail?record=809&channelid=4374> (accessed January 7, 2010).

¹¹¹ Xiaohui Yan, "Hong Kong Premieres: New Repertoire and Adaptations (June 1995 to March 2002)," Chinese Opera Information Centre, <http://www2.cuhk.edu.hk/corp/Newsletter/Newsletter5/Premiere.html> (accessed January 7, 2010).

influential performances of both Wei's and Puccini's versions in 1998, Beijing."¹¹² The National Guo-Guang Opera Company had been seeking new repertoire for Henan Opera in order to attract larger audiences; after seeing the two successful performances in Beijing, they decided to bring the *Turandot* fever to Taiwan.

The Henan opera version included more creative elements compared to previous adaptations. "Crossover" is the most innovative feature of this adaptation. First of all, the role of Mr. Anonymous is played by Wang Po-Sen, a singer of musical theater; but *Turandot* is still sung by the most famous Henan opera singer, Wang Hai-ling. The two singing styles are mixed in this production, which was the first and only time in Henan opera history. The fusion also affects the language. Henan opera is originally sung in Henan dialect; however, Taiwanese musicals are commonly sung in Mandarin. Thus, this version is bilingual.

Both features help Henan Opera to broaden its popularity. The mixture of musical theater and Sichuan Opera introduces listeners to Sichuan Opera through Wang's interpretation of Mr. Anonymous. Moreover, combining both Mandarin and Henan dialect helped non-Henan-dialect speakers to appreciate Henan Opera without a language barrier.¹¹³ Henan Opera's *Chinese Princess Turandot* successfully attracted new audiences. After its premiere in 2000, the production also gave several performances in Henan in 2001.

¹¹² Guo-Tai Wei, *A New Henan Opera: Chinese Princess Turandot Commemorative Collection*, (Taiwan: National Guo-Guang Opera Company, 2001), 28.

¹¹³ In Taiwan, Mandarin is the official language. The audiences of Henan Opera were generally of an older generation, especially the population of Henan origin who understand Henan dialect. Thus, the combination of Mandarin and Henan dialect helps general public to understand Henan opera better.

Beijing Opera (2003)

In November 22, 2003, the China National Peking Opera Company performed *Princess Turandot*, an adaptation of Puccini's opera, in the Chang An Theater, Beijing. The production was a historical landmark because of its fourteen successive performances, a new record for Beijing Opera, and the revenue earned was the highest in Beijing Opera history.¹¹⁴ The story follows Puccini's plot; the only difference lies in is the role of Lou-Ling. In Puccini's opera, Lou-Ling never appears on stage but is only mentioned in Turandot's description of her dream. Lou-Ling was Turandot's ancestor who was killed by a foreign conqueror. Turandot is seeking revenge for her murder, the impetus for Turandot's cruelty to foreign men. In Beijing Opera's revision, however, Lou-Ling has not been murdered but married to Altoum. She actually appears on the stage and plays a role in a secondary story line with a complex identity: Timur's (Calaf's father) previous lover, Turandot's mother, and Altoum's wife. While Calaf wishes to win Turandot, his father also wishes to win Lou-Ling back from Altoum (Turandot's father, ruler of China).

The additional story line for Lou-Ling provides more dramatic effects on stage through these entangled relationships. Lou-Ling is a shepherd without any royal background. Although Timur is a prince, he has fallen in love with Lou-Ling despite the difference in social status. Timur's father worries about their relationship. Thus, he makes Lou-Ling a princess and betrothed her in marriage to the king of China, Altoum (Turandot's father). Unfortunately, Lou-Ling falls into the king's disfavor after Altoum discovered that she does not have a royal background. Although she is Turandot's

¹¹⁴ China National Beijing Opera Company, "2003 Event," China National Beijing Opera Company, <http://www.cn poc.cn/Info.asp?NID=41> (accessed January 8, 2010).

mother, Altoum does not respect her. Timur sees poor Lou-Ling again when Turandot arrested him, and he wishes to get her back. At the end, Lou-Ling and Timur chooses to die with each other.¹¹⁵

This production was widely acclaimed both in China and abroad. Not only was it chosen as a cultural exchange event for embassies from 108 countries in China in 2004, it also received international invitations from countries such as Poland, Hungary, and Romania.¹¹⁶ The Austria Postal administration also released a commemorative stamp for this adaptation in 2003 (see Illustration 2).¹¹⁷

Illustration 2: Commemorative Stamp (2003, Austria)¹¹⁸



¹¹⁵ China National Beijing Opera Company, "2003 New Opera," China National Beijing Opera Company, <http://www.cn poc.cn/jumainfo.asp?NID=1443> (accessed January 8, 2010).

¹¹⁶ Xinmin Evening News, "Large Beijing opera Heat Diplomatic Envoys with Immense interest, *Princess Turandot* Enters the International Stage," Shanghai SMG Television Department, <http://www.shs zx.gov.cn/epublish/gb/paper121/1/class012100001/hwz662948.htm> (accessed January 10, 2010).

¹¹⁷ Li-Ming Post Net Work, "Blend of East and West: The Opera *Durandot* and the opera *Turandot*," *Li-Ming Post News*, September 7, 2003, <http://www.lmstamp.com/i/368.htm> (accessed January 10, 2010).

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER IV. *TURANDOT* IN THE FORBIDDEN CITY**The International Collaboration**

The 1998 opera production in the Forbidden City of Beijing, today called the Working People's Cultural Palace, was another opportunity for the Chinese public to experience *Turandot*. Carried out under the auspices of Opera on Original Site, Inc., the international creative team included conductor Zubin Mehta, director Zhang Yimou, Chinese artists who designed the sets, costumes, and choreography, and the chorus from *Maggio Musicale Fiorentino* (see Table 4). Mehta proposed producing an authentic production of *Turandot* the year before in Florence. He defined “authentic” as “made and conceived by Chinese.”¹¹⁹ Having seen the Chinese movie *Raise the Red Lattern* directed by Zhang, Mehta chose Zhang as the director of *Turandot*.

Zhang Yimou is an acclaimed Chinese filmmaker, whose most recent extravaganza was the opening ceremony of the 2008 Olympics in Beijing. Although now he is considered to be the most famous Chinese film director, his early movies could not be performed in China.¹²⁰ *To Live* (1994), for example, portrays Zhang’s view of the deep despair of life in contemporary Chinese history. The movie received international acclaim and awards; however, it was not shown in China due to its negative representation of the country.

¹¹⁹ Zubin Mehta and Zhang Yimou, *The Turandot Project*, produced by Margaret Smilow, directed by Alan Miller (New York: Zeitgeist Video, 2002).

¹²⁰ Muzi.com (Berlin News), “Film and Photography by Zhang Yimou are Worth 4 Billion,” Muzi.com News, November 14, 2004, <http://muzi.com/cc/fanti/11669,19931.shtml?q=1335499&cc=13386> (accessed January 20, 2010).

Table 4
1998 Beijing Production Team of Puccini's *Turandot*

Conductor	Zubin Mehta (India)
Director	Zhang Yimou (China)
Executive Producer	Opera on Original Site, Inc. (Switzerland) China Performing Arts Agency (China)
Presentation	Cultural Entertainment Company (China)
Chorus and Orchestra	Maggio Musicale Fiorentino (Italy)
Sets and Costumes	Gao Guangjian, Zeng Li, Huang Haiwei (China)
Choreographer	Chen Weiya (China)
Production	Teatro Comunale di Firenze (Italy) Maggio Musicale Fiorentino (Italy)
Organization	Ministry of Culture, People's Republic of China

Because some of Zhang's earlier movies were banned in China, the international collaboration was problematic. Opera on Original Site Inc., initially did not receive permission for the project until Zhang's opponents relented. Secondly, the manager of the China Performing Arts Agency was concerned about the use of the Forbidden City, a series of ancient buildings with strict regulations on usage. She would face imprisonment if something happened to the site.¹²¹ Finally, Zhang had no previous experience with Puccini or the challenges of Western opera. Zhang recognized that opera differs from film because of the focus on music and because Western opera is more serious than Chinese opera. The purpose of Chinese opera is to "entertain ...in tea house[s] in which you can talk, eat, with all kinds of people, really messy, not as respectful as Western opera...and the purpose of Western opera is the music... ." ¹²² As the production team

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

began to work, Zhang's inexperience and the cultural differences among team members became increasingly problematic.

