

**KIM JONG IL**

**ON THE ART OF OPERA**

WORKING PEOPLE OF THE WHOLE WORLD, UNITE!

**KIM JONG IL**

**ON THE ART OF  
OPERA**

Talk to Creative Workers in the Field  
of Art and Literature  
*September 4-6, 1974*

Three years have passed since the creation and first performance of the revolutionary opera *The Sea of Blood*.

I am delighted to be meeting again you, the creative workers in the field of art and literature, who have, by taking an active part in the opera revolution over recent years, made a significant contribution to the development of opera art, and to be talking to you, recollecting the creative work done in those years.

It was in July 1971 that we adapted the classic drama *The Sea of Blood*, which was created in the flames of the anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle, into a revolutionary opera of our own style, and gave the premiere of it in the presence of the great leader. This was an event of great significance in the development of art and literature in our country.

The creation and public performance of the revolutionary opera *The Sea of Blood* proclaimed to the world the birth of a new style of opera, the *Sea of Blood*-style opera, which is fundamentally different from conventional operas. Since then steady progress has been made in the opera revolution in our country. The creation of the revolutionary opera *The Sea of Blood* was a historic turning point, the breaking of the old pattern that had remained in the field of opera for many years and the ushering in of a new era of revolutionary opera.

In the course of creating the revolutionary opera *The Sea of Blood* we gained valuable experiences and, on the basis of this, staged the revolutionary opera *The Flower Girl* which, in a little over a year, was adapted from the classic drama of the same name; then we created, in succession, the revolutionary operas, *Tell O Forest*, *A True Daughter of the Party* and *Song of Mt. Kumgang*. For their high ideological and noble artistic qualities, the revolutionary operas created in the course of our opera revolution have aroused the great admiration not only of our people but also of the peoples of many other countries across the world. This is a rich fruit of our Party's policy on the opera revolution. The golden age of opera in our country began in the first half of the 1970s.

Having reviewed the successes and experiences gained in the opera revolution, I will speak about some problems arising in further developing opera art.

## **I. THE TIMES AND OPERA**

### **1) THE OPERA REVOLUTION IS A REQUIREMENT OF THE TIMES**

Opera art reflects the times, and its change and development are governed by the era. The operas of the feudal and capitalist days represented and served those periods.

Ours is a new historical era when the popular masses have emerged as the masters of their destiny and of the world and are making history and shaping their own destiny. This period requires a new type of opera to serve the popular masses.

The operas which were created in the exploitative society contain the socio-historical and ideological and artistic limitations of that age, so they do not accord with the thoughts and feelings of our contemporaries who are building socialism and communism, nor do they cater to their cultural needs. Although a number of changes have been evident in operas in the past, they were essentially mere reforms within the bounds of bourgeois opera. The newly-emergent bourgeoisie was opposed to the operas that had been serving feudal lords, so they advocated "human rights" and "liberty". However, when they themselves became the ruling class, they made opera serve those who were rich. By preaching a longing for the good old days and class cooperation by means of opera, the successive ruling classes used it as a means of pacifying the discontent of the people with the exploitative system. Therefore, opera remained for a long time as a form of entertainment and a means of money-making, and a tool for spreading illusions about emperors, God, power and gold.

From the artistic point of view, the operas of bygone days do not accord with the requirements of the masses of our times. The forms and methods of portrayal of conventional operas, which were made to cater to the tastes of the exploiting classes, contain many aspects

that do not appeal to the tastes and feelings of the people of our times. Our people today do not like amorphous lyrics, complicated rhythms, recitatives that are neither songs nor speeches, outmoded stage-settings and other stereotyped methods of portrayal. Without eliminating such outmoded patterns we cannot produce a true opera that reflects the aspirations and needs of the masses. In order to overcome the socio-historical, ideological and artistic limitations of opera art and create an opera of a new style that reflects the aspirations and desires of the people of the Juche age, we must conduct a revolution in all domains of opera—the content and form, the system and method of creation.

Conducting a revolution in opera is also a pressing need for the development of art and literature in our country. Opera is a mixed art that integrates poems, music, dance and fine arts. On the basis of music it presents to the people a beautiful and noble life and teaches them a lot about their life and struggle. That is why everyone likes opera. As a mixed art that incorporates all the forms of theatrical art it constitutes a criterion for evaluating the level of a country's art and has a major effect on developing theatrical art in general.

In accordance with the line of building Juche national culture, strenuous efforts were made in our country after liberation to create a new style of national opera which is national in form and democratic in content and, in the course of this, operas of various forms were created. These operas, being products of their own efforts and talents, were a source of pride for our artists who had not created even one opera worth mentioning before liberation due to the colonial policy of obliterating our national culture pursued by the Japanese imperialists. However, the operas produced during the periods of peaceful, democratic development, the Fatherland Liberation War and postwar reconstruction were based mainly on legends or historical tales, and their forms failed to cater to the tastes and sentiments of our people in many respects.

The reason for the defects revealed in the creation of national operas in the past was that some artists and writers were steeped in outdated ideas. Those who retained the tendency to return to the past, claiming that the national opera should, as a matter of course, be

ChangGuk (a classical Korean opera—Tr.) consisting of phansori<sup>1</sup>, were opposed to modernizing ChangGuk as required by the period; those who were infected with flunkeyism and dogmatism, claiming that operas should naturally be of a Western style, tried to copy the pattern of Western operas. They did not perceive the magnificent reality of the Chollima age<sup>2</sup> vibrant with miraculous events and innovations, but tried to produce operas which dealt only with the lives of emperors and princesses of the past or love affairs.

In postwar years when flunkeyism, dogmatism and the tendency to return to the past were rife, our Party launched a powerful struggle to establish Juche in all fields of art and literature, including opera. In the course of this struggle the tendency to deal exclusively with mythical, legendary and historical themes was overcome and operas began to depict the lives of our people who were working for the revolution and socialist construction. The replacement of the anachronistically obsolete themes, that has suited the period when people wore horsehair hats and rode donkeys, with socialist events in operas marked a milestone in the development of art and literature in our country.

However, no such change as took place in the content of opera was evident in its form. Because still then the creative workers considered it impossible to produce operas without arias or recitatives, nobody thought of effecting a radical change in the form of opera. In consequence, although an innovation had been made in the content of opera, its form still remained within the framework of the old pattern. This resulted in a discrepancy between the content and the form. Under the Sunshine, produced by the then State Opera Troupe, for instance, was outmoded in its form in spite of its revolutionary content.

In art the form must undergo continuous change to suit its new content. As the form expresses the content and is determined by it, it should, if it does not agree with the new content, be changed accordingly. Only through the unity of content and form in art can the ideological and artistic qualities be integrated properly. That is why a revolution had to be effected in the form of opera.

An opera revolution to break the old pattern of conventional opera and create a new style of opera was a pressing demand that brooked no further delay. The opera of a new style could only be completed when the old pattern, which had been polished and hardened in a way best suited to the tastes and feelings of the exploiting classes over a long period, was discarded and a new form was created to suit the socialist content.

Our Party put forward the policy of doing away with everything obsolete that suited the interests and tastes of the exploiting classes in all fields of art and literature and of building Juche art and literature which agreed with the requirements of our age and with the nature of the working class, and conducted a revolution firstly in the sphere of the cinema, one of the powerful means of educating the masses, and then in the sphere of the opera.

## **2) PRINCIPLES MUST BE OBSERVED IN THE OPERA REVOLUTION**

Sound principles are necessary in the opera revolution. Although it is a pressing need of the age, the opera revolution cannot be carried out successfully unless it is guided by sound principles. In order to effect a revolution in opera and create operas which really meet the aspirations and needs of the people and age, the undertaking must be guided strictly by revolutionary principles.

Establishing Juche in opera art is a fundamental principle that must always be adhered to in the opera revolution.

Establishing Juche in opera art means solving all the problems relating to the creation of operas to meet the interests of the revolution in one's own country and of one's own people and to suit the specific situation in one's own country and the sentiments of one's nation.

Our opera art must be subordinated to the interests of the Korean revolution and contribute to it. Only opera art which resolutely champions the interests of the revolution and implements Party lines can be loved by the people and become a powerful weapon for encouraging them in the revolution and construction.

Operas must be created to suit the specific situation in one's country and to accord with the feelings of one's people. Socio-historical conditions vary from country to country and so do the people's feelings and tastes. Those who create operas must have a good knowledge of the specific situation in their country and the sentiments of their nation and depict them accurately. In this way they will truthfully describe the lives of people who are shaping their destiny independently and creatively, in an artistic form that people like and enjoy.

In order to establish Juche in opera, all the problems involved in the creation of opera must be solved creatively on an independent basis.

Art and literature are a creative undertaking to portray independent and creative people and their lives. All problems in the creation of art and literature must be solved independently and creatively to conform with the tastes and feelings of one's people and to serve the interests of the revolution in one's own country and of one's own people. The opera revolution is something no one has ever undertaken before. There was no ready-made theory aspects of which we could adopt for our opera revolution. We had to solve all the problems that arose in the opera revolution in our own way according to our own beliefs and judgement and on an independent and creative basis.

In order to establish Juche in opera art, we must express socialist content in national form. This means changing the content and form of opera as required by the Juche idea. In other words, we must do away with the outmoded, reactionary content and form of the past which catered to the tastes of the exploiting classes and replace them with content which is revolutionary and socialist and deals with the people's struggle to realize their independence. We must also create popular and national forms suited to the tastes and feelings of the people of our age.

The main aspect of the innovation of the content and form of opera is the innovation of the content. The value of an opera is determined by its content. No matter how gorgeous the stage is and no matter how well the singers sing, an opera with poor content



cannot win the acclamation of the audience. An opera with sound and noble content alone is entitled to be one for the people and can inspire them to the creation of a new life.

Our opera art has a noble mission to assist in the modelling of the whole society on the Juche idea. In order to perform the noble mission it has assumed before the times and the revolution, above all its content must be revolutionary and popular.

Our people's life and struggle are full of events that should be dealt with by operas. Important problems in our people's struggle for national liberation, class emancipation, man's emancipation and other endeavours to realize independence must be raised and solved in the people's interests. Only then can our operas, as Juche humanics contributing to the accomplishment of the cause of independence for the popular masses, fulfil its duty to the times.

If an opera is to be revolutionary and popular it must meet the requirements of the present era and accord with the thoughts and feelings of the people.

To this end, it must represent the people's lives and struggle properly as an art which is struggling together with the people and advancing with the times.

An opera can deal with a legend or an historical event. Regardless of the life and the period it is based upon, it must contribute to teaching our contemporaries how to live, work and fight.

We must ensure that the content of opera is completely free from outmoded elements which are feudalistic and capitalistic and that it is revolutionary and popular in all aspects so that it contributes to the struggle to realize independence for the popular masses.

The form of opera must also be transformed to suit the aesthetic tastes of the people. A work of progressive and revolutionary art and literature is characterized by perfect unity between a sound content and a refined form that accord with the requirements of the period and the people's aspirations. However excellent its content is, art whose form does not agree with the people's aspirations and desires has no value whatsoever. Only opera in which revolutionary and socialist content is in harmony with elegant, beautiful national form can be opera truly for the people.

Our opera is for the Party, for the working class, and for the people, and serves them. Loyalty to the Party, to the working class and to the people is the lifeblood of our opera. If opera is devoid of this loyalty, it has no lifeblood. In the creation of operas we must steadfastly adhere to the principle of loyalty to the Party, to the working class and to the people.

In order to observe this principle in the creation of operas, we must embody in operas the Party's lines and policies correctly and portray our reality, in which the Party's policies are embodied, truthfully. In addition, we must establish the line of the working class correctly in the creation of operas. If not, it would be impossible to produce works that represent the interests and aspirations of the working class. Whatever themes we may deal with in the operas we produce, we must hold fast to the principle of loyalty to the Party and to the working class.

Adhering to the principle of loyalty to the people is an important guarantee for ensuring that an opera truly serves the people. In order to hold fast to this principle in the creation of operas, the lives of people who aspire to independence should be portrayed realistically and profoundly in a form they can understand easily and accept willingly. However excellent its content is, an opera the form of which is outdated, complicated and incomprehensible to the people cannot be loved by them. The operas of the past were not loved by the people both because their content was anti-popular and particularly because they took the form of arias or recitatives which were unattractive and incomprehensible to our people.

For an opera to be popular, arias and recitatives must be replaced by popular songs and orchestral music which are comprehensible to everyone and capable of being sung by everyone.

Some people say that popular songs and orchestral music reduce the artistic quality of operas. Such people are opposed to art for the people. Being opposed to popular songs allegedly for the sake of artistic quality is an expression of the tendency towards art for art's sake. Genuine art is popular art. Only an opera that has noble content harmonized with a popular form of music, such as stanzaic songs, can be understood easily and loved by the people.

If an opera is to accord with the emotions and aesthetic tastes of the popular masses, it must accurately reflect national characteristics. The characteristics of different nations are based on their differences in thoughts and feelings, way of life, culture and customs. For that reason, for art and literature to portray life realistically they must reflect national characteristics, and these find peculiar expression in the life of the people of that country.

Depicting our people's life and the national feelings truthfully is a basic method of reflecting our national characteristics. In order to give proper operatic expression to our national characteristics, we must sustain our people's national life and feelings evolved over a long historical course and realistically describe our people's beautiful and noble mental and moral traits and worthwhile life that are being formed in the course of conducting the revolution and construction. Along with this, we must discover and make the best use of the melodies of folk songs and the movement patterns of folk dance created and refined by our people over the ages, develop our national musical instruments and further perfect singing and the playing of instruments in our own style. In the field of stage art, too, we must introduce the latest achievements of modern science and technology while preserving our national stage art, and thus present a fresh operatic stage.

Combining ideological quality and artistic quality is an important principle in the creation of operas. Opera art, whose mission is to educate people in a revolutionary way, should be not only high in ideological quality but also high in artistic quality. An opera with high ideological quality but low artistic quality or vice versa cannot fulfil its function of cognition and education. While conducting the opera revolution, we boldly smashed the outdated pattern of conventional operas and created operas of a new type, Sea of Blood-style operas in which the ideological and artistic qualities are in perfect harmony.