Both the sound director and light designers were unhappy collaborating with Zhang because he placed more importance on representing Chinese culture rather than Puccini's work. For example, the Italian lighting designer and Zhang were irreconcilable during rehearsals because the opera-experienced designer wanted to use subdued lighting to better represent Puccini's characters, while Zhang wanted brilliant lighting to reveal his colorful staging for the representation of Chinese culture. In addition, Zhang found opera directing more difficult than filmmaking because he could not control everything himself. However, Zhang still hoped to “. . . win credit for the Chinese, which was [his] original goal in agreeing to work on this project.”¹²³

Zhang's Commercialism

At the end of the 1990s, Zhang's focus of filmmaking became more commercialized to attract larger audiences and avoid government criticism and censorship.¹²⁴ His recent style has been successful in bringing him fame, but not critical acclaim. The representation of colors, luxurious costumes, and spectacular scenes are focal parts of his recent movies, including *Hero* (2002) and *Curse of the Golden Flower* (2006). All of these movies had box-office appeal, but many critics did not value these works as much as his earlier movies, because they perceived that his commercialized

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Muzi.com (Berlin News), “Wang Shuo: ‘I Should Not Have Said that Zhang Yimou is Excrement’,” Muzi.com News, January 18, 2007, <http://muzi.com/cc/fanti/11669,19931.shtml?q=1453442&cc=13386> (accessed January 22, 2010).

style lacked sincerity and originality. For example, film critic Lu Guoping criticized Zhang's movies as containing a fancy frame with no meaningful content.¹²⁵

Zhang does not deny that he sees filmmaking as a business. He states: "without the commercial reputation, the 'art' of your movie is utopian;" and "I just want to please whoever finances me to make films...I do not have any grand goal, my priority is to live [as a filmmaker]." ¹²⁶ When Mehta invited him to join the *Turandot* production company, he was in a period of transition, but many of the aforementioned features such as vivid colors, elaborate costumes, and large crowds were already incorporated into the production. As a result, Zhang's *Turandot* was also considered as a work commercializing Chinese culture.

From Movie to Opera

From his filmmaking background, Zhang brought the best-known attribute of his movies to the opera: the use of color. Mehta indicated that the myth of Chinese culture is all about colors, and Zhang is the master of coloration.¹²⁷ According to Robert Mackey, color itself is the theme of Zhang's movie, *Hero* (2002).¹²⁸ Four vibrant colors are used to symbolize different characters and story lines: red for love and jealousy, blue for desperation, green for idealism and hope, and white for truth (see

¹²⁵ Guoping Lu, "Where Zhang Yimou Will Bring Chinese Movies To," *China Reviews News*, April 1, 2009, <http://www.cn-rn.com/crn-webapp/mag/docDetail.jsp?coluid=0&docid=100929540&page=2> (accessed January 25, 2010).

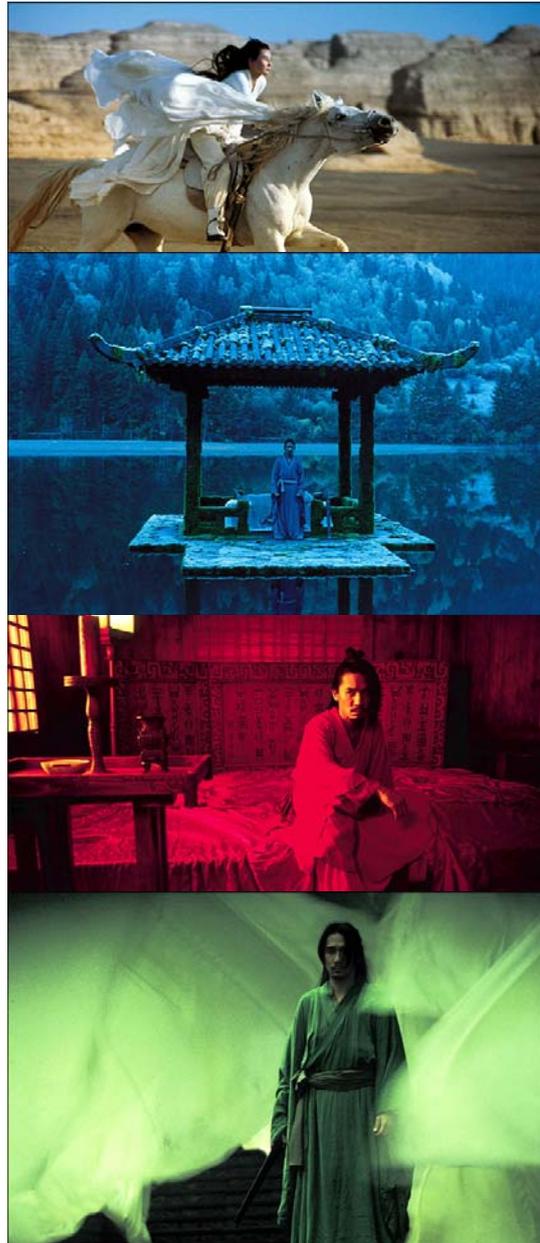
¹²⁶ Muzi.com (Berlin News), "A Quiet Move to Commercialized Chinese Lunar New Year Movies," Muzi.com News, December 18, 2005, <http://muzi.com/cc/fanti/11669,19931.shtml?q=1394776&cc=13386> (accessed January 22, 2010).

¹²⁷ Zubin Mehta and Zhang Yimou, *The Turandot Project*, produced by Margaret Smilow, directed by Alan Miller (New York: Zeitgeist Video, 2002).

¹²⁸ Robert Mackey, "Cracking the Color Code of 'Hero'," *New York Times*, August 2004, <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/08/15/movies/film-cracking-the-color-code-of-hero.html> (accessed October 20, 2009).

Illustration 3). The cinematographer Christopher Doyle concluded, “Part of the beauty of the film is that it is one story colored by different perceptions.”¹²⁹

Illustration 3: Movie *Hero* (2002)¹³⁰

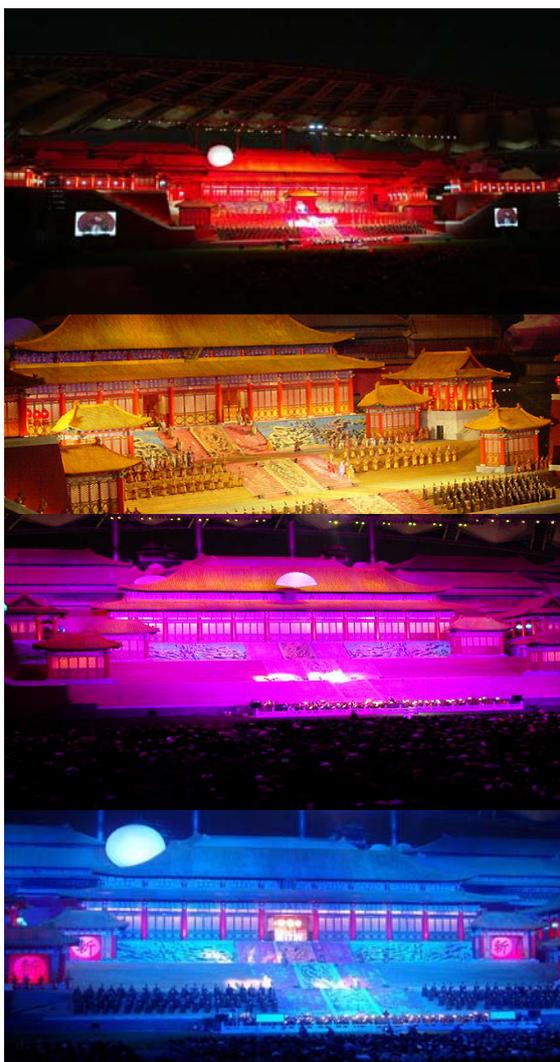


¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Robert Mackey, “Movies: ‘Cracking the Color Code of *Hero*,’ from *New York Times*, August 2004,” HelloZiyi.us, http://www.helloziyi.us/Articles/Hero_Color_Code.htm (accessed October 29, 2009).

The costumes and staging of *Turandot* also utilize the power of colors. For example, the executioner wears a red dress symbolizing victory, providing contrast to the phantom roles in white robes. The red, blue, gold, and pink colors, on the other hand, illuminate the Forbidden City (see Illustration 4).¹³¹

Illustration 4: *Turandot* in the Forbidden City¹³²



¹³¹ Zhang did not attribute the use of his coloration of the Forbidden City to anything specific other than aesthetic considerations.

¹³² Sina Corporation, "Pictures: Zhang Yimou's 2003 *Turandot* in Seoul's World Cup Stadium," SINA Corporation, http://slide.ent.sina.com.cn/slide_4_168_145.html (accessed October 29, 2009).

Zhang and the Chinese Government

Many critics also accuse Zhang of trying to please the Chinese government by overly praising communist ideas and glorifying Chinese culture in his movies. *Turandot* provided Zhang his first opportunity to work for the Chinese government; he obviously desired to please the officials and to change their negative view of him derived from his earlier movies. His goals were achieved. In fact, after the success of *Turandot*, Zhang was invited by the Chinese government to create a series of “Impression” musicals in different sites such as Xihu and Lijiang to promote tourism. The government also chose him to direct the opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

As Zhang gained the trust of the Chinese government to advertise Chinese culture, Wang Gang, an old friend of his who is also a filmmaker, sarcastically praised Zhang as “the master of image design” of the Chinese government.¹³³ Wang sees *Turandot* as one of the ways that Zhang helped the government to create a powerful, wealthy, and modern image to foreigners.¹³⁴ In sum, Zhang and Mehta’s collaboration of *Turandot* not only opened a door for Chinese audiences to appreciate Puccini’s opera, but also to enhance Zhang’s fame and the Chinese government’s external image.

Another Premiere of Puccini’s *Turandot*

Before Zhang and Mehta’s collaboration in 1998, Puccini’s opera was performed in China in 1996—but not in its original form. The Beijing Century Theatre staged *Turandot* in the middle kingdom instead of China so as not to misrepresent Chinese royalty.¹³⁵ Director Xu Xiaozhong explains the clash between Chinese

¹³³ Muzi.com (Berlin News), “Wang Shuo: ‘I Should Not Have Said that Zhang Yimou is Excrement’.”

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Sheila Melvin, “Opera : Puccini’s Chinese Tale in the Middle Kingdom,” *The Wall Street Journal*, February 13, 1996, A13.

people's ideal princesses and Puccini's *Turandot*. First, in contrast to Chinese people's image of Chinese princesses as "kind, obedient, and conservative," Puccini's *Turandot* is cold, arrogant, and brutal.¹³⁶ Second, in Chinese history, Chinese princess's marriage was usually decided by the emperor. She had no right to test her suitors and execute those who fail. Yet no princess is seen as cruel or independent as *Turandot* is. Mr. Xu worried Chinese audiences would not appreciate *Turandot* and Puccini's beautiful music because of the unauthentic portrait of the Chinese princess, so he moved the setting from Peking to an unnamed kingdom on the Silk Road in the opera story.¹³⁷ Although not authentic to Puccini's plot, the setting still evoked the exoticism of Puccini's *Turandot*. While Western audiences see *Turandot* as an Orientalist story with Chinese flavors, Xu's Chinese audience perceive *Turandot* as an exotic fantasy of the middle kingdom.

Similar to Zhang's 1998 extravaganza, the 1996 production was considered at the time as "the largest operatic production" and "the most expensive production" ever in China.¹³⁸ Nevertheless, only a relatively small number of people attended the performance. Because the 1996 production was not in Puccini's original form and was poorly received, Zhang's 1998 production has been generally viewed as the "real" premiere of Puccini's *Turandot* in China.

Recent Performances of Puccini's *Turandot*

After the 1998 premiere, Puccini's *Turandot* has been performed in China in 2008 and 2009 (see Table 5). The 2008 production was performed both for Puccini's 150th birthday and for the opening of the Chinese National Performing Arts Center. The

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid. It cost 144,600 US dollars.

young Chinese composer, Hou Weiya, was commissioned to write a new ending for Puccini's unfinished third act.¹³⁹ In October 2009, Zhang reproduced *Turandot* in the Olympic Stadium, so-called the "Bird's Nest." Zhang wanted to bring *Turandot* (the most representative of Chinese princesses) to the Olympic Stadium (the most important Chinese modern building) in order to blend the past with the present, the imaginary of China and the real World, and the West and the East.

Table 5
Performances of Puccini's *Turandot* in China

<i>Year</i>	<i>Genre</i>	<i>Place</i>
1996	Western Opera (in middle kingdom)	Beijing
1998	Western Opera (original form)	Beijing
2008	Western Opera (with new ending)	Beijing
2009	Western Opera (reproduced by Zhang)	Beijing

In order to give Chinese audiences a modern view of *Turandot*, Zhang brought the most advanced technology to the stage and organized many "*Turandot*-focused" events, including a commercial bus, a fashion show, and competitions for Ms. China and Chinese Martial Arts Boy.¹⁴⁰ The new production was the most important cultural, social, and fiscal event in China of the year; it will be performed again at the 2010 EXPO in Shanghai.¹⁴¹

Zhang's *Turandot* has also been performed internationally over the past few years. The 2003 performance in Seoul's World Cup Stadium, South Korea was the first performance outside of China. In 2004, they were invited to perform in the Beiteddine

¹³⁹ For detailed information, see Chapter II.

¹⁴⁰ Further information can be found in Chapter V, page 75.

¹⁴¹ Hai-tao Yang, "Zhang Yimou's 'Bird Nest' *Turandot* Will Perform in Shanghai World Expo Next Year," China (Expo) Youth Website, http://2010expo.youth.cn/tppt/200908/t20090803_975846.htm (accessed January 27, 2010).

Festival in Lebanon.¹⁴² In 2005, Zhang directed this production in Stade de France and Olympiapark München in Germany. A world tour is planned for the 2009 production to South Korea, France, Germany, and the 2012 London Olympics.¹⁴³

¹⁴² Lebanon.Com , “Beiteddine Festival: July 24, 2004, A night at the Opera Puccini's *Turandot*,” Lebanon.Com , <http://www.lebanon.com/where/entertainment/festivals04.htm> (accessed January 26, 2010).

¹⁴³ Hai-tao Yang, “Zhang Yimou’s ‘Bird Nest’ *Turandot* Will Perform in Shanghai World Expo Next Year,” China (Expo) Youth Website, http://2010expo.youth.cn/tptt/200908/t20090803_975846.htm (accessed January 27, 2010).

CHAPTER V. COMPARISONS

This chapter compares the two seminal productions of *Turandot*'s homecoming: the first Chinese adaptation of the *Turandot* story by Wei Minglun and the first Chinese production of Puccini's opera by Zhang Yimou. Because these two productions were pioneering efforts in *Turandot*'s homecoming to China, they are often compared. The Sichuan opera production was repeated in Beijing in 1998, coinciding with the Western Opera's premiere directed by Zhang (see Table 6).

Table 6
General Comparison of Zhang's and Wei's Productions

	Zhang Yimou	Wei Minglun
Role	Director	Playwright
Genre	Italian opera	Sichuan opera
Expense	15 million US dollars	500,000 US dollars
Language	Italian	Sichuan dialect with Chinese/English subtitle
Music	Live Orchestra	Prerecorded tape
Ticket (in dollars)	\$150-1500 (Foreigner) \$5-100 (Chinese)	\$24 (most expensive)
Place	Forbidden City (People's Cultural Palace)	Stalin-era Auditorium
Other performances	South Korea (2003) France (2005)	TV series (2002) Australia (2004)

The competition between the two productions created a "new contest." The original *Turandot* story contains three riddles for Turandot's suitors. The new contest in *Turandot*'s homecoming comprises cultural, political, and historical problems for Chinese directors. As the suitors must answer the riddles to marry Turandot, the two directors must negotiate the complex set of issues in creating an authentic Chinese princess.

Comparison of Music

Zhang's production, which uses Puccini's opera and Alfano's ending, did not add or change anything musically to the opera. Wei's Sichuan opera, however, combined Chinese traditional music with some of Puccini's musical material. Sichuan opera is a regional operatic form in southwestern China sung in Sichuan dialect. Originally containing five sonic systems, it includes four voice types from other provinces: *Gao Ciang*, *Kun Ciang*, *Hucin Ciang*, and *Tan Si*, and a native voice type, *Deng Si* (see Table 7). *Gao Ciang* is best-known for using the upper vocal register and being accompanied by *Paiban* (wooden clappers). It also sounds more rhythmic than the other voice types. *Kun Ciang* and *Hucin Ciang* are generally accompanied by melodic instruments: the *Cyudi* (bamboo flute) for the former, the latter by string instruments, the *Hucin* and *Sanxian*. *Tan Si* uses accompaniment from both the rhythmic instrument *Paiban* and the melodic instrument *Yuecin* (moon-lute), usually used to express strong emotions. Finally, *Deng Si* uses a special string instrument, the *Datong*, and usually includes folk themes.¹⁴⁴ These five voice types were independently performed in China before the Ming Dynasty (17th century) and blended together as "Sichuan Opera" in the middle of the Qing Dynasty (1736-1795).