In the creation of operas the principles of the speed campaign<sup>3</sup> and collectivism must be rigidly maintained.

It is only when creative workers and artists, in support of the policy of the speed campaign set by the Party, give priority to

political work at each stage of their creative work and launch a lightning operation<sup>4</sup> and employ finish-one-by-one tactics, that they can produce perfect operas in a short time. Our practical experience in the opera revolution tells us clearly that conducting the speed campaign is a revolutionary principle of doing creative work which ensures the highest level of ideological and artistic qualities of works of art and literature and an extremely rapid development of art and literature, as the situation demands.

The principle of collectivism ensures that the collective carries out all tasks, however difficult, by its own efforts, helping and leading one another forward under the communist slogan of “One for all and all for one!” and that the people undergo steady, revolutionary training in the course of this. By applying the principle of collectivism in the creation of operas, creative workers and artists must strengthen the ideological unity and cohesion of the collective, transform themselves into revolutionaries and assimilate themselves to the working class.

### **3) THE SEA OF BLOOD-STYLE OPERA IS AN OPERA OF A NEW STYLE**

There is a variety of operatic styles. Operatic style is the manner and form in which songs and orchestra and various other means of portrayal are employed in creating an opera. Different operatic styles are determined according to which means of portrayal is employed and how it is used.

Operatic styles have changed according to the times and nation. Within the limitations of ideology and the standard of music and art of the period, they have been influenced by the cultural traditions, sentiments and aesthetic tastes of nations. ChangGuk that was produced in our country in the past was different from the Beijing opera and Western opera. The style of creation of art and literature and national characteristics are different matters, but they are closely related. Even the same style of art is adopted and employed in different ways by different nations.

Different social classes also have different effects on the characteristics of the style of opera. Just as different classes have different attitudes towards life and different views on it, so their manners and forms of representing life by means of art are different.

Since the operatic style is governed by the period, assumes national characteristics and follows the requirements of classes, we should naturally create a new style of opera which conforms with the requirements of our times, our people's aspirations and the intrinsic nature of the working class. The operatic style of feudalism or capitalism cannot serve the creation of operas for the working class who are now building socialism and communism, nor can the imitation of foreign things help in producing operas that cater to the aesthetic tastes and feelings of our people.

We must transform and develop opera art in our own way as we do when solving the problems that arise in the other fields of the revolution and construction.

In order to develop opera in our own fashion, we must free ourselves from the Western style of opera and create a new style which accords with the characteristics of our nation and suits the aesthetic tastes of our people today.

By setting the policy of conducting the opera revolution and working hard to create operas of our own style, we have produced a perfect revolutionary opera, *The Sea of Blood*, an adaptation of the classic, dramatic masterpiece of the same name. This new revolutionary opera, which has been produced in our own fashion and form, is evoking a positive response from our people and the peoples of many other countries.

All the songs in *Sea of Blood*-style operas are composed in stanzas. The sweeping introduction of the stanzaic form was the turning point in eliminating the outmoded, anti-popular elements of the operas of the past and creating original operas in our own way. The stanzaic composition of all opera songs provides the possibility of portraying the ideological content in great depth and breadth through a succinct structure and making the songs beautiful and easy to sing. In conventional operas arias and recitatives were regarded as a basic means of portrayal, and it was considered impossible, without

arias and recitatives, to link the music and the drama and create beautiful and refined operas.

Although opera is an art which combines music and drama, songs play a fundamental role in making opera art a beautiful and noble art. However, establishing the relations between characters and weaving the drama with recitatives, which are difficult to sing and awkward to listen to, does not conform with our people's tastes and feelings.

Songs must always serve the people, and they should be composed in such a way that anybody can understand and sing them. Art for art's sake is pointless. In order to make opera art a truly popular art, we must discard the recitative and make all operatic songs stanzaic. In Sea of Blood-style operas not only the recitatives but also the arias and all other songs have been replaced by stanzaic songs.

Introducing stanzaic songs is important in improving the ideological and artistic qualities of an opera. Opera music is valuable in that it expresses noble content in beautiful melodies and touches the people's heartstrings. Because a stanzaic song integrates poetic words and beautiful melodies, it can express the characters' thoughts and feelings intensively in a simpler structure than an aria or a recitative. A stanzaic song can express the characters' thoughts, feelings and psychological state delicately, ensure the effective depiction of the situation that surrounds them, and provide freedom of interaction between characters. As you can see, stanzaic songs can improve the ideological and artistic qualities of a work by fulfilling functions which were beyond the capability of the vocal music of conventional operas.

The introduction of stanzaic songs into opera music is of great significance in enhancing the popular character of operas, in that these songs are simple and comprehensible to the people. In our new operas, all the songs are composed in stanzas which are beautiful, gentle and overflowing with national sentiments, so everyone enjoys singing these songs.

In Sea of Blood-style operas the pangchang (off-stage song—Tr.) has been introduced as an important means of operatic portrayal. The introduction of the pangchang is another change in the development

of operas. The pangchang plays an important role in depicting the events taking place on the stage and the characters' thoughts and feelings. It was a rule in conventional operas to organize and develop the drama only through songs sung by the characters and orchestral music. The newly-created pangchang describes the times, situation and the inmost world and actions of the characters in an objective way, conveys the inmost thoughts and feelings of the characters, provides links between the stage and the audience, and helps the characters to perform well. In addition it forms a grand chorus with the song of the character on the stage, and in some cases the members of the pangchang group appear on the stage and take an active part in the drama. The introduction of the pangchang has provided our operas with a powerful means of portrayal not present in the operas of the past and has broadened the scope of operatic portrayal beyond measure.

Dance is an indispensable means of portrayal in Sea of Blood-style operas. Although there were dances in the operas of the past, they were not interwoven closely with the storyline but appeared on the stage, as incidental to a scene. So they were not used as an indispensable means of portrayal. In our new operas, however, dance, as an essential element of portrayal which is interwoven closely with the storyline, has become a powerful means of portrayal that describes the background of the times, the thoughts and feelings of the principal character and all the characters' aspirations and desires.

In Sea of Blood-style operas, the role of stage art has also changed. Our new stage art combining sides, lighting and setting has broken the old pattern of stage setting that had been hardened over a long period of time. In the past it was considered possible to produce operas only with stage settings which described life through a few stereotyped acts and scenes. That was why, although they admitted the need for realistic settings portraying the environment of the characters, creative workers portrayed the surroundings in static state only through the back part of the stage and the background and made it a rule that breaks must occur between acts, thus interrupting the drama. Sea of Blood-style operas have smashed the previous idea of

fixed stage settings and depict the environment realistically in three dimensions, unfolding the flow of the change of environment without interruption and organizing the drama in such a way as to give the audience the impression of real life.

Sea of Blood-style operas have also opened up a new phase in dramaturgy. The new operas employ stanzaic songs, capable of admirably expressing the characters' thoughts and feelings in a complete musical image, as the main means of musical dramaturgy, and these not only help to describe characters but also make it easy for the audience to understand the story, the relations between the characters and the flow of the drama. Moreover the music, acting, dance, stage art and all the other means of portrayal are subordinated to describing the characters in conformity with the logic of life, and their functions and roles are enhanced considerably, so that the level of artistic quality of operas can be raised still higher. This shows that Sea of Blood-style operas are totally different from the operas of the past which, regarding the recitative as a means of musical dramaturgy, gave prominence to the dramatic development of the music, which depended on leitmotiv.

In our new operas all the means of portrayal are combined and harmonized on the basis of stanzaic songs. Because the lyrics in the librettos of the new style of operas are all composed in a fixed form of verse, all the music is stanzaic. Consequently, the acting of the characters as well as the dance is tuned to the music, and the stage settings and the backgrounds change with the flow of the songs. The unity of orchestra, dance and stage settings on the basis of stanzaic songs, and the development of the drama accompanied by dancing and the change of the scenes on the basis of stanzaic songs, represent precisely the Sea of Blood-style of opera. The Sea of Blood-style of opera consisting of stanzaic songs and the pangchang of our own fashion, and dancing and stage art of our own style constitutes a completely new style of opera never seen before in the history of opera.

We must consolidate the successes achieved in the creation of new operas, Sea of Blood-style operas, and continue to develop them.



## **2. THE LIBRETTO**

### **1) THE LIBRETTO IS THE IDEOLOGICAL AND ARTISTIC BASIS OF AN OPERA**

An excellent libretto is essential for the creation of an opera which touches the people's heartstrings.

The seed and theme of an opera, and its characters and storyline, are all indicated in the libretto; the music, dance and stage art, too, are determined by the libretto. Only when a valuable subject is dealt with in a libretto and portrayed skilfully in a way best suited to the characteristics of opera can, on this basis, an opera of high ideological and artistic qualities be created. You must not rely solely on the music and neglect the libretto simply because opera is an art based on music. It was a wrong tendency of the era when opera was regarded as a means of pleasure to give prominence to a few pieces of music while neglecting the libretto.

Writers must have a correct understanding of the importance of the libretto in the creation of opera and concentrate their efforts on writing good librettos.

Operas make an active contribution to the ideological and aesthetic education of people. Therefore, librettos must be deep and rich in their content. Only such librettos can provide the soil for creative thinking and imagination as well as the basis of wonderful songs, orchestral music, dances and stage art.

In order to create a libretto with deep and rich ideological content, the seed of the work must be well selected.

As the nucleus of a work, the seed guarantees its ideological and artistic value. The depth of the ideological content and the educational value of a libretto depend on the seed. In creative work, therefore, the main attention must always be paid to the selection of the right seed. If a librettist starts to write without selecting a proper seed, mixing up the seed and the theme, he cannot produce a good libretto.

The seed of a work in itself is not a theme or a thought but the ideological kernel which underlies and determines them. Only through his study and analysis of life from his class position and his aesthetic point of view can a writer grasp an ideological kernel of life which inspires him to creation: that is the seed. If the writer, failing to grasp the ideological kernel of life, regards a sphere of life or some event in life as his theme and starts writing on the basis of that, he cannot produce a work with a proper seed.

Writers must eliminate the practice of identifying the seed with the theme or of writing after selecting an unworthy seed. They must develop their creative work in depth only when they have chosen a meaningful seed and fully grasped its meaning.

The struggle and life of our people, who are working for the revolution and construction, contain a lot of meaningful seeds that deserve operatic depiction. Many seeds for the creation of operas of high ideological and artistic qualities can be found in the heroic struggle of the anti-Japanese revolutionary fighters, who waged an arduous struggle for many years for the liberation of the fatherland, the heroic struggle of the valiant soldiers of our People's Army and our people who, having inherited the brilliant revolutionary traditions of the anti-Japanese struggle, fought bravely during the Fatherland Liberation War, and in today's magnificent reality of advancing in the spirit of Chollima spurred on by the speed campaign and in our people's worthwhile life. Writers must penetrate the reality and select seeds for operas that can provide the people with revolutionary education.

In selecting seeds it is important on which stand and with what attitude a writer views life and how he studies it. He must not neglect the life of an ordinary man or a small event in selecting a meaningful seed, while paying attention only to the life of a famous man or a major event. Valuable seeds can be found not only in the life of a famous man or a major event but also in the life of an ordinary man or in a small event. If the life of an ordinary man reflects the needs of the period and the people's aspirations, it is sure to contain the meaningful ideological kernel of life.

The revolutionary opera *The Flower Girl* exposes the contradictions of the exploitative society through the life of Kkotpun and her family, who are forced to live the life of servants for generations on account of two mal of foxtail millet which they owe to a landlord. The opera is implanted with a profound seed that her flower basket of sorrow and filial duty becomes the flower basket of struggle and revolution. Precisely from this seed is derived the theme of the destiny of a nation that has lost its sovereignty and is living in misery. The development of this theme clarifies the idea that revolution is the only way to liberate one's nation and oneself. As you see, the seed of the revolutionary opera *The Flower Girl* is meaningful and profound, but the life which elucidates the seed is commonplace. It could be found everywhere in our country's rural areas before liberation.

Experience tells us that you must not try to find seeds only in important lives or major events simply because the seeds of works should be of great social significance.

Works of art and literature can and must portray gigantic historical events and the lives of well-known men. Even in that case, a philosophical seed must be selected from concrete and realistic events and described in depth from various angles. Only then is it possible to reach a momentous conclusion and clarify a profound thought.

Whether the event depicted in an opera is big or small and whether the event is contemporary or historical, the seed must always contain worthy human problems raised in life as well as the aspirations and desires of the people. In other words, the seed of an opera must be capable of providing a solution to the problem of the destiny of the popular masses who are struggling for an independent and creative life and to the problems of national liberation, class emancipation and man's freedom. In all cases only a seed which can give a profound answer to the question of the destiny of an independent man and his political integrity can provide a definite guarantee for the creation of an opera of high ideological quality and noble artistic value.

In order to write a libretto with profound and rich ideological content, it is essential to depict the personalities of the principal and other characters skilfully.

The personality of a character is fundamental to the development of the seed. All the means of portrayal, such as the event, conflict, storyline and composition, play an important role in the development of the seed but, of all these, the depiction of their personalities, especially the characterization of the hero, is decisive. The principal character is essential for the development of the seed. For that reason, characterization must naturally be focussed on the hero. The seed can come into full bloom only when the relations between the characters are properly established around the hero, when the line of action of all the characters is linked closely with that of the hero, and when their personalities are depicted well in accordance with the logic of life.

A contemporary hero who appears in a work of art or literature must be a typical, independent and creative man who lives and works with an attitude befitting the master of the revolution and construction. The time is gone when the feudal emperors, aristocrats and millionaires were given prominence in operas.

Ours is an era when the popular masses are struggling to defend independence. Operas of our era must raise the question of man's independence and of independent man, and give a full answer to the question of people's political integrity through a typical man who shapes his own destiny independently and creatively.

In order to write a libretto with profound and rich ideological content, you must write it to suit the characteristics of opera.

For this, the storyline must be solid and yet concise.

Each genre of art has its peculiar way of describing life. Like cinema and drama, opera is an art which portrays life dramatically, but the method of weaving the storyline is different.