In addition to the voice types and their associated instruments, gongs and drums are the most important instruments in Sichuan opera; in fact, they are the distinguishing features of the genre. Gongs and drums are used to announce the

¹⁴⁴ *Datong* belongs to *Hucin* family. *Hucin* is generally referred to as the "Chinese violin." In the *Hucin* family, the *Erhu* is smaller and plays in a higher register, while *Datong* is bigger and plays in a lower register.

opening scene after the overture.¹⁴⁵ They are also used for emotional transitions and dramatic effect.¹⁴⁶ Sichuan opera also contains a particular performance format. It always begins with an instrumental introduction, which serves the role of an opera overture. The introduction, usually slow and lyrical for establishing the musical atmosphere, contrasts with middle fast passages. The following scenes are organized into a three-part format: instrumental music→singing→dancing.¹⁴⁷ Sichuan Opera contains other features reminiscent of Western operatic forms (e.g. Singspiel and ballad opera), such as spoken dialogue, recitative-like and aria-like passages, and their characteristic humor and wittiness. All the aforementioned conventions of Sichuan opera can be found in Wei's *Chinese Princess Turandot*.

Table 7
Five Sonic Systems in Sichuan Opera

Type	Region	Main Instruments	Other Attributes
<i>Gao Ciang</i>	Southwestern China	<i>Paiban</i> (wooden clappers)	High-pitched voice
<i>Kun Ciang</i>	South Yangtze Basin	<i>Cyudi</i> (bamboo flute)	Fluent, highly artful melodies
<i>Hucin Ciang</i>	Beijing	<i>Hucin</i> and <i>Sanxian</i> (strings instrument)	Often only serve as background music
<i>Tan Si</i>	Northern China	<i>Paiban</i> and <i>Yuecin</i> (moon-lute)	Emotionally fraught rhythms
<i>Deng Si</i>	Si-Chuan	<i>Datong</i> (<i>Hucin</i> Family)	Folkloric themes

¹⁴⁵ Ministry of Culture, P.R.China, "Sichuan Opera," Chinese Culture, http://ww.chinaculture.org/gb/en_madeinchina/2005-12/05/content_76647.htm (accessed August 10, 2009).

¹⁴⁶ Chongqing Sichuan Opera Theater, "Sichuan Opera Gongs and Drums' Three Features [川劇鑼鼓三絕]," Chinese Sichuan Opera Website, <http://scopera.newssc.org/system/2009/02/23/011599704.shtml> (accessed August 21, 2009).

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

Wei's production was adapted for a three-episode television show in 2002. The most notable innovation in this adaptation is the music: Wei blended Puccini's theme of "*Nessun dorma*" and Western instruments with traditional Sichuan opera music. In the opening of the first episode, Turandot and the chorus are accompanied by Chinese instruments as in Sichuan Opera. After the first stanza, the theme of "*Nessun dorma*" appears in the instrumental interlude played by Western string instruments. The transition from Sichuan opera to Puccini's melody was unnoticeable to those unfamiliar with Puccini's *Turandot*.

Modern Sichuan Opera does not utilize a live orchestra as Western operas do; rather, taped music is employed. In addition to the instrumental music, some songs are also pre-recorded. For example, in the opening scene, while Turandot's self-portrait is shown, a prerecorded song proclaims her beauty. Chinese traditional opera is generally not notated and is transmitted orally; therefore, the score of Wei's Chinese Princess Turandot is unpublished. The music from the Henan opera performance, however, was transcribed and appears in its commemorative catalogue published in 2001. Different from Wei's incorporation of Puccini's melody in Sichuan opera, a piece titled "Tonight No One Shall Sleep [jin ye wu ren ru shue]" in Henan opera coincides with Puccini's "*Nessun Dorma*" in terms of its lyrics (See Appendix A). These cultural exchanges raise perplexing issues on authenticity. While Puccini incorporated Chinese music elements in order to make *Turandot* more "authentically" Chinese, Chinese directors embraced Puccini's musical elements in order to signify *Turandot*'s "authentic" origin.

Comparison of Plot

Wei's *Chinese Princess Turandot*, includes elements that represent not only the Sichuan operatic conventions, but also Chinese tradition in general. Zhang stayed close to Puccini's plot but added new elements to represent his ideal of Chinese culture.

Wei's revision and characterizations are creative. First of all, his Chinese princess is not as cold and cruel as by Puccini's. Turandot does not kill those who fail to solve the riddles, she is truly sorry for Liù's death, and she forsakes all fame and wealth to stay with 'Mr. Anonymous' (Calaf in Puccini's opera). Second, Wei adapts the ending in typical Chinese fashion to suit Chinese sensibilities: "reincarnation," a common concept in Chinese folklore, merges Turandot and Liù into a single character at Liù's death.¹⁴⁸ After Liù dies, Mr. Anonymous realizes how much she meant to him. He cannot marry Turandot even though he won her affections. In the final scene, Mr. Anonymous leaves the palace and runs into the two previous suitors. He is surprised that both of them are still alive, assuming they were beheaded by Turandot. He reflects on Liù's death. At that moment, he hears a voice saying "Liù is here!" Turandot, wearing Liù's clothing, enters—indicating to the audience that the two women have become one.

Zhang did not change Puccini's plot, as Wei did, to represent Chinese culture, but created "a Chinese frame around the Italian opera core."¹⁴⁹ He tried to infuse authentic Chinese culture through staging. For example, large dragon-patterned fabric, a symbol for the son of heaven from Chinese mythology (See Illustration 5), provides a

¹⁴⁸ Reincarnation appears in Chinese folklore or myth. One of the earliest mythologies of reincarnation is about Emperor Zhe Wu Di (who was born out of the previous Emperor Yu Di's reincarnation); the famous Chinese romance *Butterfly Lover* has reincarnation as a control theme: the couple is reincarnated into two butterflies after their death.

¹⁴⁹ John Pomfret, "Turandot in China: A Two-Opera Policy," *The Washington Post*, September 7, 1998, B1.

backdrop for the emperor's entrance,. The addition of an extended dance number by the executioner represents Chinese martial arts. The staging is full of Chinese word characters that highlight the beauty of Chinese calligraphy (See Illustration 6).

Zhang aimed to put *Turandot* into its historical context. During imperial days, the hairpin was the only sharp object that Chinese courtiers were allowed to carry. Thus, Zhang used a hairpin as Liú's suicide weapon. Moreover, because the Forbidden City was built during the Ming Dynasty, Zhang's costumes are remade in the Ming style. For the same reason, a drum corps is added at the beginning, which follows the Ming dynasty tradition of using drums to announce the emperor's arrival or a royal celebration (See Illustration 7).¹⁵⁰

Illustration 5: The Dragon-depicted Fabric¹⁵¹



¹⁵⁰ Sean Metzger, "Ice Queens, Rice Queens, and Intercultural Investments in Zhang Yimou's *Turandot*," *Asian Theatre Journal* 20 (2003): 211.

¹⁵¹ Sina Corporation, "Pictures: Zhang Yimou's 2005 *Turandot* in Stade de France," SINA Corporation, http://slide.ent.sina.com.cn/slide_4_168_145.html (accessed October 29, 2009).

Illustration 6: The Calligraphy¹⁵²Illustration 7: The Drum Corps¹⁵³

Comparison of Reception

In 1998, Wei's and Zhang's simultaneous performances in Beijing were entitled "Chinese Sichuan Opera and Italian Opera's First Global Conversation."¹⁵⁴ Both productions created their own attractions for Chinese audiences. The vernacular language and the plot changes of Wei's *Chinese Princes Turandot* were more Chinese-friendly. On the other hand, the strong support from the Chinese government and the Opera on Original Site Inc. of Zhang's production were more publicized. In general, Wei's production was more successful in winning Chinese appreciation and most critics' acclamation. Zhang's production received both accolades *and* harsh criticisms from Chinese audiences and Western critics.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Cing Tian, "Turandot and Chinese Princess Turandot's Competition of Discourse Power," *Method 9* (1998), <http://www.xys.org/xys/ebooks/literature/essays/dulanduo.txt> (accessed November 13, 2009).

Both Chinese and Western reviews applauded Wei's successful adaptation. Chinese critic Cing Tian praised Wei as a Chinese "Don Quixote"—a knight defending Chinese culture against Western Orientalism and capitalism. Although the budget was much smaller and the staging was simple, Wei made the *Turandot* story appeal to Chinese audiences through the story itself. Wei's portrayal of the characters especially impressed the public. Tian praised Wei who gives a more vivid character to Liù: smart, gentle, and loyal. *The Economist* reviewer indicated that Wei's *Turandot* is more "believable: cruel and cold on the outside, human underneath."¹⁵⁵ All of these characteristics not only provide contrast to *Turandot*'s personality, but signify ideal virtues of Chinese women.

Tian indicated that Wei's revision not only makes this story more Chinese and more dramatic, but also eliminates the dramatic difficulties in Puccini's plot.¹⁵⁶ The *Guangming Daily* reviewer also attributed the success of Wei's revision to the plot. Wei modified the core value of love in Puccini's *Turandot* to the pursuit of beauty: beauty exists not only in appearance but also in the soul. Only if *Turandot* give up her pride and seek a pure heart, can she and Mr. Anonymous find love together. On the other hand, Mr. Anonymous cannot accept *Turandot*'s love because of his guilt over the death of Liù. The concept of beauty is not only close to Chinese virtue, but also makes *Turandot*'s surrender appear more realistic to the audience. Thus, although the

¹⁵⁵ The Economist, "Grand Opera in China. One Country, Two *Turandots*," *The Economist* U.S. Edition, September 19, 1998, Arts, Books and Sport, p.101.

¹⁵⁶ Cing Tian, "*Turandot* and *Chinese Princess Turandot*'s Competition of Discourse Power,"

performance of Wei's production earned less revenue than Zhang's production, critics proclaim it to be the more successful of the two.¹⁵⁷

Zhang's eight performances attracted large audiences and the media from all over the world."¹⁵⁸ One patron, who flew from Toronto to China especially for this performance, stated that the production took her "back to the era [sic]."¹⁵⁹ Another patron paid 1,700 dollars to attend this performance.¹⁶⁰ For foreign audiences, Zhang's production was spectacular. On the other hand, it was the first time Puccini's *Turandot* was performed in public in China, but few Chinese could afford to see it. According to statistics, the 1996 Chinese annual income per capita was only 2,800 US dollars.¹⁶¹ This made the majority of Chinese impossible audiences to afford for even the cheapest ticket which cost 150 USD (see Table 8).

Table 8
Ticket Prices of the 1998 Forbidden City Performance

Foreign Nationals	150 US dollars	General
	350 US dollars	Dinner with performers
	1500 US dollars	Sponsors
Chinese Audience	5-100 US dollars	General dress rehearsals
		Charity Performance

The special ticket prices for Chinese audiences were for the dress rehearsal and a charity performance. However, due to the weather, the first dress rehearsal was cancelled. Since most Chinese missed this performance, Zhang's initial hope to bring *Turandot* to the Chinese public was never fulfilled.

¹⁵⁷ The Economist, "Grand Opera in China. One Country, Two Turandots," *The Economist* U.S. Edition, September 19, 1998, Arts, Books and Sport, p.101.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid. According to this news, the patron did not specifically explain which era he felt Zhang brought him back to, I interpreted his statement as "back to the era of Turandot's time—old ancient China."

¹⁶⁰ Sean Metzger, "Ice Queens, Rice Queens, and Intercultural Investments in Zhang Yimou's *Turandot*," in *Asian Theatre Journal* (2003): 209.

¹⁶¹ Jasper Becker, "Turandot Captivates Forbidden City Opera Fans," *South China Morning Post*, September 6, 1998, p. 1.

Media reviews were not as positive as Zhang might have hoped. Although he had announced that “his main aim was to lend authenticity to the portrayal of imperial Chinese culture,”¹⁶² his filmmaking background was a hindrance for opera critics. According to the *Washington Post*, “all in all the overweening spectacle earned ‘nol points’ for drama.”¹⁶³ The *New York Times* also pointed out that “the audience was too busy watching all the scene changes and extras moving about to “sink deep into the aria.”¹⁶⁴ *USA Today* indicated it was “richer in spectacle than sound.”¹⁶⁵ Chinese critics still disagree with Zhang’s commercialization of Chinese culture. Chinese critic Guo Wei commented: “this production is a Western balloon inflated by Chinese breath.”¹⁶⁶ His rival Wei has also accused Zhang of doing “business, not art.”¹⁶⁷ Indeed, Zhang’s most recent reproduction of *Turandot* in October 2009 reinforces Wei’s assessment of Zhang’s commercialism.¹⁶⁸

While Wei revised the plot in order to appeal to Chinese audiences, Zhang was more successful in promoting Chinese culture in a commercial way to the West. He brought himself fame, and he successfully bridged the gap between capitalist and Communist China by exporting Chinese culture and importing Western capitalism. It is difficult to decide who won the new contest because of the different focuses of Wei’s and Zhang’s production. Wei aimed to revise the story of *Turandot* to attract the

¹⁶² Cheng, *Los Angeles Times*, p. 6.

¹⁶³ Pomfret, *The Washington Post*, sec. B1.

¹⁶⁴ Erik Eckholm, “*Turandot* Bids Farewell To Beijing, the ‘Home’ It Awed and Perplexed,” *The New York Times*, September 15, 1998, sec. E4.

¹⁶⁵ David Patrick Stearns, “Forbidden City-filmed *Turandot* Richer in Spectacle than Sound,” *USA Today*, December 7, 1998, p. 3D.

¹⁶⁶ Bay Fang, “The real tragedy of *Turandot*,” *U.S. News & World Report*, September 14, 1998, p. 44.

¹⁶⁷ Susan H. Greenberg and Leslie Pappas, “Forbidden Arias,” *Newsweek*, September 14, 1998, Atlantic Edition, p. 64.

¹⁶⁸ Haosi International Corporation, “2009 Zhang Yimou’s *Turandot* in the Bird Nest,” <http://ent.sina.com.cn/y/turandot/> (accessed September 20, 2009).

Chinese audience, while Zhang hoped to represent authentic Chinese culture to the Western audience. Undoubtedly, both Wei and Zhang have brought *Turandot* home in their own ways. Because of these two seminal productions, *Turandot* is no longer recognized by Chinese audiences as an Orientalist Asian woman but an authentic Chinese princess.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁹ In 2002, Guang Zhou Ballet Troupe performed a two-act ballet based on Puccini's *Turandot*. Most surprisingly, Puccini's music for *Turandot* was chosen for the Ice Skating competitions in the 2003 World Games to represent the Chinese team where they won the first gold medal for China. Dandan Zhang, "Turandot," The Guangzhou Ballet, http://www.gzballet.org/news/detail_2.asp?catalogid=7&productid=12&type_id=13 (accessed October 10, 2009); Xiao Shin, "Pairs champions Shen Xue and Zhao Hongbo reelected, "Turandot" to conquer the world championships," *Oriental Sports Daily*, March 28, 2003 <http://sports.sohu.com/92/49/news207784992.shtml> (accessed October 1, 2009).

CHAPTER VI. CONCLUSION

Orientalism and Occidentalism

Puccini's *Turandot* has been widely considered as an operatic reflection of Edward Said's *Orientalism*.¹⁷⁰ Said views Orientalism as a constraint of "positive doctrine." Turandot's barbaric, mysterious, and brutal characteristics all reflect this restriction of positiveness.¹⁷¹ The Orientalist idea of "Otherness" also reveals in the portrayal of China in *Turandot*—a country "resists modernization and westernization," Maria N. Ng indicates.¹⁷² In terms of music, Joseph Kerman also observes that "bogus Orientalism lacquered over every page of the score" in Puccini's *Turandot*.¹⁷³ While this Oriental subject attracted large Western audiences, the negative portrayal of Chinese culture resulted in no performances of this opera in China for more than seventy years. Because of the established Orientalist image of *Turandot*, the Chinese directors must emancipate the Chinese princess from Orientalist constraints before bringing her home.

The new contest for the Chinese directors is to negotiate between Orientalism and Occidentalism.¹⁷⁴ According to English literature scholar He Hui-Bin, the view of Chinese Occidentalism can be organized into three time periods. From the 1950s to the

¹⁷⁰ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (NY: Random House, 1978). In this chapter, I follow Said's use of Orientalism and capitalize the term.