In an opera it is difficult to establish many storylines and stage a lot of scenes as in a film or in a drama. Certainly, Sea of Blood-style operas employ the pangchang and a new stage art which make it possible to portray many aspects of life in great breadth. But this does not allow a freedom to describe life without the limitations of

time and place as in a film or novel. Since opera is an art which describes life by means of music, the plot must be composed properly and the storyline woven solidly and yet in a concise manner so as to deal with life concisely and intensively.

Weaving a solid and concise storyline means composing the drama in a way that vividly shows the characters' personalities and the process of the development of the relations between them. The storyline is not an array of various aspects of life, nor is it a mere connection of events. It is the process of the inevitable development of the characters' personalities and life. Only when the storyline is solid and concise can the opera express its theme and thought clearly and weave the drama musically. If the storyline lacks solidness and is confused by various aspects of life and events, the drama will be desultory and entangling, and the musical representation will be difficult. Since the clarity of dramatic structure depends on how the storyline is woven, the storyline must be solid and concise, as required by the characteristics of opera.

The storyline must not include every event and episode simply because they are interesting. The plot of an opera must be made up of only such selected events and episodes as essential for elucidating the theme and thought, for describing the characters' personalities and their lives and for describing the relationship between them. This is the way to compose a plot properly.

In order to compose a storyline for an opera, the major event must be selected and combined with other events carefully.

The major event is the basis on which the lines of action of the principal and other characters are linked, the relationship between them established and the conflicts developed. It acts directly on elucidating the theme and thought of a work. Only when the selected events spread from the trunk of the major event like tree branches growing from a single trunk can the storyline be compact. If the plot is a mechanical assembly of different events, then the story is incoherent, and the drama cannot be realistic and dynamic.

In order to weld the major event and other events harmoniously in the storyline, the relations between the characters centring around the major event must be established properly and co-ordinated with the

relations between the characters around the other events, and then woven to conform with the logic of life. The storyline unfolds with the establishment and development of the relations between the characters in the course of the occurrence and development of events, so the composition should be done in such a way that the relations between the characters and the process of the development of their personalities make up the full storyline.

Confrontation and struggle between the characters who are in contradiction are the motive force developing the storyline.

A proper establishment of the relations between the positive and negative characters and a skilful arrangement of these relations can portray their conflicts and struggle clearly and propel the storyline dynamically and in a tense atmosphere. The stronger the desire of the positive and negative characters to achieve their ends, the more intense their confrontation and struggle can be, and the greater momentum the storyline can gain. Whether or not the confrontation and conflict are sharp depends on the social relations they represent. The confrontation which represents an antagonistic social relationship should be sharp, but the confrontation which represents the lives of the working people in a socialist society should not be extreme. Under certain circumstances strongly dramatic works can be produced even though they do not contain any direct confrontation or clash between positive and negative characters. It is old-fashioned dramaturgy to require sharp antagonism and conflict without considering specific social relations.

The storyline of an opera must be dramatic, elastic and tense. In other words, the dramatic sequence must not distract the audience from the opera.

To this end, the characters must be closely interrelated and their relations tinged with emotions and variety in the course of the dramatic development, until the climax is reached.

The climax is the moment when a qualitative change takes place in the characters' personalities and in the dramatic development; it is the point where the conflicts culminate in an intensive exposition of the theme and thought of the work. When composing a storyline, the writer must calculate accurately where to place the climax and how

to bring the dramatic tension to a head. When the climax coincides with the critical point of the contradiction as an inevitable consequence of the life and events, so far, the storyline will be automatically elastic and tense.

For the storyline to be woven in this way, the emotions must be arranged well.

We cannot think of the organization of the drama apart from the organization of emotions. Particularly in operas events can be shown emotionally only when they develop along the line of the emotions of the characters. No matter how acute the conflicts involved in the events are and how serious the action is, it is difficult to make them impressive unless the characters' emotional experience of the events and the emotions on which the action is based are described delicately. It is only when emotions of various colours that flow out from the experiences of the characters in every scene and at every moment of the development of the drama are represented delicately that the storyline can be elastic and tense and that the organization of the drama can be a delicate organization of emotion.

For the dramatic organization to correspond with the emotional organization, the scenes must be established and developed along the line of the emotions of the characters. Then, the emotions of the songs can be sustained and the emotions of the scenes strengthened. Opera songs can overflow with emotions only when they are based on the accumulation of the characters' emotions; and the scenes can be full of emotions to suit the characteristics of the opera only when they are established and developed along the line of the characters' emotions.

Realistic dramatic composition in line with the developing storyline is an important factor in making dramatic delineation delicate emotional delineation. Dramatism emanates from the acuteness of the conflicts involved in the events and from the depth of the characters' experience of that acuteness. The aim of the realistic composition of drama is always to draw the audience deep into the world of the production so that they can digest the emotional content of the opera still better. However, the tension of the events must not be stepped up artificially, nor the characters' experience

emphasized illogically. Artificial tension and seriousness have nothing in common with realistic dramatism. Dramatism must be created in accordance with the logic of life and emotions, and not for its own sake. In order to achieve realistic dramatism, the characters' experience of the events must be depicted in depth.

In an opera the description of life must be delicate and rich, while the storyline should be compact and concise.

The delicate and rich description of life can show the characters' personalities and events in sharp contrast and in a variety of ways so as to strengthen the drama.

Not everything should be depicted in song simply because opera art depicts life musically. Songs emanate from life and they must always depict life. Songs divorced from life are of no significance. Particularly in operatic portrayal, one is liable to lean towards music and neglect the depiction of life. That is why attention must be paid to describing life delicately and richly. The more delicately and richly an opera depicts life, the more deeply and the more broadly it can portray the characters' psychological world and the stronger impression it can make on the audience.

A delicate and rich depiction of life is also needed to give dramatic tension to the storyline. Such a depiction can portray the characters' personalities and events in sharp contrast and from various angles, exposing contradictions more clearly and, accordingly, making the story dramatic. Since a varied and rich life is a prerequisite for a dramatic and interesting storyline, the writer must always strive to depict life in all its delicacy and depth in line with the development of the drama.

A delicate and rich depiction of life is also important in describing historical backgrounds truthfully. Various aspects of life portrayed in all its delicacy and in all its richness can provide vivid and realistic historical backgrounds in all fields of politics, the economy, culture and morality.

The revolutionary opera *The Sea of Blood* describes the historical background of the 1930s truthfully because the portrayal of the life of the heroine's family is not confined to the bounds of family affairs but covers a broad field of politics, the economy, the military and



culture, while exposing the true nature of society at that time. It is precisely because this opera describes life in this way that it convincingly proves the truth of the revolution that no force can check the might of the people who have risen up in the struggle under the banner of independence. The aim of such a depiction of life is, in the long run, to give the people a correct understanding of life and show them the way to lead a worthwhile life. Therefore, life which is described in an opera must always contain important human affairs and embody a beautiful, noble and progressive ideal.

In order to describe life in all its delicacy and in all its richness it must be portrayed in detail. This means that life is fully explored in various aspects and described delicately. Life comprises political, economic and cultural activities. Various aspects of life corresponding to the dramatic situation and moments should be explored from various angles and depicted delicately; only then can the opera give people a correct picture of life. If life is shown without details, it is possible neither to represent it in its concrete richness, nor to make the characters animated and provide a broad picture of the historical background and social system.

In portraying the details of life, the actions of characters and the situation surrounding them must interrelate properly. Since an opera depicts life through the characters' actions on the stage, the situation and actions must not be represented separately. In theatrical art, the actions of the characters must always fit in with the situation. This means that in opera the situation should not be explained ahead of the actions, nor should actions that do not accord with the situation be depicted. Dramatic interest is not aroused by the results of the events or actions, but by the life that leads to the results and by the clarification of the characters' destiny in the process of life. If the situation is explained ahead of the actions, the drama showing the characters' destiny will be revealed too early, and the characters' actions related to the situation will naturally be explanatory. If the characters' actions take place out of context, the life depicting the characters' personalities will not be convincing and the development of the drama will creak, with the result that, ultimately, the whole representation will be unrealistic.

In order to write a libretto that conforms with the characteristics of opera, every means of operatic portrayal must be used in such a way that it fully performs its function and role. Writing a libretto in this manner is an important guarantee for improving the ideological and artistic qualities of the opera. Song, speech and dance are important means of operatic portrayal. The writer must compose a libretto which, by means of songs, the basic means of operatic portrayal, depicts the personalities of the hero and other characters and develops the seed in depth. To this end, he must determine the exact content and form of the songs in each scene as well as the way in which the songs can be connected from scene to scene in keeping with the development of the drama.

When composing songs for a libretto, the characters' emotions must be built up carefully while the basis of the life that produces the songs is laid so that the built-up emotions burst out in song in accordance with the logic of the personality and the dramatic situation. If the drama is set with songs monotonously and if the libretto is written in the manner of simply connecting one song to another, then it can be nothing more than a type of variety performance of some solos, vocal ensembles and choruses.

In an opera the songs must be the main element and, at the same time, speeches and dances must be used where necessary. A few spoken words rather than a song can make some scenes realistic, and communicate the meaning more clearly than a song; in some scenes a dance rather than a song or a speech will show the life emotionally and make the dramatic sequence natural. Art can impress the people only when it depicts life truthfully. In a libretto everything must be calculated properly from the beginning and the drama be woven in accordance with the characters' personalities and the logic of life.

A libretto must be perfect from the literary point of view. Only such a libretto can lead the work of the composer and other members of the creative group in the right direction and firmly guarantee the ideological and artistic qualities of the opera. In a libretto the lyrics of songs must be poetic, the speeches meaningful and the words that describe the time and place of the events and the situation and behaviour of characters depictive.

## **2) LYRICS MUST BE POETIC**

The lyrics, as the ideological and artistic basis of songs, are a factor determining the ideological content and artistic value of an opera.

In opera, songs are the means of portrayal which directly expresses the characters' thoughts and feelings in detail, describes life and develops the drama. The lyrics are the main element of a song. Songs dealing with the same subject can be good or bad, depending on their lyrics.

Excellent lyrics are a prerequisite for excellent music. Excellent lyrics are those which induce one to deep thought when listening to them, and which become a song when recited because of their profound meaning and fine portrayal. Lyrics should be meaningful, plain and rhythmical so that they can easily be set to music.

Lyrics must be profound in their ideological content.

It is only when the lyrics have deep ideological content that the story of the opera can be unfolded impressively and the characters' spiritual world be elucidated profoundly. The lyrics of opera songs must contain what the characters think and feel in their mutual relations and what they see, hear and feel in the course of their lives. The librettist can only write lyrics with profound meaning when he explores the characters' inmost world revealed in their mutual relations and in the course of their lives. The lyrics must never contain feelings of characters that are simple or what can be understood clearly from their actions.

The lyrics of opera songs may vary with the requirements of the seed, the characters' personalities and the situation in the scenes; but in general they must represent man's aspirations and desire for an independent and creative life, his strong will to achieve it, his hopes, optimism and other significant elements, all on a high poetic level.

Highly poetic portrayal is the main requirement for lyrics. Such portrayal is the librettist's original discovery based on his passion for life and his philosophical contemplation of the period and human beings. A highly poetic portrayal can only be created when a

profound idea is portrayed with warm passion and rich emotion. Noble thoughts and rich feelings are prerequisites for raising the standard of poetic portrayal of lyrics.

Opera lyrics must contain profound philosophy that elucidates the character and essence of the period and inspires people to deep thought. A production can be philosophical when its subject matter, through profound artistic portrayal, induces people to meditate upon the period and life for a long time. In order to create a philosophical image, it is imperative to select a new and original seed and explore the aspect of life which reflects a pressing question of the period, an issue which is vital to the political integrity of the popular masses who make history as masters of the world. Selecting a new, valuable seed, however, is only the first step towards guaranteeing the philosophical depth of a work. No matter how valuable a seed is in the hands of the librettist, he cannot create a philosophical image unless he develops the seed onto a high artistic level through a sincere study of life and deep thought. The philosophical character of a production emanates from the depth of highly suggestive portrayal. Even a single expression in an opera song must have deep meaning and even a single line of a poem should have broad ideological content; only then can the poetic portrayal be excellent and the philosophical depth be ensured.

The song in the night scene in the revolutionary opera *The Flower Girl* is excellent because the lyric has great philosophical depth. The words to the effect that, although there is one moon in the sky, different people gaze up at it with different feelings according to their social status poetically express the contradictions of the exploitative society. As you can see, lyrics can touch the people's heartstrings only when they are philosophically poetic.

Since poetry is a genre of literature which lyrically describes the impact of life and thoughts and feelings from a person's own experience, it is important in making lyrics poetic so that they express the subject matter with rich emotions. A poem expresses thoughts through emotions; so, if it lacks emotions, the thoughts expressed will be crude. A poem rich in emotions can inspire the audience with the thoughts it expresses.

Lyrics which are not poetic lack lyricism and descriptive force. This is the case with songs in general, and the lyrics of opera songs in particular, which are based on specific situations and definite aspects of life, cannot impress the audience if they lack lyricism and are unable to inspire the audience to thought, or if they explain the content of scenes or reveal it directly. Direct expression and crude lyrics in opera songs are a fiasco. Such lyrics cannot serve as the basis of beautiful melodies.

The text of a song must be rhythmic and lyrical. If it is composed of spoken words or of lines of prosaic sentences cut into stanzaic form, it cannot evoke a response from the audience. If the text of an opera song is to be rhythmic and lyrical, it must be composed of set-form verses as required by the stanzaic song. This can deepen the ideological content of the opera and raise the level of its poetic portrayal as well as the artistic quality of the song. A text in rhythmic verse can be set closely to music. A text in free verse is difficult to set to music, and even when it is set to music the song will not be smooth and easy to sing.

In conventional operas the melodies of songs fluctuate violently and are complicated because the texts of the songs are in the style of free verse or of narrative speech, as required by arias and recitatives. Since stanzaic songs require poetic texts that become songs naturally, even if only chanted, all the lyrics of opera songs must be written in stanzaic form.

In order to compose the text of a song in a stanzaic form, lyrics that take the form of narrative speech must be eliminated. Lyrics in this style are a remnant of the recitative opera. It is impossible to create a highly poetic portrayal or a smooth and simple rhythmic flow from this style of text. All the texts of songs, including those for villainous characters, to say nothing of the hero's songs, must be written in rhyming verse; only then can all the opera songs be stanzaic and a highly artistic portrayal be created.