¹⁷¹ Said, 42.

¹⁷² Said, 42 and Maria N. Ng, "The Two Asias in Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* and *Turandot*" in *A vision of the Orient: texts, intertexts, and contexts of Madame Butterfly*, 179.

¹⁷³ Joseph Kerman, *Opera as Drama*, rev. ed. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), 206-207. Ralph P. Locke, "Cutthroats and Casbah Dancers, Muezzins and Timeless Sands: Musical Images of the Middle East," *The Exotic in Western Music*, Jonathan Bellman ed. (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998), 127.

¹⁷⁴ The term was introduced in Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit, as an inversion of Said's Orientalism. It generally refers to Eastern views of the West: including ethnicity (ex. Jews to the German), religion (ex. Muslim to Christian), or geography (Middle East to America). In this chapter, I follow the use of the term and capitalize when every time I use it. Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit, *Occidentalism: the West in the Eyes of Its Enemies* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2004), 11.

1970s, China experienced liberation and the Cultural Revolution, and the Occident was viewed as the enemy of socialism and communism. In the 1980s, however, Occidentalism contained positive connotations that regarded Occidental literature as having universal value and the Occident as utopian. After the 1990s, Occidentalism has been generally recognized as Western Cultural imperialism. In this period, Chinese Occidentalism spawned two opposite reactions, Wei's and Zhang's productions can be seen as examples.¹⁷⁵

Wei's motivation to create an authentic Chinese princess represents a form of Occidentalism. When facing Western Cultural imperialism, Wei chose to defend Chinese culture as *Don Quixote*.¹⁷⁶ His revision also corresponds to He Hui-Bin's definition of the third-stage Occidentalism: the Chinese seeks an equal conversation with the Occident by representing and developing Chinese cultural uniqueness.¹⁷⁷ Wei successfully conveys 'cultural uniqueness' by revising the focus of *Turandot* to conform the Chinese concept of love in Chinese traditional opera.

Zhang's admiration of Western opera and his anxiety about international reception, on the other hand, represents another form of Occidentalism. In contrast to Wei's defense of Chinese culture, Zhang showed his fear and admiration of Western capitalism.¹⁷⁸ In his comparison of Chinese opera to Western opera, he used the term "messy" to describe the performance of Chinese opera, as saw it as not "as respectful as" Western opera.¹⁷⁹ Also, his aim in making this production "authentic" was to avoid

¹⁷⁵ Hui-Bin He, "Sixty Years of Occidentalism in Literary Studies," *China Reading Weekly*, October 14, 2009, http://www.gmw.cn/01ds/2009-10/14/content_995366.htm (accessed January 30, 2010).

¹⁷⁶ See Chapter V, 10.

¹⁷⁷ He, "Sixty years of Occidentalism in Literary Studies."

¹⁷⁸ See Chapter IV, 3.

¹⁷⁹ See Chapter IV, 4.

being an “international joke.”¹⁸⁰ Both statements demonstrate that Zhang produced *Turandot* under the pressure of making a “respectful” Western opera and winning “international” accolades. His production was mainly created for Western audiences, not Chinese. As *Los Angeles Times* Journalist Henry Chu concluded, Zhang’s *Turandot* is “largely a Western creation for a Western audience.”¹⁸¹ In terms of the reception in China, while Wei’s Occidentalism earned him praise, Zhang’s reflection of Occidentalism was scorned for his assistance of Western Orientalism.

An earlier study of Chinese Occidentalism by Xiaomei Chen may explain Zhang’s representation of Occidentalism. As Chen indicates, the notion of “Chineseness” was not only constructed by the self-understanding of the Chinese but also “contaminated” by Western determined views of China, including Orientalism.¹⁸² Applied to Zhang’s case, when he desired to represent “authentic” Chinese culture and please Western audiences at the same time, he inclined to the Western-expected Chineseness rather than the authentic one. As a result, Zhang’s production did not purely speak for the Chinese; rather, he “exaggerate[d] European fantasies of the Chinese Other and materializes them onstage.”¹⁸³ For example, Zhang added a dance for the executioner in order to represent Chinese martial arts; however, the executioner was one of the negative portrayals of Chinese culture by Westerners. While Zhang wished to represent the beauty of Chinese martial arts, he exaggerated the Orientalist image of China.

¹⁸⁰ See Chapter IV, 4.

¹⁸¹ Henry Chu, “A Great Wall Comes Down: Puccini’s *Turandot* Makes Its Long Awaited Debut in China. The \$15-Million Stage Spectacle Draws 4,000 from Far and Near to Historic Opening Night,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 7, sec. F, p. 1.

¹⁸² Xiaomei Chen, *Occidentalism: A Theory of Counter-Discourse in Post-Mao China* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 4.

¹⁸³ Sean Metzger, “Ice Queens, Rice Queens, and Intercultural Investments in Zhang Yimou’s *Turandot*,” *Asian Theatre Journal* 20 (2003): 212.

From Puccini's, and Wei's, to Zhang's *Turandot*, the scope of Orientalism and Occidentalism has been modified. *Turandot* was a Western Orientalist opera because it was created by a Westerner's view of the East and perceived as an "Oriental fantasy" by the Western audience.¹⁸⁴ When *Turandot* came to China, the audience changed. For the Chinese, this Western opera was no longer an Oriental fantasy, but an offensive misrepresentation of Chinese culture. Thus, if Orientalism refers to the Westerner's construction and perception of the Oriental Other, as Said indicated, it cannot be applied to *Turandot*'s reception in China because of the audience to which it is presented.¹⁸⁵ Similarly, while Occidentalism refers to Easterners' construction and perception of the Occidental Other, it cannot completely apply to *Turandot*—the story of *Turandot* and the opera are both originally made by the Westerner.¹⁸⁶ To disentangle the dilemma, I suggest that Orientalism and Occidentalism can be viewed separately in two aspects: how it is made and how it is perceived.

The inconsistency of constructing and perceiving perspectives affect the scopes of both Orientalism and Occidentalism in *Turandot*. In fact, Said notices the danger of ascertaining the "Western discourse on the Orient," and suggests that future studies of Orientalism could be explored by countries, such as "Italian, Dutch, German, and Swiss Orientalism."¹⁸⁷ Applied to *Turandot*'s homecoming, we might have Chinese Orientalism. Because of the cross-cultural context of performing *Turandot* in China, I propose that there are two types of Orientalism and Occidentalism: Western and Eastern.

¹⁸⁴ Metzger, 210.

¹⁸⁵ Said, 45. "I mean...the division, ...of men into 'us' (Westerners) and 'they' (Orientals)."

¹⁸⁶ Xianlin Song, "Post-Mao New Poetry and 'Occidentalism'," *East Asia: An International Quarterly* 18 (2000): 83-84.

¹⁸⁷ Said, *Orientalism*, 223 and 24. Quoted in David Beard and Kenneth Gloag, *Musicology: The Key Concepts* (New York; Routledge, 2005), 128.

By separately examining the creator and the perceiver,¹⁸⁸ one is made from the Western perspective, while the other is created by the Easterner producers. Accordingly, the original meaning of Orientalism was Western Orientalism, and Occidentalism was Eastern Occidentalism.¹⁸⁹ I want to add “Eastern Orientalism”¹⁹⁰ and “Western Occidentalism” to this cross-cultural context. “Western” and “Eastern” indicate the creator’s perspective; for example, Puccini’s *Turandot* is written from the Western perspective, while Wei’s *Chinese Princess Turandot* shows an Eastern perspective. On the other hand, “Orientalism” and “Occidentalism” referred to how it is perceived, because the two are interpreted by perceiver rather than recognized by the creator.

Puccini’s *Turandot* and its reception in the West represent Western Orientalism. When it came to China, the opera demonstrates Western Occidentalism because the Chinese perceived *Turandot* as an Occidental Other. This is not only because *Turandot* is in Western operatic form, but also because the misrepresentation is seen as an offense to Chinese culture. Applied to the two Chinese directors’ production, Wei’s *Chinese Princess Turandot* demonstrates Eastern Occidentalism—it is made by an Easterner and perceived as a defense of Chinese culture by the Chinese.

¹⁸⁸ In this discussion, I use creator to generally include director, composer, and author; and I use perceiver to include viewer, audience, listener, and reader.

¹⁸⁹ The term “Western Orientalism” is also used in previous studies such as in Abdallah Larouo, “Western Orientalism and Liberal Islam: Mutual Distrust?” *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin* 31 (July 1997): 3-10; Ussama Makdisi, “Ottoman Orientalism,” *The American Historical Review* 107 (June 2002): 769; Jill Beaulieu and Mary Roberts, *Orientalism’s Interlocutors: Painting, Architecture, Photography* (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2002), 4.

¹⁹⁰ The term was also used in a conference called “Destination Asia: Eastern Orientalism,” host by Soros Center for Contemporary Art—Almaty in 2008. The theme of this conference was the Western capitalism’s impact in Asian countries in terms of cultural dependency and the Orientalist reflection. Nancy Adajania defines, “Eastern Orientalism is the assumption of such categories as authentic, by the subjects of the Western gaze: either for reasons of self-representation or to capture the ground of cultural uniqueness.” Aliya Sharipbaeva, “Destination Asia: Eastern Orientalism,” Soros Center for Contemporary Art—Almaty, <http://www.scca.kz/en/Destination-conference/conference-project.htm> (accessed February 10, 2010); Nancy Adajania, “*The Intimacy of the Sacred: The Quest for a New Context*,” Soros Center for Contemporary Art—Almaty, <http://www.scca.kz/en/Destination-conference-participants.htm> (accessed January 30, 2009).

Zhang's production, an international collaboration, can be categorized into all the categories due to the combination of Western composer, Eastern director, and both Eastern and Western audiences. In terms of its Western operatic form and the story as origin, it represented Western Orientalism to Western audiences and Western Occidentalism to the Chinese audience. On the other hand, Zhang's manifestation of Chinese culture and his focus on Western audiences reveals Eastern Orientalism: an "Oriental fantasy" made by the Easterner. Lastly, Zhang's production reveals the Eastern Occidentalism, because the Chinese viewed it as "a Western balloon inflated by Chinese breath" rather than "winning any credits for the Chinese."¹⁹¹ Due to the multi-faceted aspects of Zhang's production, he received both negative and positive reviews from Chinese and Western critics.¹⁹²

Authenticity Issues

From Puccini's opera to the two Chinese adaptations, authenticity had been a consistent goal; however, identifying authenticity is a problematic task. Puccini used Chinese folk songs, pentatonicism, and Chinese instruments to create an authentic Chinese sound for *Turandot*. Wei adapted the story to create a more human princess along the lines of what the Chinese would expect; and Zhang spectacularly exhibited Chinese cultural features on stage to signify *Turandot's* Chinese background. Based on all their efforts, whose *Turandot* is authentic? It is difficult to define because of the changing contexts.

The Chinese elements in Puccini's opera cannot authentically signify the Chinese because they were already westernized. As critical studies scholar Ping-hui

¹⁹¹ Bay Fang, "The Real Tragedy of Turandot," *U.S. News & World Report*, September 14, 1998, p. 44 and Chapter IV, 4.

¹⁹² See Chapter V, 12.

Liao asks at the end of his research on Puccini's operas and Orientalism: "If the Chinese melodies are 'phrased' by Puccini, do they not tell us more about the Occident itself than about the Orient...?"¹⁹³ On the other hand, although *Turandot*'s premiere in China was directed by a Chinese rather than Westerners, it was not authentically Chinese still because Zhang exaggerated "Western fantasies of the Chinese other" on stage.¹⁹⁴ Compared to the previous two works, Wei's production was more successful in achieving Chinese authenticity. For Sichuan opera, however, it was an adapted Western repertoire rather than a Chinese original. The problem of authenticity still remains.

Although Wei's version is more authentically Chinese, it is the one that is the most unauthentic to the original source. Authenticity often indicates "some notion of truth and sincerity," according to musicologists David Beard and Kenneth Gloag.¹⁹⁵ The term is generally used in performance when an "authentic performance" conveys the composer's intentions found in the original manuscripts and documentary evidence. The origin of the story of *Turandot* was a Persian tale with *Chinoiserie* rather than a real Chinese story. Thus, the authenticity of *Turandot* should lie in truthfully representing the original story from Nizami or the original plot written by Gozzi. Among all, Wei's adaptation is the least authentic in this aspect. Westerner's reception of Wei's version reveals this issue. Although his innovative revision makes the story of *Turandot* palatable in China, Westerners cannot appreciate his adaptation due to the fact that Wei's *Turandot* was already not the one they were familiar with. *The Economist*

¹⁹³ Ping-hui Liao, "Of Writing Words for Music Which is Already Made: *Madame Butterfly*, *Turandot*, and Orientalism." *Cultural Critique* 16 (1990): 59.

¹⁹⁴ Metzger, 212.

¹⁹⁵ David Beard and Kenneth Gloag, "Authenticity," *Musicology: Key Concepts* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 17.

journalist comments, “Mr. Wei’s point is one of cultural autarky: nobody outside China is in a position to interpret, let alone understand, Chinese culture....”¹⁹⁶ When Wei’s *Turandot* became a more authentic Chinese princess, *Turandot* became unauthentic.

If authenticity is indefinable, why did Puccini, Wei, and Zhang seek it? The answer seems clearer when it comes to business. Opera on Original Site Inc. aimed to set Puccini’s *Turandot* in Beijing as an authentic performance, but it actually reveals Richard Taruskin’s worry of misusing authenticity. Taruskin states:

I had hoped a consensus was forming that to use the word in connection with the performance of music—and especially to define a particular style, manner, or philosophy of performance—is neither description nor critique, but commercial propaganda, the stock-in-trade of press agents and promoters.¹⁹⁷

The authentic setting of *Turandot* in China, apparently, was the promoter’s “stock-in-trade” and Zhang’s commercial propaganda.¹⁹⁸ Zhang advertised his *Turandot* as the authentic production, because the setting was constructed in China. Opera on Original Site Inc. also emphasized its commercial the realization of Puccini’s *Turandot* performing in the Forbidden City, “the environment envisaged by the composer.”¹⁹⁹

“Do we really want to talk about ‘authenticity’ any more?” Taruskin asks.²⁰⁰

The problem to talk about authenticity lies in *Turandot*’s multiple identities: a Persian tale, published in France, adapted by Italian playwright, translated into German, staged as an Italian opera, and revived in China. Even if only focusing on Puccini’s *Turandot*,

¹⁹⁶ The Economist Newspaper, “Grand Opera in China. One Country, Two Turandots,” *The Economist*, September 19, 1998 <http://0-www.lexisnexis.com.maurice.bgsu.edu/hottopics/lnacademic/> (accessed December 20, 2009).

¹⁹⁷ David Beard and Kenneth Gloag, 18.

¹⁹⁸ Also produced *Carmen* in Spain and *Aida* in Egypt.

¹⁹⁹ Opera on Original Site, Inc. “Giacomo Puccini’s *Turandot* in the Forbidden City: an Introduction,” Opera on Original Site, Inc., http://www.turandotonsite.com/frame_tur.html (accessed January 30, 2010).

²⁰⁰ David Beard and Kenneth Gloag, 18.

which Wei and Zhang focused on, it still comprises a complex web. As journalist Angilee Shah concludes that *Turandot*'s homecoming represents "Italians interpreting Chinese, then Chinese interpreting Italians interpreting Chinese."²⁰¹

Hybridity Issues

Even though *Turandot*'s multi-faceted identities blur its authenticity, the hybrid content allows this subject to be popular all over the world. *Turandot* has been historically, culturally, politically, and musically constructed as a hybrid. The origin of *Turandot* already contains hybrids: *The Thousand and One Days* is a collection of Persian tales written by a French writer de la Croix; the story of *Turandot* describes both Tartars and China; and the Chinese princess was created as a heroine who owns both feminine appearance and "masculine" power.²⁰² In Gozzi's play, he incorporated *commedia dell'arte* characters to signify the Venice theatrical tradition into this Persian subject.²⁰³ When it comes to Schiller, he embodied the enlightenment centrality of freedom in the story for bringing *Turandot* to Germany.²⁰⁴

The hybridity is also revealed in the music. When Weber composed the incidental music for Schiller's play, he reused a Chinese melody from Rousseau's *Dictionnaire de musique* (1786), an *Air Chinois*.²⁰⁵ Puccini also incorporated Chinese melodies from J.A. van Aalst's *Chinese Music* and included the Chinese gong to emphasize Chinese colors in Italian opera. In *Turandot*'s homecoming, the three-episode television adaptation mixed Puccini's "*Nessun Dorma*" into Sichuan opera created a

²⁰¹ Angilee Shah, "Orientalism or chinoiserie?," World Press Org., September 2, 2008, <http://www.angileeshah.com/2008/09/02/orientalism-or-chinoiserie/> (accessed February 2, 2010).