In order to eliminate narrative speech from operas, it is necessary to choose a kernel of dialogue which expresses the characters' personalities, ideas and emotions in everyday life and to write the lyrics in a poetic form. If the lyrics are a jumble of various things,

with no essence representing the characters' personalities, ideas and emotions, the texts will lack a keynote and will be unable to express the ideological and emotional content of the production profoundly. The librettist must give a poetic form to the essence of the ideas and emotions flowing out from the experience of the principal and other characters.

Song texts must be comprehensible to the popular masses.

If you are to write comprehensible song texts you must express the characters' ideas and emotions in a simple and realistic manner. Only those song texts which are comprehensible to the people and cater to their tastes can be welcomed by them. They will be excellent songs that are easy to sing. Such song texts not only are comprehensible to everybody but also invite him to chant and sing them.

In order to write comprehensible song texts you must also avoid the use of words of Chinese origin and puzzling words and choose, polish and use words used widely by our people. One simple song text in the revolutionary opera *The Sea of Blood*, to the effect that you may break a bush clover branch with ease, but you cannot break a giant tree, and that women, all united, have the strength to defeat any enemy, clarifies the truth of unity and struggle in plain words. The words of opera songs must be succinct and simple and, at the same time, meaningful.

You must not use vulgar and dull expressions and empty, lengthy phrases simply because you have to write song texts that are comprehensible to everybody.

Although a song text is the smallest form of literature, writing it is not easy. It must be simple in structure, but it must be rich in emotions and deep in the idea it contains. In order to write excellent texts, librettists must acquire deep experience of a diverse, rich life and think at all times. Only when they explore life will new, significant poetic ideas flash into their minds so that they can write excellent song texts.

### **3) ADAPTATION REQUIRES THE PROPER ESTABLISHMENT OF A PLOT**

Adapting to various genres works of art and literature which are widely known and loved by the people for their cognitive and educational value and excellent portrayal is very important in increasing the cultural wealth of the nation.

Artists and writers must, in addition to creating new works, select works of high ideological and artistic qualities from among novels, films and dramas and adapt them skilfully to various other genres.

Adaptation is a new form of creative work. Adaptation translates the ideological content of one original work into another in conformity with the characteristics of the latter form of art and literature. It requires the re-interpretation of a work in accordance with the characteristic of another form of art and literature on the principle of retaining the ideological content of the original. As the manner of depiction and the means of portrayal of the different forms of art and literature differ from one another, their methods of establishing and developing the plot are not the same. The film has its peculiar manner of depiction and means of portrayal, and the same is the case with the opera. Therefore, when adapting a certain work of art and literature into an opera, it should be reshaped to accord with the characteristics of opera.

The plot of an opera has to be established in the translation of a production of one form of art and literature into an opera.

Establishing the plot in adaptation into an opera means reshaping the composition and plot to suit the characteristics of opera. In adapting a film, for instance, into an opera, the dramatic organization characteristic of films must be dissolved, the human relations and events must be re-established to accord with the characteristics of the opera, and the structure and plot must be revamped.

It is most important in adaptation to have a correct understanding of the seed of the original and to preserve it to suit the characteristics of the genre to which it is being adapted.

A work is adapted into another form because the seed of the original is good. So, if its seed is misunderstood or misrepresented, the purpose of adaptation is not achieved. There are some instances in which more emphasis has been given to translating a few scenes in

which the portrayal is interesting than to understanding and preserving the seed of the original production, or in which the characters, events and life in the original have been copied without modification. This is not the way to establish the plot in adaptation, nor will such adaptations acquire any significance.

In order to establish the plot in adaptation, primary attention must be paid to the work of analysing and understanding the seed of the original production. Only when the seed of the original work is understood correctly can the structure of an opera be composed on the basis of it to conform with the characteristic of opera, and can the events and details of life be enlarged or omitted in a creative fashion. It was possible to depict the scene in the street at night where the heroine is accused of theft and the moonlit scene where she returns home with medicine in a fresher manner in the revolutionary opera *The Flower Girl* than in the film of the same name because the film was adapted excellently to accord with operatic characteristics on the principle of preserving the seed of the original on the basis of a correct understanding of it.

In order to establish the plot in adaptation properly the structure must be composed with skill.

In adaptation not only must the individual characters, events and scenes of the original be dealt with properly but also the main content must be depicted well in a new structural form. The composition of an opera is different from that of a novel or of a film. Because of the limitations of the stage, an opera requires a concise and intensive dramatic representation of the characters, events and life. *Sea of Blood*-style operas, unlike the operas of the past, can show life in three dimensions through the continuous flow of many scenes, but they cannot describe man and life as a film or a novel can. In making a novel or a film into an opera, the characters, events and scenes of the original must be rearranged more succinctly to suit the conditions of the stage so as, on the basis of this, to form a new structure.

If you are to compose the structure of an adapted opera properly, you must establish a new plot to accord with the characteristics of opera. If you remain within the framework of the storyline of the



original, you cannot establish a proper plot in your adaptation. Nor must you reverse the human relations of the original and the organization of events or leave out important scenes and essential details of life on the pretext of giving life to the characteristics of opera.

The structure must be composed by adapting to the characteristics of the new work the events and characters that exert a direct influence on depicting the seed of the original rather than changing them or discarding them indiscriminately.

In order to establish the plot of the adaptation to the opera, the method and means of portrayal must suit the characteristics of opera.

An opera also differs from a novel, a drama or a film in the method and means of portrayal. The events which have been portrayed in a film through the characters' speeches, actions and other cinematic means are described in an opera by songs, orchestra and theatrical means. This does not mean that the characters' speeches and actions in a film can be put into the characters' songs and actions in the opera as they are. The events which have been described by the characters' speeches in a film can be depicted by a song or by actions, or be omitted, in an opera. Portraying events which have been described by cinematic methods by new operatic methods is a characteristic of adaptation to the opera. As you see occasionally in the course of creation, some emotional scenes in the original work leave no impression in the adaptation, whereas some commonplace scenes in the original are impressive and meaningful in the adaptation. All this depends upon whether or not the plot of the adapted work is established so as to create an original image.

In order to create new images in the adapted work, important scenes from the original must be reorganized to conform with the features of opera. Those scenes from the original which do not promise a good effect must be boldly discarded if discarding them does not hinder the development of the seed, and new aspects of life must be discovered on the basis of the original so that the scenes can be restructured. Even those scenes which have not been given serious attention in the original can be reconsidered and given prominence when necessary to suit the features of opera. In adaptation, among

scenes from the original work those which can be omitted or shortened must be boldly omitted or shortened and those which can be developed broadly must be developed in that way so that the scenes which are impressive in the original are portrayed in such a way that they have the same effect in the opera. You must neither omit impressive scenes from the original without fully exploring various ways of preserving them simply because they do not seem to meet the requirement of the stage and substitute them with good songs, nor bring the impressive scenes of the original into your opera intact on the ground that they have to be retained. Even impressive scenes from the original must be reproduced to suit the logic of opera and the depictive features of the stage.

In adaptation, two tendencies must always be guarded against. One is to stage everything of the original work mechanically on the pretext of respecting the original and the other is to depart from the seed of the original on the pretext of recreating it. Copying the original work without reestablishing the plot to accord with the characteristics of the opera is not creation; portraying images at will by departing from the seed of the original conflicts with the nature of adaptation.

Fresh representation through adaptation requires artistic fiction. Even when fiction can be used, the principle of preserving the seed of the original must be observed. Artistic fiction has nothing in common with arbitrary change or the fabrication of life, a departure from the principle of creating typical images. Fiction which is not based on the original and which does not help the preservation of the seed of the original has no significance, although it may seem excellent in itself. Artistic fiction is only significant when it depicts an important aspect of life that can contribute to the development of the original.

The creator's originality must be sustained in adaptation. Adaptation is not technical and practical work simply to translate a work into another form but a creative endeavour that requires originality. Originality in this work can ensure a more life-like and impressive portrayal of the seed of the original. When creating the operatic version of a novel or a film, the form of the structure, the

way of developing the storyline and the style of the portrayal of the original must not be mechanically copied; the ideological content of the original must be translated properly to accord with the characteristics of opera by displaying originality.

With a correct viewpoint and attitude towards adaptation, creative workers must always blaze a path of adaptation.

### **3. OPERA MUSIC**

#### **1) THE STANZAIC SONG IS THE MAIN MEANS OF OPERATIC PORTRAYAL**

Songs form the major component of opera. Opera is an art describing people's thoughts and feelings and their lives and weaving drama with song. An opera song should be composed in such a way as to describe the characters' personalities and their lives realistically and represent their thoughts in depth.

##### **(1) Opera Songs Must Be Stanzaic**

It is very important to make good use of songs because they are the main means of operatic portrayal. For opera to become a true art for the people, its songs must be composed in a stanzaic form which is liked by them.

A stanzaic song is a song with a text in rhymed verse which is divided into stanzas set to the same melody.

The stanzaic song is the major form of folk music created and refined by the people. It is the major means of operatic portrayal.

Stanzaic songs are easy for the people to understand and sing, and they are familiar to them. Although falling under the category of folk music, the narrative folk song is not much liked by the people because its text has quite a few prosaic elements and its melody sounds like a tuned speech, whereas the stanzaic folk song is enjoyed by everyone because its text is in the form of rhymed verse and its melody is beautiful and gentle. The stanzaic folk song has been sung by the people widely for many years.

In spite of its concise form, the stanzaic song is very expressive and diverse in its descriptive function. The stanzaic song, with its concise text and melody, can express people's inmost worlds emotionally, depict life in a descriptive way and weave human relations dramatically. It can reveal the people's various thoughts and emotions and their complicated psychological worlds lyrically and delicately and describe nature and the various emotional colours of human life vividly. It can also depict the flow of the times, momentous historical events and the people's magnificent advance in great depth and breadth.

The stanzaic song is a powerful means of describing life dramatically. An opera must have drama expressed in song as well as songs expressed in drama. If the drama does not contain songs or if the songs do not flow with the drama, the drama and song cannot be in harmony. The drama must go with the songs and the songs must be sung in the drama. Only then can the drama and music be in unity. In conventional operas the aria has played the major role in expressing the principal character's emotions, and the recitative has played the role of connecting the events and weaving the drama. Such being the case, when an aria was being sung by the hero the flow of the drama slowed down or was interrupted, and when a recitative was being sung the musical character weakened; thus it was difficult to achieve the organic unity of music and drama.

The stanzaic song provides an easy solution to the problem of coordinating the music and drama in an opera. The stanzaic song facilitates the unity of music and drama because the intercourse and interchange of thoughts and feelings between characters is done by means of songs lines of which are sung by turns by different singers, as is done with work songs. The stanzaic song can also express the characters' inmost depths without obstructing or interrupting the flow of the drama because it can accommodate rich content in a succinct form. When realizing the intercourse and interchange of thoughts and feelings between characters, the stanzaic song, unlike the recitative, makes the intended idea poetic and sets it to a beautiful and gentle melody; so it can always contribute to the development of the drama without weakening the musical character. The stanzaic

song is characterized by its potential to realize the intercourse and interchange of thoughts and feelings between characters and to promote the drama powerfully by means of perfect and refined music.

In order to describe the opera's seed and theme in depth as well as the inmost depths of the characters delicately, and to develop the drama powerfully, the stanzaic song must be made the basis of opera music and the principal means of portrayal, and all songs must be in a stanzaic form.

Making all songs stanzaic is a fundamental principle in the creation of opera.

The art of opera has a history of hundreds of years. However, there has never been an opera in which all its songs were stanzaic. At one time stanzaic songs were used in Western opera, but they were only a small part of the whole of the musical composition, in which the aria was predominant. It could not be said that opera songs had been made stanzaic when the musical form of the aria was preserved while a few arias had been replaced with stanzaic songs. In Western operas the aria has been considered the "flower of opera" that is capable of describing the hero's spiritual world better than any other musical form and which enables the composer and singer to display their musical talents to the full. In this context, more and more complicated and intricate arias have been produced whether the people understand them or not. In some operas free singing parts were included at the close of arias, which gave the singer the "freedom" to perform whatever feats he could. The songs of such operas were so difficult to understand, so unnatural to the ear and so difficult to sing that the people did not like them. The popular masses accept only music that is pleasant to hear and easy to sing; if music is difficult to understand and to sing, they do not accept it, no matter how excellent it is. Many operas have been produced, but most of the songs in them have only been sung on the stage and by a few music fans. They have not become popular because such music as arias and recitatives are not readily accepted by the people.

When Sea of Blood-style operas were being created in our country for the first time, some creative workers doubted whether they could

in deed create an opera in the musical form of stanzaic songs to touch the heartstrings of the people. That was because they did not regard the stanzaic song as a noble form of music and were reluctant to adopt it. Holding the stanzaic song in contempt is an expression of a bourgeois aesthetic view. The introduction of stanzaic songs into opera music is a revolution in this field.

In order to make opera music stanzaic, the aria and recitative, which have been the main elements of conventional opera, must all be replaced with stanzaic songs, both the songs of the characters and the pangchang. In addition, orchestral music must be arranged and played in a variety of forms and by a variety of methods to suit the characteristics of stanzaic songs. For the transformation of opera music into stanzaic songs it is also necessary to sustain the characteristics of stanzaic songs in the musical communication between characters. In the early days of creating Sea of Blood-style operas some creative workers, because they had an incorrect understanding of the introduction of stanzaic songs, made each character sing a new song whenever he appeared on the stage. Even when characters with common thoughts, feelings and aspirations interacted and intercommunicated on the stage they were made to sing separate songs. If stanzaic songs are introduced into opera in this manner, all the songs in an opera will be similar, drab and tedious. Doing this is an outdated technique of musical dramaturgy. Characters in the same position and with the same aspirations should be made to sing one song which accords with the thoughts and aspirations of each character, to sing lines with different words in the same song, by turns, rather than sing different songs. One stanzaic song with lines with different words which express intercommunication between characters will be clear in its content, easy to understand and familiar to the audience.

It is important to compose musical masterpieces for stanzaic songs in operas.

The aim of introducing the stanzaic songs into opera is to produce musical masterpieces that are intelligible and enjoyable to everyone. Even an opera with stanzaic songs cannot impress the people unless

its songs are excellent. Only when an opera overflows with excellent music can its stanzaic songs prove their worth.

A musical masterpiece is a song which the more one listens to it, the better it sounds, which the more one thinks over it, the more profound its meaning becomes and which the more one sings it, the more one wants to sing it. In other words, it is a song which contains life and profound thoughts and is rich in emotion; it is a song with a gentle and beautiful melody, a song which the more we hear it, the better it sounds and which the more we sing it, the more we want to sing it.

A good song always inspires the people with confidence and courage and encourages them to a new struggle. The revolutionary songs of the period of the anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle, the songs of the days immediately after liberation, the songs of the years of the Fatherland Liberation War and many songs of the period of postwar reconstruction and of socialist construction served as a powerful weapon for encouraging the popular masses to perform great feats of heroism. Composers must compose every single song to inspire the people dynamically to the revolution, masterpieces that can be sung not only today and tomorrow but also in the distant future.

It is not easy to compose such a song. A song which seems to sound good when it is heard at first but is not appealing after being heard several times is not an excellent song.

In order to compose excellent songs the composer must explore people's lives and experience their noble moral world in depth. Art represents life. A truthful portrayal of life is a genuine work of art and literature. A noble and beautiful melody is found in life. The composer must discover melodic images and bring his musical conception to maturity in the course of experiencing people's lives deeply.

The composer must penetrate not only people's lives but also the world of his own work. The heroes of our operas are prototypes of the times who embody a noble moral world and sublime moral traits. The composer who creates an opera must penetrate the world of his work so as to understand the hero's thoughts and feelings correctly,

and he must discover a melody that can portray the hero's ideological and moral qualities accurately and in depth.

## **(2) Melodies Peculiar to a Nation Are the Basis of Opera Music**

In order to make opera songs stanzaic and fill the opera to overflowing with excellent songs, good music must be composed. An excellent song plays a major role in giving the people a correct understanding of life and in encouraging them forcefully to the struggle to create a happier and more worthwhile life. Every single song that is composed must be polished artistically so as to be an excellent song in which high ideological content is expressed naturally through noble artistic qualities, a song which touches the heartstrings of everyone.

Music must be composed on the basis of our nation's own melodies.

Composing music on the basis of these melodies is a policy our Party has been maintaining consistently in the development of socialist national music. The ideological and artistic qualities, the popular character and the national character of music are determined by the melodies on which they are based.

Our music must become art that reflects our people's lives, their thoughts and feelings and serves the Korean revolution—Juche art. If it is to reflect our people's lives and emotions accurately, opera music must be composed on the basis of national melodies that have been created by our people and refined over a long period of time.

Creating opera music based on our national melodies is a principle in creating our national opera. By national melodies I mean those which represent the sentiments that are peculiar to a particular nation. A nation has its peculiar sentiments that have been formed historically and artistic forms that are suitable for expressing them. The Korean people like songs and dances which are elegant and gentle and drawing which is light and clear. Our opera music must be created to accord with these national sentiments of ours.



Folk songs are representative of music with national melodies. Folk songs have been composed to reflect the people's thoughts and feelings formed in the course of labour and life and, as such, are rich in national characteristics. During their struggle to harness nature, transform society and defend the land, our people have created many gentle and beautiful folk songs and enjoyed singing them, while refining them continually. Folk songs reflect people's feelings and sentiments in detail.

The melodies of Korean folk songs are clear and soft without steep changes in their pitches, and they are gentle and beautiful. Folk songs based on such melodies are succinct, clear and easy to understand and sing. These songs have been liked and sung by our people for many years not only because they reflect their own feelings and desires but also because their forms are easy to understand and sing.

Although folk songs are representative music that is based upon national melodies, some of them do not cater to the modern tastes of our people. Folk songs were produced and developed in the class society, so they have socio-historical and class limitations. From the point of view of the working class and modernity, we must preserve those folk song melodies which accord with the aesthetic tastes of our people today and discard those which do not.

Retaining folk song melodies that are not liked by the people of our times is a tendency to return to the past. Such a tendency in the creation of art and literature would beautify the exploitative society and the life of the exploiting class, glorify outmoded and antiquated things and, consequently, distort or debase the noble national character of our people. At present, the reactionary bourgeois theoreticians of art and literature and the artists of south Korea are, on the pretext of sticking to the national character of art, reviving the court music, court dance and the like that served the feudal rulers. They are presenting the phansori that the feudal noblemen enjoyed singing, as if it were representative of the musical heritage of our nation. Some of them even allege that dancing, and singing in a hoarse voice, with a topknot and horsehair hat on the head and with a traditional robe flying is national art. This, in essence, is ignominious

behaviour that distorts our sublime national art and debases our nation as an uncivilized nation. On no account must we tolerate even the slightest tendency that debases our nation, distorts our national art and tries to return our modern art to the past. National melodies are not immutable. The outdated and stale elements among the national melodies are eliminated with the development of the times, and the beautiful and progressive elements are refined, and thus the treasure-house of national music is enriched. National melodies are enriched not only by new folk songs of the new age but also by excellent songs composed by professionals. Excellent songs composed by professionals become folk songs over the course of many years, and their melodies and tones are added to the stock of national melodies. In our country there are not only folk songs that have been sung from time immemorial but also the progressive folk songs that were composed in the 1920s, the revolutionary songs which were composed and spread widely during the anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle and the popular songs composed after liberation. These songs have their own distinct national melodies as well as traces of having overcome the limitations of the national melodies of the past. Our folk songs of the past are soft and lyrical; some of them, however, lack vivacity. Many of the new popular songs created on the basis of folk music are soft, lyrical and lively. The fine melodies of popular songs have taken their place firmly in the music of our country by being gradually established as melodies peculiar to our nation. Over many years the melodic elements that are outdated and do not conform with the people's aspirations have been discarded, and new melodic elements, the product of the new age and new life, have been added. Thus our national melodies have been developed and enriched constantly. This, precisely, is the law-governed process of the development of national melodies. Therefore, national melodies must not be identified with those of folk songs but be understood in a broader sense.

The characteristics of national melodies are clearly expressed in their tones. The tone is the basis and the smallest unit of a melody, but even so it embodies national feelings and timbre. People can

guess whether a melody is Korean or not simply by listening to its tone, because it embodies national characteristics.

Composers must, as a matter of course, study our revolutionary songs, folk songs and popular songs closely and discover among them Korean tones and melodies which suit our people's national feelings and tastes and use them widely in musical creation.

Sea of Blood-style operas overflow with national feelings because the folk and other songs which were created and widespread in the past have been incorporated in them in conformity with the characteristics of opera music, and the tones of these songs were preserved in every way. Drawing on the valuable experience gained in creating Sea of Blood-style operas, composers must produce all opera music on the basis of our national melodies and in accordance with our people's tastes and sentiments. Our people do not like a mixture that is neither Korean nor Western music. Only songs with rich national melodies are accepted, loved and sung joyfully by our people.

Making the melodies of songs gentle and beautiful is one of the principles of creating music for Sea of Blood-style operas. Doing so is an essential requirement in composing stanzaic songs.

A gentle melody means a natural melodic flow emanating from the impact of the lyrics of a song.

It is only when the melody of a song is gentle that the meaning of the words can be understood and the people can listen to it at ease and appreciate the deep meaning of the song with composure.

In musical composition, creating gentle melodies and setting them in due order must not be confused. By a gentle melody I do not mean only orderly melodic development. The orderly development of a melody is an aspect of making it gentle, but all the notes cannot be arranged in order. If a melody ascends and descends in a gentle curve all the time, the song will be too monotonous to the ear. It is not our way to make the melody ascend and descend excessively, overwhelmed with emotions provoked by the lyrics of the song. In order to make the melody gentle and beautiful, the notes must be arranged in a natural manner in accordance with the situation of the drama and the inmost world of the principal character, as well as

with the meaning contained in the lyrics of the song and its emotional colour.

If gentle and beautiful melodies are to be composed, the dramatism of the song must also be understood correctly.

An opera song is the song of a character who is in a dramatic relationship, so it must be dramatic. Songs without dramatism cannot be opera songs. The melody itself must not be made artificially dramatic simply because opera songs have to be dramatic. Since dramatism can underlie gentle songs, you will be perfectly able to sustain the dramatism if you organize the drama skilfully. The songs *I Shall Remain Singleheartedly Loyal* and *Do Not Cry, My Dear Ul Nam* from the revolutionary opera *The Sea of Blood* have gentle and beautiful melodies, but they are strongly dramatic because the meanings of their words harmonize with the situation in the scenes in which they are sung. In particular, the song *Avenge the "Punitive Expedition"* leads the people into the world of the drama with strong dramatism because not only is the melody of the song good but also its words are deep in meaning. That is why, when producing the revolutionary opera *The Flower Girl*, gentle and beautiful melodies were composed first to accord with the idea and emotion of the lyrics, and then they were made dramatic at subsequent stages of portrayal.

Temperate and beautiful melodic composition must not result in feeble and slow melodies. Composing temperate and beautiful melodies is one thing and producing feeble and slow ones is another. A song's melody must be vigorous and carry weight while being moderate; it must be lively and fresh while being elegant. A lifeless and spiritless song cannot inspire strength and courage in people. Although its melody is temperate, the song *The Snow Falls* is vigorous and carries weight; the song *My Happy Country* is moderate and simple, although its melody is lively. A song whose melody is gentle and yet vigorous, graceful and yet full of vigour, is precisely a song of our style.

It is important to make good use of Korean tunes in creating opera music on the basis of national melodies.

The tune expresses feelings peculiar to a nation. The music of a nation has its own tunes.

Our national music has a rich variety of tunes. Our forefathers have given wonderful musical expression to their noble feelings by means of tunes that suit our national music.

In order to preserve distinct national characteristics in musical composition, the composer must make effective use of the unique timbre of our folk melodies and the rich variety of Korean tunes.

If he is well-versed in Korean tunes, he can compose a song which is better suited to our people's tastes and emotions, although the melody may be in the same tempo and key. A song which is composed with a distinctive tune that is properly suited to the content of its lyrics can express national feelings well.

In the composition of opera music the lyrics of a song and its melody must be set precisely to each other.

Matching the words and music well is a principle that must be observed in the creation of songs.

A close alliance between them means artistic harmony. In a song the tone of the melody is based on the tone of speech. The tone of speech finds tangible expression in the attitude of the speaker, the pitch of his voice, its tune, stress and timbre. Likewise, the tone of the melody varies according to changes in the people's thoughts and emotions. Therefore, to discover a temperate and beautiful melody, a close study must be conducted into the characteristics of the tone of our language.

Needless to say, tones of speech and melody are not identical. Although it is based on the tone of speech, the tone of a melody is still more distinctive, more regular and more measured than that of speech in its pitch, tune and stress. Therefore, the tone of a melody requires polished, poetic words. The melodies of folk songs are always allied with rhymed verse. This explains why the words of songs must be stanzaic and poetic in order to produce national melodies.

In order to obtain a good alliance between the words and melody of a song, it is necessary to make the best use of the good points of the Korean language in setting music to the words so that the melody

follows the poetic rhythm in a natural way. Only when the poetic rhythm and the tone of the melody weld into a harmonious alliance will an excellent piece of music be produced.

For a good alliance between the words and music, the tones of the melody must be arranged to suit the syllables of the words. If not, the meaning of the lyrics will be distorted, or the flow of the melody will be unnatural.

### **(3) Opera Songs Must Be Idiomatic**

Even if all the opera songs are stanzaic, the stanzaic composition will be meaningless unless the songs are idiomatic.

The aim of introducing stanzaic songs into opera is to weave the drama with novel and idiomatic songs which the people can understand easily and enjoy singing.

It is only when opera songs have their own characteristics that they can mirror the individual features of the characters and those of life realistically and attract the interest of the audience. People see operas in order to enjoy good songs. If all the songs in an opera are composed in the same manner people will not go to see the opera. The songs of an opera must be idiomatic and fresh from the beginning; then the audience will wait for the songs in the following scene with interest and expectation and will be drawn into the drama in spite of themselves. Composing idiomatic songs is, in the long run, a factor in raising the ideological and artistic qualities of the opera and strengthening its cognitive and educational functions.

In order to compose idiomatic songs for an opera, set patterns and imitation must be avoided.

Some operas contain similar songs. Some songs are alike not only in their melodies but also in the lines of their texts. The tendency to imitation is revealed notably in copying pieces recognized as good. Needless to say, a close study must be made of the good aspects of a song for emulation if its lyrics or melody are recognized as good. However, emulating such a work after a close study and copying it mechanically have nothing in common. In creation, stereotype and

imitation hinder the development of freshness and variety in art and literature.

Stereotype and imitation in creative work result from the lack of an original spirit of inquiry and creative enthusiasm. Imitation emanates from a spiritual void and absence of experience of life and artistic talent. Imitation and plagiarism bring disgrace on creative workers. An artist who, with a highly creative spirit, loves people and life and is well-versed in art, never imitates others. Bearing in mind that stereotype and imitation in creative work result in disaster, creative workers must combat them. Composers must understand the essence of life from the creative standpoint and with an original attitude so as to compose fresh and idiomatic songs.

In order to compose idiomatic songs for an opera, their timbre must be distinct.

The timbre of opera songs must accord with the personality of the characters.

The characters appearing in the opera all have their own tasks of portrayal. Even a secondary character plays a role that no one else can do in expounding the seed and theme of the opera; so the songs of each character have their own tasks of portrayal. The timbre peculiar to these songs does not come of its own accord simply because every song has its own task of portrayal.

When creating the revolutionary opera *The Sea of Blood*, it was considered that the original song in the scene in which the guerrilla operative meets the mother, the heroine, and persuades her to work for the revolution posed no problem in carrying out its portrayal task because its text was good and the melody was smooth. But it had no artistic appeal for the listeners because of the absence of emotional timbre peculiar to the song. That was because the composer paid attention only to the technical aspects of the task of depiction without exploring the political operative's thoughts and emotions on meeting for the first time the mother who, bereaved of her husband, was gradually being awakened to revolutionary consciousness while undergoing every manner of hardship. Even a song whose portrayal task is clear cannot have emotional appeal unless the composer produces timbre appropriate to the song.