²⁰² See Chapter I, 4-9.

²⁰³ See Chapter I, 9-14.

²⁰⁴ See Chapter I, 16.

²⁰⁵ Ashbrook and Powers, 53. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Dictionnaire de Musicque* (Geneva: Minkoff, 1998), Planche N.

musical hybrid.²⁰⁶ The Henan opera adaptation's embracing of a Broadway musical singer into Henan opera demonstrates hybridity as well.²⁰⁷

Turandot's homecoming strongly enhanced the hybridization. Wei's *Chinese Princess Turandot* not only embedded Chinese concepts in the Western story but also brought the Western opera repertoire into Chinese operatic traditions. Undoubtedly, Zhang's production in the Forbidden City expanded the hybrid of the West and the East. The production was made by an international team, which consisted linguistic, cultural, interdisciplinary, and business hybrids. First, the production was done in two languages (Italian and Chinese). Not only could the Italian conductor and the Chinese director not communicate with each other, the Italian singers and chorus also could not understand the Chinese choreographer. As a result, in Allan Miller's documentary *The Turandot Project*, translators obviously played one of the most important roles.²⁰⁸ The language hybrid is also revealed in the program written in three languages: Chinese, Italian, and English. Second, staging Italian opera in a Chinese palace not only visually provides the hybrid image; Zhang's representation of the Ming Dynasty tradition in a modern setting also creates a historical hybrid.

The administrative collaboration of Opera on Original Site Inc., the Chinese Government, and Maggio Musicale Fiorentino represent different forms of hybridity. Each of them had different motivations and goals toward *Turandot's* 1998 premiere. The Chinese government wanted to show its liberality by welcoming Western culture even though *Turandot* misrepresents China. On the other hand, Maggio Musicale

²⁰⁶ See Chapter V, 5.

²⁰⁷ See Chapter III, 5-6.

²⁰⁸ Zubin Mehta and Zhang Yimou, *The Turandot Project*, produced by Margaret Smilow, directed by Alan Miller (New York: Zeitgeist Video, 2002).

Fiorentino desired to introduce and export Italian opera to China, and the OOS Inc. wished to attract both Western and Chinese audiences through this cross-cultural production. While the Chinese representative Zhang Yu stated that the performance was a “successful conversation between the East and the West,” the mayor of Florence pointed out that Florence was Western opera’s origin and praised opera as the highest art. The OOS’s executive officer Michael Ecker, on the other hand, was thankful that the company could witness the historical moment of performing *Turandot* in Beijing.²⁰⁹ The hybridity became even more complex under these exchanges of culture, business, and politics.

The Remaining Riddles

Although no one found the authentic princess, *Turandot* has appealed to worldwide audiences for more than two hundred years in different forms and still remains popular. By exploring *Turandot*’s hybridity, the scopes of Orientalism and Occidentalism are modified, and authenticity is no longer a solvable question. The last question remains: what is the universal appeal of *Turandot*? The mysterious Chinese princess has broken cultural barriers and traveled from Persia, France, Italy, Germany, and to China. She also broke the imaginative barriers of the Occident and the Orient. Even though *Turandot* was scorned for its Orientalist representation of China, the Chinese accepted her and welcomed her home at the end of twentieth century. She is far from being lovely but still makes many people fall in love with her, regardless of time and place. The “universal appeal” of *Turandot* cannot be completely discovered in Western-dominated studies only. Thus, I offer a view that incorporates both American

²⁰⁹ Kii-Ming Lo and Jürgen Maehder, *The Changes of Turandot [du lan duo de tui bian]* (Taiwan: Cultural Speak Publishing Company, 2004), 238, 242, and 253.

and Chinese studies as an example to study *Turandot* in a wider context. The Chinese have experienced *Turandot* since 1995, so studies of *Turandot* have increased tremendously in China. In addition to exploring *Turandot*'s appeal, various aspects of issues such as politics, cultural industry, globalization, and tourism still remain after *Turandot*'s homecoming. On the other hand, Puccini's another Asian-subjected opera *Madama Butterfly* (1898) has experienced a similar revival in Japan—comparative studies needs to be done. To explore all the remaining issues, I hope that later approaches to *Turandot* can be carried out with an eye to both Western and Eastern studies—we may be able to understand the mysterious *Turandot* better in a wider context.

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APPENDIX A

“Tonight No One Shall Sleep [jin ye wu zen zu shue]” from *Chinese Princess Turandot* (Guoguang opera company, 2000)

jin ye wu ren ru shue en - - - huang gong zhen dang
 en - - - huang gong zhen - - - dang - - -
 jin - ye - wu ren ru shue jin ye wu zen zu shue man cheng bei shang
 man cheng bei shang man cheng bei shang
 man cheng bei shang man cheng bei shang a
 liu a - - - jing

ru — yan er — yang —
 ————— wu ru huang gong
 zhui di — wang si — de kuai si — de ji si de — hao shuang hao —
 shuang qing ren lei qing ren sing qing ren si — liang — a —
 — zi hen wo — wo zou huo — ru mo — zhang —
 — zhui qiu — mu — dan — hua — zhong — zhong — wang —
 — you yi zai hua hua bu — fa — wu xin — cha — liu — liu cheng xing —
 — — qian li xun mei mei he — zai — mei — he — zai — — —
 — — — hui tou — kan — zui mei de gu — niang zao zai wo shen pang —

zao zai - wo - shen - oang zui mei de gu - niang zao zai ni shen pang -

zao zai ni - shen pang zao zai ni - shen - pang

tian - - - - - a - - - -

- - - - - kuai gei wo qi - si hui - shen ling -

zhi - cao - - - - - di - - - - - a - - - - -

- - - - - kuai ci wo wu - gu ji ming huan hun

tang rang - liu er zhang - xin hui dao ren shi shang wo yu ta

qing chuan jie bain hao huan xiang

Original Text

jin ye wu ren ru shuei en
 今夜無人入睡 恩
 huang gong jhen dang
 皇宮震盪
 man cheng bei shang
 滿城悲傷
 liu er jing ru yan er yang
 柳兒竟如雁兒樣
 wu ru huang gong zhui di wang
 誤入皇宮墜地亡
 si de kuai
 死得快
 si de ji
 死得急
 si de hao shuang
 死得豪爽

[Tonight no one shall sleep, The palace is shaking, The city is full of sorrow, I Cannot believe that Liù is like the bird, Accidentally entered the palace and fall, Die so soon, Die so suddenly, Die so determinedly.]

qing ren lei
 情人淚
 qing ren xing
 情人醒
 qing ren si liang a
 情人思量阿
 zi hen wo zou huo ru mo zhang
 自恨我走火入魔障
 zhui qiu mu dan hua zhong wang
 追求牡丹花中王
 you yi zai hua hua bu fa
 有意栽花花不發
 wu xin cha liu liu cheng xing
 無心插柳柳成行
 qian li xun mei mei he zai
 千里尋美美何在

[Lover's tears. Lover, wake up. Lover, miss you I hate myself run into the fire and evil. Seeking the Peony, king of flowers. Intend to plant the flower, But it never bloom. Not intentional to plant the willow, And it becomes shade. Traveling thousands of miles to seek the beauty, but where beauty is.]

hui tou kan
 回頭看
 zui mei de gu niang
 最美的姑娘
 zao zai wo shen pang
 早在我身旁
 zui mei de gu niang
 最美的姑娘
 zao zai ni shen pang
 早在你身旁

[When I look back, The most beautiful girl was already beside me. The most beautiful girl was already beside you.]

tian a
 天阿
 kuai gei wo qi si hui sheng ling zhi cao
 快給我起死回生靈芝草
 di a
 地阿
 ci wo wu gu ji ming hai hun tang
 快賜我雞鳴還魂湯
 rang liu er zhong xin hui dao ren shi shang
 讓柳兒重新回到人世上
 wo yu ta qing chun jie bai hao hai xiang
 我與她青春結伴好還鄉

[Oh, sky! Please give me the medicine to bring the dying back now. Oh, earth!
 Please grant me the soup to bring her soul back now. Let Liù come back to the world
 So I can accompany her to go back our hometown.]