The timbre of an opera song gives musical expression to the emotions emanating from the characters' personalities and the dramatic situation. If the composer is concerned only with superficial phenomena, instead of penetrating the inmost thoughts and feelings of the character, he will have difficulty in catching the emotional timbre emanating from the character. A song, however skilfully composed, cannot be good if it lacks emotional timbre derived from the personality of the character.

The emotions involved in the dramatic situation must be represented in a lifelike manner if idiomatic songs are to be composed. Since opera songs are sung by the characters in a specific situation, the songs must express the emotional atmosphere of the situation as well as the emotional state of the characters. Only a song which corresponds with the characters' experience and the atmosphere of the situation can be a lifelike, idiomatic song for an opera.

In creating an opera some songs, which have been included in scenes as a result of their apparent profound meaning and emotions, have to be omitted because the emotional content of the songs does not suit the dramatic situation. In an opera a song which does not correspond with the situation must be dropped without hesitation and a new song composed to replace it.

Opera songs must have their own characteristics, and yet maintain internal connections according to the characters' personalities and the logic of the dramatic development. They must form a harmonious unity as integrated opera music.

Opera songs must be composed in such a way that they harmonize with one another. Only then can the characteristics of musical portrayal be preserved and its unity be realized. Harmony without characteristics is meaningless, and musical timbre which lacks harmony cannot produce the desired effect. Even if the songs are idiomatic and correspond with the personality and situation, the general musical image will be lacking consistency, and the dramatic sequence will seem broken unless the songs are in harmony. On the other hand, if the timbre of the theme song is copied in other songs for the sake of the harmony of the overall musical image, all the



songs will resemble one another and will sound dull to the ear. Composers must never seek harmony for harmony's sake. Harmony for its own sake cannot give life to the timbre of songs; it will even end in destroying the harmony. Harmony is always achieved through the contrast and combination of characteristic elements, so the timbre of the songs must not be sacrificed for the sake of harmony. Instead, the musical timbre must be clear for the sake of harmony. Distinct musical timbre and its harmonious unity are essential for the creation of excellent opera music.

An idiomatic melody is the product of original thinking, inquiry and passion. The creator's standpoint and attitude, as well as his passion, are reflected directly in his creation. His creation shows his ideological level and the scope of his heart. Just as a factory worker says "If you want to know my thoughts, look at my products," so a creative worker must say "If you want to know my thoughts, look at my creations." With such an attitude you will be able to compose excellent songs. You can never create novel and colourful songs with illusions and skilful fingertips on a keyboard. Composers must always penetrate man and life and experience them in real earnest; they must sing from the bottom of their hearts with warm passion. Profound thought and the spirit of inquiry with which to choose one piece from a hundred pieces they have composed, as well as tireless creative passion and originality and audacity to blaze the musical trail that nobody has trodden will enable them to compose fresh, idiomatic masterpieces that will be sung down through the generations. The more such songs there are, the more deeply the opera will find its way into the people's lives.

## **2) THE PANGCHANG IS SOMETHING OF OUR OWN STYLE**

One of the essential characteristics of Sea of Blood-style operas is the introduction of the pangchang. The pangchang in opera is something completely of our own style, and it is new and original.

## **(1) No Aspect of Life Is beyond the Descriptive Power of the Pangchang**

The pangchang is a song that, off the stage, describes the world of the drama. It is a new musical means of portrayal that is capable not only of descriptive delineation beyond the reach of stage songs but also of dramatic or lyrical portrayal.

In former days only the characters' songs and orchestral music were considered to be musical means of portrayal in opera. This was because the operas of the past were based on the long-established theory of the opera. This theory only recognized lyrical portrayal directly expressing the characters' thoughts and emotions and dramatic representation expressing the characters' relations by means of song and action, on the ground that the opera was also a form of dramatic art; it never recognized lyrical portrayal dealing with life from the point of view of a third person. Therefore, in the operas of the past all the songs were sung only on the stage and the characters' personalities and life, and the dramatic relations among them were portrayed only through their songs and orchestral music.

The operas produced in our country in the 1950s and the early 1960s were not free of this framework. The opera *Tell O Forest* created in those days is the moving story of a guerrilla political operative who, working as a village headman in the enemy area during the anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle, rouses the people to the struggle for national liberation. This opera had great significance in that it was the first to deal with our revolutionary traditions, but it failed to solve quite a few descriptive problems. Choe Pyong Hun, the hero, is a revolutionary who fights, overcoming all his mental suffering, being held in every manner of contempt and disdain by the villagers because he has to work in the guise of the village headman. He keeps the secret of his identity even from his daughter and, at the crucial moment, lures the enemy to destruction at Hongsan Valley, where he dies. The creative workers intended to stir strong emotions in the people through the death of the hero Choe Byong Hun, but, contrary to their subjective intention, the audience felt empty. Rather than thinking that the hero died a worthwhile death the audience felt

forlorn at his death because he died without seeing the bright world for which he had worked so arduously underground. The death of a fighter who devoted all his life to the revolution must not give people a forlorn feeling. The hero should have survived to see the reward of his struggle and victory.

The opera *Tell O Forest* also had problems with its musical interpretation. In that opera even the vocatives, to say nothing of such words of action as “come”, “sit down” and “go”, were set to music in the form of the recitative, so they were awkward to the ear. Worse still the hero, at the moment of his death, was made to sing an aria expressing his thoughts. For a dying man to sing in an opera does not accord with either the logic of life or the logic of portrayal.

Opera is an art which represents life mainly through music, but there should be no rule that all aspects of life must be described in stage songs. In the opera speech can be employed when the actions of a character can be more appropriately portrayed in speech than in song. When it is awkward for the character himself to express his own feelings, a third person can express his thoughts in song off the stage. It is an outmoded way of thinking to insist that in an opera life must, without exception, be knitted by music and that the character himself must sing his own thoughts, whatever the circumstances. As life is rich, so the manner of its portrayal must be varied.

Realism is the lifeblood of art. The conventional methods of portrayal which hamper the realistic depiction of life must be altered to meet the requirements of the period and the aspirations of the popular masses, as well as to accord with the nature of art. This is precisely the *Juche* creative attitude. There is no need to portray life exclusively by means of stage songs, sticking to the outmoded pattern.

Having studied the operas of Korea and various other countries, we realized that it was impossible to portray the moral traits and life of our contemporaries perfectly through the conventional form of opera consisting of stage songs and orchestral music. We reaffirmed our decision to conduct a revolution in opera. We introduced the *pangchang*, a completely new means of musical interpretation, into *Sea of Blood*-style operas.

The introduction of the pangchang in opera, along with that of stanzaic songs, is a particularly important success in the opera revolution.

The introduction of the pangchang is significant in that it has enabled the new style of opera to depict man and his life in a natural and realistic way.

The pangchang not only describes the situation but also shows the inmost thoughts and feelings of the characters from different angles, represents the period and life in great breadth, adds great momentum to the drama and links the stage and the audience. The pangchang is a powerful means of portrayal that can represent every dynamic aspect of life and any subtle shade of psychology. The introduction of the pangchang has furnished the potential to show from various angles and in greater depth and breadth the hidden aspects of the life of characters and their inmost selves, which are beyond the descriptive power of stage songs, and to give a lifelike musical interpretation to the seed and theme of a work.

The significance of the introduction of the pangchang lies in the creation of a new style of opera capable of describing different aspects of life in depth by means of songs being sung in turn on and off the stage to suit the dramatic situation and development.

By the introduction of the pangchang, a third form of music, into opera, which previously consisted of stage songs and orchestral music, a new opera music consisting of stage songs, orchestral music and pangchang has been evolved. This makes it possible to enhance the descriptive function of stanzaic songs and to enrich the musical portrayal beyond measure through a proper combination of stage songs and pangchang, pangchang and orchestral music, and pangchang and pangchang, and through their contrast and harmony. The employment of the pangchang has brought about a radical change in opera. It is a revolution that has opened up a new realm in the style of opera and musical dramaturgy.

The pangchang holds a very important place in opera and plays a major role in it.

The pangchang is a powerful means to portray the inmost thoughts and feelings of a character in an opera in great depth and breadth from various angles.

In opera stage songs directly express the inmost thoughts and feelings of the characters; but these songs cannot describe the characters objectively, so the characters experience certain limitations in revealing their inmost selves. The pangchang can describe the characters freely from both the objective and the subjective angles, describing their inmost world in breadth and depth.

The pangchang furnishes the potential to portray the characters' inmost depths particularly from the objective point of view.

The pangchang, from the objective viewpoint, mainly supports the characters' actions and describes their thoughts and emotions from the point of view of the creative artist. In the revolutionary opera *The Sea of Blood* the scene in which the mother learns to read and write shows how deeply the pangchang can portray the heroine from the objective viewpoint. The pangchang, *The Mother Learns How to Read and Write*, describes the mother sitting on the earthen floor at the front of the room, burning the midnight oil to learn to read and write from her youngest son and warmly sings of the heroine's noble mind reflected in her action. If that scene had been portrayed by means of songs sung alternately by the mother and son in the manner that was used before, it would not have created such a strong impression on people. In this scene the mother and the son do not sing but hold a dialogue of a few words and perform some actions, and the pangchang, together with the orchestra, unfolds the depths of their lives and the mother's pure mind, so that everyone who sees it cannot but be moved.

The pangchang can also describe the depths of the characters' minds objectively in scenes of illusions or dreams. Of course, orchestral music can also do this. But it is difficult for an orchestra to express so clearly the characters' aspirations and wishes reflected in illusions or dreams as distinct linguistic images do. In such scenes the pangchang, employed along with orchestral music, can produce a clear image of a characters' imagination and dream and add variety

to the portrayal in a scene. The pangchang can also revive impressive events in characters' past lives and unfold their hopes for a beautiful future.

The pangchang can also depict in strong relief the inmost thoughts and feelings of a character. In other words, it can play the role of a mouthpiece which expresses something that the character himself is not in a position to express or a state of mind that cannot be described by anything other than monologue. In dramatic art it is very important to depict an event which cannot be represented by the character himself, as well as the hidden aspects of his life. In life there are circumstances in which one cannot express one's own feelings or finds it more natural to have someone else speak for one. In the operas of the past the principal character himself was made to sing even in such cases. As a result the character often found it difficult to express his anxiety properly or he described his life in an awkward manner. In a drama such situations can frequently be dealt with through a monologue or narrative, but these methods are not appropriate for an opera. A situation that can be expressed through a narrative in a drama must be portrayed through a pangchang in an opera. It is only when the pangchang speaks for the character and shows even the hidden aspects of his life, which are difficult for him to speak about, that the personality of the character can be more realistic and the scope of the opera music widened. Musical interpretation by the pangchang reveals a character's inmost thoughts and feelings alternately with the character's songs. The better the pangchang performs this function, the more naturally the audience is drawn into the world of the drama, accepting the experience of the principal character as their own.

Although it is an off-stage song, the pangchang has great power to emphasize the characters' personalities and to depict their inmost thoughts and feelings delicately. In opera, therefore, the pangchang is no less important than the principal character's song. In all cases it can show the characters' ideological and spiritual worlds if they are difficult for them to depict or cannot be shown by means of stage songs or the orchestra.

The pangchang is also a powerful means of deriding or denouncing negative characters from an objective standpoint. In the operas of the past their villainous nature was described either through their own songs or recitatives or through their actions, or they were exposed and denounced through the form of a chorus by the positive characters. These methods cannot easily reveal their villainous nature clearly. In some operas many scenes were clumsy because, while a positive character denounced the negative character face to face by means of a song, the latter waited silently until the singing was over and then acted as if to say “what?”. In such scenes the pangchang must satirize or condemn a villainous character’s action from an objective standpoint, or the heroic character’s standpoint. Thus it can expose the villainous nature more clearly and describe the characters’ actions on the stage realistically.

The pangchang is a powerful means of broadly outlining the period and society as they relate to the hero’s destiny; thus it makes an active contribution to describing their essential nature in full. It is also an instrument with which the creative worker can make an aesthetic appraisal of the event taking place on the stage. Art can accurately describe the law of historical development only when it provides people with a realistic portrayal of the essence of the period and society. To do this, life must be depicted in depth from various angles and the experience gained by people in the course of their lives explored delicately. The more broadly and deeply a character’s life and his inmost thoughts and feelings are described, the more the essential nature of the period and society will be clarified.

In exposing the essential nature of the period and society the class character of the society of the period, if it is not yet understood by the principal character, can be described from the point of view of the author, as is done through the pangchang *When Did the Toilers Appear in the World* in the scene in the revolutionary opera *The Flower Girl* in which Kkotpun goes to the landlord’s as his servant. The true nature of the exploitative society, which is full of contradictions, can also be exposed from the standpoint of the audience and of Kkotpun and her sister, as is done by means of the pangchang *Faith Moves Mountains* in the scene of her mother’s

death, through the outpouring of hatred for and curses on the cruel, exploitative society which tramples mercilessly upon the pure hearts that are devoted to their mother and orphans them. The pangchang exposing the true nature of the period and society in the context of the life described on the stage is similar to the narrative description of a novel which outlines the period and society broadly and provides an in-depth philosophical interpretation of their true nature.

The pangchang provides the opera singer with conditions for realistic acting. In an opera, the singers must sing while acting realistically and act realistically while singing. Only then can they create true-to-life characters. In the operas of the past it was an iron rule that the characters' personalities should be represented only by means of stage songs and orchestral music. The singer had to sing all the time and was scarcely able to act. Such being the case, many songs were songs for song's sake in the operas of the past, and the singer found himself tied to the songs, hardly able to create images through acting. In conventional operas the personalities of the characters were abstract, their acting was clumsy and the flow of the drama was tedious because the singers were forced to sing unnaturally and their acting was neglected. The pangchang provides the characters with satisfactory conditions for free action while describing their inmost thoughts and feelings and explaining the situation and environment of the drama from the standpoint of a third person and while singing their thoughts from their standpoint. As a result, the characters have become able to act realistically and animate the opera stage with the help of the pangchang.

The pangchang is a powerful means of developing the drama.

The main means of expressing dramatic development in former operas was the recitative and orchestra. Although arias and the characters' acting influenced the dramatic development, they did not play a significant role. The pangchang, free from such limitations, works actively on the development of the drama. In an opera the pangchang promotes the development of the drama alternately with the songs sung on stage by the characters. If the pangchang is given excessive emphasis in disregard of the dramatic situation, or if it alternates with the stage songs at any moment simply because it is a



musical form that has a strong influence on the dramatic progress, then it may have an adverse effect on it. Therefore, the stage songs and pangchang must be introduced when appropriate after the dramatic situation has been carefully examined.

The pangchang also promotes the development of the drama independently, according to the dramatic situation. The pangchang in the scene of the mother's death in the revolutionary opera *The Flower Girl* and in the scene in which convalescing Myong Ho practises walking in the revolutionary opera *A True Daughter of the Party*, give great momentum to the drama in harmony with the characters' acting, but without any emotional echo of their songs. The appeal of these pangchang comes not from the objective description of the characters' actions but from the psychological depiction of their inmost thoughts and feelings. The stage only shows the main characters' actions, but the pangchang express their emotions in depth in support of their actions so as to give a strong impetus to the drama and impress the audience.

In an opera the drama can be connected and developed by employing pangchang between scenes and acts. If the pangchang is introduced along with orchestral music as the stage slowly darkens, an emotional connection with the following scene can be achieved naturally and the drama be developed smoothly while particular emotions are evoked as the stage moves. If the pangchang is used when connecting the scenes in a work that covers a long historical period, the passage of time and the changes in life can be described naturally without any particular explanation or change of stage. It would be a good idea to provide a lingering effect by means of the pangchang along with orchestral music if necessary when the curtain is lowered.

The pangchang is a powerful means of effecting emotional communication between characters and the audience and of linking the stage and the audience.

Making the audience believe the events depicted on the stage to be true and accept the characters' ideas and emotions as their own while laughing and crying with them—this is the power of realistic stage art. In former operas the characters responded to one another

mainly by reciprocating songs, so there were some limitations to realizing a rapport between the characters and the audience. In Sea of Blood-style operas the pangchang links the stage and the audience to provide emotional communication between them, sometimes depicting the mind of the character and sometimes expressing the minds of the audience, thus helping the stage and the audience to breathe the same air.

By conveying the feelings of the characters to the audience, the pangchang plays the role of a bridge between the stage and audience. Listening to the pangchang, the audience actively responds to the appeal of the character and sympathizes with him and follows his actions.

Moreover, the pangchang conveys to the character what the audience wants to tell him, so it draws the audience into the drama. The pangchang *Let Our Girl Soldier Slumber Gently and Deep* in the revolutionary opera *A True Daughter of the Party* is sung after the heroine falls asleep with a spoon in her hand as she watches the wounded soldiers delightedly eating the meal she has prepared with the rice she has obtained from an occupied village at the risk of her life. Representing not only the minds of the wounded soldiers who, with warm camaraderie, want to see the girl soldier sleep just for a moment but also the minds of the audience who is observing her beautiful deeds, the song says: “Birds of the forest, do not chirp now! Let our girl soldier slumber gently and deep.” In the earnest pangchang, the audience’s warm feelings towards the heroine are conveyed to the stage and the audience is impressed by her beautiful spirit so that the audience and the stage experience the same feeling.

As you can see, the pangchang holds a very important place and plays a significant role in improving the ideological and artistic value of an opera and freshening its quality.

## **(2) The Greater the Variety of the Pangchang Is the Better**

The pangchang is a good means of portrayal, but it can only be effective when it is used where it is needed; it can only prove its

worth when it is used properly. Creative workers must make the best use of the pangchang and improve our style of opera.

The pangchang must be used in accordance with its characteristics. It can be sung independently or in unison with or alternately with the stage songs, or it can depict the psychology of the principal character. In all cases, however, it is sung from an objective point of view. It is characterized by its effectiveness in describing the depths of life beyond the reach of the stage songs, always from an objective point of view. When producing an opera, the creative workers must seriously consider which scene is appropriate for an objective representation of man and life and must employ the pangchang in such a scene. It must also be used in scenes in which it is difficult or impossible to express the characters' inmost thoughts and feelings by means of stage songs alone. Only when the pangchang is used where it is needed can its descriptive function be enhanced and its peculiar timbre be maintained.

The pangchang must be used in a variety of ways to suit the scenes. The stage always reveals new aspects of life. In the course of constant change and development in life with new events taking place in succession from the first scene to the last, the characters' personalities develop and the theme of the work is clarified. Life that changes and develops without interruption requires a variety of new songs. No piece of music can take the place of the pangchang in describing various aspects of life. Since it can describe various aspects of life in great depth and breadth from an objective point of view, from a third person's standpoint, there can be no end of variety in the operatic portrayal of life if the pangchang is used in appropriate scenes.

The pangchang must be used in conformity with the personalities of the characters and the situations in the drama.

What is important in this regard is to employ it on the principle of sustaining the stage songs. This is because it has the descriptive task of emphasizing and giving life to the stage songs. In an opera the personalities of the characters and the dramatic situations are portrayed in detail by means of stage songs. No matter how effective it is, the pangchang cannot produce good results apart from its

emotional communication with the stage songs. Even its independent employment can be significant only in the context of the stage songs in the previous and following scenes.

In an opera a song sung by the principal character is the most important of the stage songs. Only when a song by the hero is sustained is it possible to describe his personality accurately and clarify the seed of the opera properly. The pangchang plays a major role in sustaining songs sung by the hero. Needless to say, other characters' songs, too, support the songs of the hero and emphasize his personality, but they are not so effective as the pangchang.

There are several methods of using the pangchang to support the songs of the hero and emphasize his personality. In harmony with the hero's song, the pangchang strengthens the emotion. The principal character in an opera usually sings the theme song or major songs. These songs are the best and most refined of opera songs. More often than not, however, even a good song, if sung on its own, sounds rather simple. It would be a good idea for an opera singer to sing a melodious song alone and also in harmony with a pangchang when necessary. If the pangchang backs up a vocal solo in various ways, it can produce peculiar emotional colours that cannot be produced by a solo alone and arouse people's emotions more delicately in a harmonious way. But, for all that, the pangchang must not be stressed at the expense of the solo. The solo on its own has great depictive significance. When the hero's song is joined by a pangchang, the solo must be protected well and backed up in such a way that it penetrates the pangchang; it must not be repressed or hindered.

The pangchang must be used in a well-harmonized way not only with a song by the hero but also with other characters' songs, which must not be neglected on the ground that they are songs by secondary characters. Even though they are songs by secondary characters, if the pangchang represents the characters' ideas and emotions or stresses their personalities, enriching their songs in an objective way, their characterization can be so much more vivid.

Another important factor in using the pangchang to suit the personalities of the characters and the dramatic situation is that it

must be used in various forms according to the growth of the characters' personalities and the development of the events. In the course of creating Sea of Blood-style operas various types of pangchang, such as a solo pangchang, duet pangchang, small pangchang, medium-sized pangchang and grand pangchang have been evolved and various methods of using them to conform with the characteristics of the opera have been developed.

Creative workers must skilfully use the various types of pangchang and the methods of portrayal which have been created in Sea of Blood-style operas to conform with the personalities of the characters and the dramatic situation. In an opera, even the same song requires different musical interpretations depending on the forms, for instance, a small pangchang or grand pangchang; the pangchang also produces a variety of emotional climates in a scene depending on the timbre, for instance, a women's pangchang and men's pangchang. The musical interpretation also differs depending on the sequence of the characters' songs and the pangchang. In short, ten types of pangchang and ten methods of interpretation are required for ten different situations. Choosing the type of pangchang is not simply a technical and practical matter but creative work to sustain the characteristics of the pangchang, to realize the general harmony of the musical interpretation of the opera and to raise the level of its ideological and artistic qualities. Creative workers must employ every single item of the pangchang with care.

What is important in dealing with the pangchang so that it conforms with the characters' personalities and the dramatic situation is to use it in a proper combination with the grand ensemble. The grand ensemble, as a new form of opera vocal music evolved in Sea of Blood-style operas, is the biggest form of chorus involving all the positive characters on the stage and all the members of the pangchang group. It is mostly used when the dramatic relations reach a climax or when they are settled. The pangchang must powerfully develop the drama in harmony with the stage songs and then, in a scene in which the dramatic emotions reach a climax or in which they come to a head, it must join the grand ensemble.

The pangchang must be used well, in harmony with the dances and orchestral music.

Stressing the ideological and emotional content of dances is essential in combining the pangchang with them. As in the scene of the Mt. Paektu dance in the revolutionary opera *The Sea of Blood*, a wordless pangchang can be included initially, culminating gradually in a grand pangchang singing of the indomitable spirit of our people who are fighting staunchly, looking up at the noble image of Mt. Paektu. As in the scene of a dance in a dream in the revolutionary opera *The Flower Girl*, the pangchang in different forms can sing either of the heroine's past life or of her beautiful hopes for the future, following the line of her destiny and emotions. On particular occasions, such as in the scene in which a dance is performed by a symbolic method, a wordless pangchang can breathe life into the dance and give it peculiar appeal.

It is also important to intensify the emotional colour of the dances and sustain the dance movements. In order to create an emotional impression on the audience, the dance must be performed to beautiful and temperate music. When the pangchang matches the dances, it plays the role of not only emphasizing the content but also accompaniment, sustaining the dance rhythms.

The pangchang must also harmonize with the orchestral music. In harmony with the orchestral music, it can, by describing the inmost thoughts and feelings of the characters realistically, explain aspects of the plot that cannot be described by orchestral music and thus play the role of linking the orchestra with the stage songs and fulfil the function of connecting different scenes. The pangchang which accompanies orchestral music must be used in various ways to accord with the resonance and timbre of the orchestra. When it is accompanied by an orchestra which connects different scenes the music of the orchestra must be gradually replaced by that of the pangchang so as to produce a long, lingering effect.

A variety of methods of connecting one pangchang with another must also be explored.

While maintaining harmony with the stage songs, dances and orchestral music, the pangchang must always preserve its peculiar

timbre. Variety in the employment of the pangchang with its own timbre to suit the dramatic situation and context is the key to enriching the characterization and musical interpretation of opera.

### **3) WHEN THE ORCHESTRAL MUSIC IS ALIVE, THE STAGE IS ALIVE**

In opera, orchestral music plays the important role of increasing the effect of the songs, of welding the drama into one musical flow and of integrating the stage representation into a harmonious whole. Songs are the major elements of opera, but whether they are effective or not depends largely on the role of orchestral music. It is only when orchestral music supports the songs well, sustaining their main melodies, that the musical interpretation will be profound. No matter how good a song is, it cannot prove its worth if it is not well-supported by orchestral music.

In opera orchestral music fuses the characters' songs, the pangchang and all the other songs into one musical sequence. Opera songs, no matter how many and how excellent they are, may sound like a mere collection of songs unless they form one stream. In an opera the orchestra is the only means of drawing songs into one stream and ensuring the consistency of the music. Playing continuously throughout the development of the drama, the orchestra connects one song to the next, supports the characters' speeches and actions, strengthens the rhythms of the dances in harmony with them and allows the stage movement to flow; it links the stage movement into one musical flow and realizes the unity of the image.

Playing independently in an opera, it also emphasizes the characters' personalities, develops the drama and broadens the opera's musical interpretation. The effect, dramatic progress and animation and ardour of opera songs on the stage depend on how the orchestra is used. Bearing in mind the role of orchestral music in an opera, the creative workers must work hard to create and develop an opera orchestra of our own style from our own standpoint.

#### **(1) Orchestral Music Must Be Based on Stanzaic Songs**

Orchestral music in our opera must be popular, national and modern.

If opera is to be an art to serve the people, the orchestral music of the conventional opera, which is difficult and complicated, must be discarded and a new one which appeals to the feelings and aesthetic tastes of the people created. The correct way of creating new orchestral music for opera is to develop it on the basis of stanzaic songs.

From the point of view of musical development this is the age of stanzaic song. Our people today require stanzaic songs that have been created and refined by the popular masses. Regarding this trend as “simplicity” is the way of thinking of the exploiting class who despise the people. It is the aesthetic view of the bourgeoisie. It is the popular masses who create and enjoy true art. The art loved by the masses is the noblest and truest of arts. At the same time as introducing stanzaic songs into opera, we must develop new orchestral music for opera of our own style which is based on these songs.

This means that, as an accompaniment to opera songs, orchestral music should sustain these songs on the basis of their stanzaic melodies and that, in independent performance, it should not only follow the stanzaic melodies but also modify and amplify them by various methods so as to effect symphonic portrayal.

This principle must not mislead you into trying to reproduce the stanzaic melodies. Basing orchestral music on stanzaic melodies does not in the least mean reproducing these melodies. Such a reproduction is mere accompaniment, not orchestral music.

The new orchestral music for opera is incomparably superior to the conventional one not only in describing the theme of the opera and the personalities and lives of its characters but also in achieving unity of portrayal with the vocal music and developing the drama.

As a direct accompaniment to stage songs and the pangchang the new opera orchestra enhances the songs’ power of expression by emphasizing the meaning of the songs and the melodic emotions through the orchestral tone, and adds to the emotional depth of the



characters' personalities and lives. Even when being performed independently, the new orchestral music modifies and amplifies the melodies and the tones of the stanzaic songs by various techniques, effecting symphonic depiction, so that it sounds more familiar to the audience, attracting them to the world of the drama with ease, than the conventional one which developed the music by means of the so-called leitmotiv and flexible melody lines.

The new opera orchestra is also superior to the conventional orchestra in ensuring the consistency of the music. In opera, orchestral music and songs must not be fragmentary, nor should the orchestral timbre depart from the general mood of the music. An opera must begin with music and end with music; life should unfold with music, and the drama should develop with music. All songs and orchestral music must contrast with one another and yet harmonize with one another so as to become welded into one mood. In new operas, musical integration can be achieved easily because the orchestral music is based on the theme melody and on the principal melodies derived from the theme melody not only when accompanying the songs but also when supporting the characters' words and actions and interpreting dramatic situations and dances.

The new orchestral music of opera, which is based on stanzaic songs, is the best one in that it promotes the songs' artistic qualities and their dramatic functions and enriches the musical interpretation beyond measure. It is popular orchestral music because it sounds familiar to the audience.

Creative workers must firmly maintain our own standpoint and produce and develop orchestral music of our own style which is capable of an impressive portrayal of characters' personalities and lives, and of making the stage resound.

## **(2) Orchestral Music Must Be Alive**

When the orchestral music is alive, the stage is alive. By lively orchestral music I mean a variety of orchestral resonance that, in harmony with the situation, gives life to the inmost feelings of the

characters, animates the atmosphere in the scenes and develops the drama powerfully, breathing the same air with the stage.

In order to make the stage alive, the orchestra must skilfully perform the functions of both accompaniment and musical drama. When it accompanies a song, it must keep the song alive; when it is played independently, it must give a strong impetus to the dramatic development while fusing the song and the dramatic flow.

The orchestra must accompany songs skilfully.

Accompaniment is a form of performance to support the musical interpretation of songs by means of orchestral resonance. Skilful accompaniment is very important in enhancing the ideological and artistic qualities of opera and in raising the level of musical interpretation of songs. The standard of a song's musical interpretation depends upon the level of the orchestral accompaniment. The accompaniment must be subordinated to giving life to songs. It must lead the songs so that they start naturally; when the singing has begun, it must support it well and cover it softly; and when the singing has come to an end, it must wind it up properly so as to leave a lingering effect.

The accompaniment must always be played on the principle of preserving the principal melody of the song. An accompaniment that does not keep the principal melody alive not only blurs the ideological and emotional content of the song but also lowers the level of its interpretation. It must sustain the timbre of the principal melody and lead the singer to sing with ease; it must help the listeners to be drawn spontaneously into the world of the music.

In opera the orchestral accompaniment sustains the dramatic character of the songs. All opera songs are sung at certain moments of the dramatic development, so they assume dramatism. In order to bring the personalities of the characters to life and describe dramatic situations by means of accompaniments to songs, the dramatism of songs must be sustained by orchestral techniques. The songs sung in the scene of the amusement quarters in the revolutionary opera *The Flower Girl*, where Kkotpun is branded as a "thief", and in the scene of crossing the River Namchon in the revolutionary opera *A True Daughter of the Party*, are strongly dramatic. When accompanying

such songs, the orchestral music cannot emphasize the meanings of the songs and the dramatic emotions merely by covering and supporting them. When dealing with such songs, the accompaniment must go beyond the range of the general concept of accompaniment and strengthen the dramatic character of these songs. In other words, variety and alterations must be provided according to their character and mood. Only then can the accompaniment emphasize the ideological content of the songs, penetrate the inmost thoughts and feelings of the characters, bring the emotional atmosphere of the situation to life and give life to the stage.

The orchestra must fulfil the function of providing dramatic music. Orchestral music for opera differs from ordinary accompaniment in that it interprets life by emphasizing characters' personalities independently as required by the dramatic development, and adds momentum to the dramatic development. A piece of music that does not fulfil this function satisfactorily cannot be called orchestral music for opera.

If orchestral music is to fulfil the function of dramatic music, you must penetrate the world of music, the world of orchestral music. This means that you should conduct intensive creative research into ensuring a skilful orchestral interpretation of the psychology of the characters and their dramatic emotions that are difficult to express in songs and dances. By nature, orchestral art is art that shows a person's inmost nature through the harmonious resonance of various instruments. Its fascination is that by this means it can portray man's inmost depths that cannot be expressed through spoken or written words, as well as the noble, beautiful, romantic and heroic elements of human life, in a peculiar way. In opera these expressive capabilities of orchestral music must be employed to the full so as to portray the inmost thoughts and feelings of the characters in a deep and subtle way; then both the orchestra and the stage will be alive.

In order to make the orchestral music fulfil the function of dramatic music properly, music that connects songs must be used skilfully. The skilful employment of it allows for a consistent musical sequence and the unity of musical interpretations, as well as the natural singing of singers.

Music that connects songs and develops them must integrate the songs that are sung in different situations. Because they are sung at different stages of the dramatic development, opera songs must be joined into one flow by the orchestral music and assisted and led to act strongly on the dramatic development. To perform this function, orchestral music should be arranged in a way different from the manner of arranging ordinary songs. What is important here is to eliminate the tendency to use stereotyped preludes, interludes and postludes in every song. If this tendency is tolerated, opera music will sound like a mere collection of songs. Worse still, it will be impossible to provide the natural connection of characters' emotions and impart tension to the dramatic sequence. Music that connects different songs and develops them must always be dealt with by a variety of techniques to suit the characteristics of the songs and the situation in the scene, as well as the logic of life and the dramatic development.

While covering gaps during the characters' speeches and actions on the stage, interludes must penetrate the depth of the opera music and link the dramatic action and music organically. In an opera the characters must speak, act and dance always in the context of the music. Their speeches and actions can only be impressive and meaningful in the context of the music. An uninterrupted flow of orchestral music enables the characters to act naturally in tune with the musical flow. If music is not provided, the speed of acting of the characters may vary; but if music is provided, they can act steadily and realistically because they act to the accompaniment. In a scene where the characters merely act and speak, without singing, orchestral music must concentrate on portraying the characters' inmost thoughts and feelings and maintaining the emotional atmosphere of the situation rather than on describing the actions and events superficially. Only orchestral music that follows the emotional flow can portray the world of music vividly and in great breadth.

In order to employ connecting music to suit the characters' inmost thoughts and feelings and the emotional atmosphere of the situation, orchestral music must skilfully provoke the characters' feelings to

continue towards and reach the climax in a natural manner and leave a long, lingering effect. While giving a hint of the new songs and new scenes to come, it must also create an atmosphere for fresh interpretation. Only then can the drama enlarge the world of the music indefinitely and develop along the emotional line exuberantly.

For the orchestra to fulfil its function of performing dramatic music, it must provide a high standard of musical interpretation of the scenes. The scenes hold a very important place in an opera. Each scene in an opera involves stage songs, the pangchang, the characters' speeches and actions, and dances. It is the main task of orchestral music to fuse all these artistic elements into a single emotion and effect a consistent musical flow. A scene which includes orchestral music is precisely where the orchestra should resound by displaying its artistic skill to the fullest. In a scene which includes orchestral music, the orchestra must emphasize an in-depth interpretation of the characters' ideas, emotions and psychology. Here the orchestra must, by various methods of portrayal, make the best use of not only the theme song and other major songs but also their derivative melodies, so as to create an integral, symphonic resonance. To this end, the stanzaic songs' melodies must be prolonged and broadened freely and boldly as the situation and atmosphere demand so that the orchestra resounds endlessly. By a resounding orchestra, however, I do not mean a superficial representation of events and actions producing roaring sounds. A piece of orchestral music that cannot express the characters' inmost thoughts and feelings will merely sound loud and noisy. It will be meaningless, and appealing to nobody. Even when supporting an event or an action, it must represent in an emotional way the characters' inmost depths that cannot be expressed by actions or words. When it is stirring, dynamically representing the characters' psychology in step with the dramatic development and the situation, the orchestra can have a strong effect on the dramatic representation and great appealing force.

If it is to bring the stage to life, the orchestra must perform its accompaniment to dances skilfully. Just as a good musical piece enlivens a dance, so stirring orchestral music can bring the stage to

life. The essence of dance music lies in sustaining the patterns of dance movements. Movement patterns are the lifeblood of dance. Harmonious dance patterns and measures are a must in creating a beautiful dance. What is important in dance music is skilfully to handle that part of the music which starts the dance as well as that which marks the divisions in the dance movements. Nothing is more awkward in dancing than a discrepancy between the moment when the rhythmic movements are started and when the music is started. Only when the music matches the rhythmic movements can the dance be harmonious; and only when the moment is defined clearly by the music can the dancer dance with confidence. Besides, the divisions in the dance movements must be defined distinctly by the dance music. In a dance the movements in the rhythmic flow must be distinct, so the orchestra must support the dance in such a way as to mark the divisions in the movements by means of distinct divisions in the musical flow.

### **(3) National Instruments Must Be Combined with Western Instruments**

Instrumentation is of great significance in enhancing the role of an opera orchestra.

Conventional orchestration is concerned mainly with the combination of Western instruments. Needless to say, the number of instrumental groups is important in that it affects the role of the orchestra. However, from the point of view of developing opera in our own way, it would be a biased attitude to deal with orchestration simply as a matter of deciding the number of instrumental groups. In our country, where both traditional, national instruments and Western instruments are available, the question of the composition of the orchestra must not be confined to a numerical concept. Arguing about the number of Western instrumental groups alone, while ignoring our national instruments, is an expression of a departure from our own standpoint.

In order to develop opera orchestras of our own style we must combine national and Western instruments properly. Each country

and each nation has its own characteristic music and instruments as well as those adopted through exchange with other countries. We have fine national music and national instruments that have been evolved over thousands of years, down through history. In our country, where national culture began to flourish a long time ago, musical art was developing and a variety of music using many of our national instruments was being performed magnificently as early as the Middle Ages. Our advanced music has had a great influence on the development of music in other countries. Since the end of the last century, when exchange between East and West became active, Western music and Western instruments were introduced into our country and began to have an effect on the musical life of our people. That was the beginning of the existence of two styles of music in our country. That was an inevitable result of the worldwide exchange in national culture and arts. This historical phenomenon must not be ignored when we develop new socialist, national culture and arts. The point at issue is from which standpoint and with what attitude you consider the mixture of different national cultures, and in which direction and on which principles you develop your national culture. When approaching our national music and Western music, national instruments and Western instruments, we must always maintain our own standpoint and the attitude of considering them with our people at the centre and of making them serve our people. We must neither take to national nihilism by making a fetish of Western music and Western instruments and ignoring our own national music and instruments, nor must we practise national chauvinism in developing our national music by rejecting Western music and instruments indiscriminately.

In order to develop musical art of our own style, we must adhere to the principle of developing it with the main stress on our national music and instruments and subordinating Western music and Western instruments to them. If we depart from this principle we will be unable to develop our musical art properly.

In order to subordinate Western music to our national music and ensure the priority of our national instruments over Western ones, we must hold our national music dear and improve and perfect our

national instruments so as to cater to the modern tastes of our people. We cannot develop our national music and instruments if we look down on them, regarding them as backward and Western music and instruments as modern and superior. In general our national instruments have clear and beautiful timbre and are rich in expressive power, but the sounds of some of them are weak and dull. In the field of music the characteristics and strong points of our national instruments must be used as well as possible and their weak points improved. Unless the weak points of our national instruments are improved, our national music cannot be developed in conformity with modern tastes. If they are to perform the music of any modality successfully, our national instruments must be improved. Forming a modern orchestra with better national instruments is one of the basic methods of subordinating Western music to Korean music and giving priority to our national instruments over Western instruments.

A modern orchestra of our own style has now been formed and it can depict the multifarious aspects of our people's lives and their rich psychology superbly and play opera music on any theme expertly. This orchestra has acquired characteristics that no other orchestra can beat in its scale, its timbre and its methods of performance. It has been developed into a Juche, modern orchestra that can digest any Western instruments. Experience shows that, when national instruments are improved and their characteristics are used as well as possible, the problem of subordinating Western instruments to our national music can be solved.

In order to subordinate Western instruments to Korean music, we must use them properly. Only then can they express our people's emotions and contribute to the singing of our people's life. Subordinating Western instruments to Korean music is a principle in developing our national music, and it meets the aspirations of our people.

There will be no problem even if Korean music is played on Western instruments. Of course, our musicians may perform world-famous pieces of Western music on Western instruments, and that is natural. Musicians will be able to improve their artistic skill and develop Korean music more rapidly only when they have a good



command of Western instruments and are versed in Western music. At one time the symphony orchestra was unpopular with our people because it did not perform much of our national music on Western instruments but a lot of Western music. Therefore, we saw to it that a good symphony orchestra was formed and that it performed Korean folk songs and famous songs that were widely known among our people in a manner congenial to their feelings and tastes. Since then, our symphony orchestra has been loved by our people. This shows that when our musicians perform musical pieces which our people like, even on Western instruments, they can enjoy the people's love and contribute to the development of Korean music. Creative workers must not, in trying to assert our national character, reject Western instruments, but make the best use of the excellent aspects they have.

In order to subordinate Western instruments to Korean music and so contribute to the development of our music, we must combine national and Western instruments properly. A new orchestra must be formed, combining our national and Western instruments on the principle of making the best use of those qualities of the latter which appeal to our people's feelings and of rejecting those which do not. Creating a new composite orchestra of our own style is a pressing requirement for applying the popular character and national characteristics to the art of music and raising the level of its ideological and artistic qualities. Our present situation requires that a variety of new elements of portrayal and forms of expression be created constantly in all fields of art. The elements of artistic portrayal and forms of expression change and develop continually with the passage of time and the development of life. Music, too, can sing of life more broadly and deeply and contribute actively to enriching the treasure-house of human culture only when Korean and Western instruments are combined well.

A Western orchestra combined with our national bamboo-wind instruments with clear and soft timbre was once formed. As such national instruments as bamboo-winds that produce a plaintive but elegant sound and the jangsaenap that heightens the zest were included in the orchestra, its national characteristics were intensified

and the music sounded much better to the ear. A national orchestra which included some special Western instruments was also formed. This resulted in a national orchestra with distinct national characteristics and modern appeal. Needless to say, these were partially combined orchestras. With only a partially combined orchestra the Party's policy on creating a composite orchestra of our own style could not be carried out. Therefore, when effecting an opera revolution, we made sure that an orchestra was formed by a full-scale combination of national instruments and Western instruments. The composite orchestra which has been created in the course of producing Sea of Blood-style operas is our own original orchestra which gives firm priority to our national instruments while combining our national instrumental groups with those of Western instruments. By creating the orchestra in which the national and Western instruments are fused on a full scale, we have provided a brilliant solution to the long-standing problem of the co-relation between our national and Western instruments, and our orchestra has become a national, popular and modern orchestra with a peculiar timbre and a great, rich sound that no other orchestra of the past could ever produce. The creation of such an orchestra of our own style is a major success in the opera revolution.

For the proper combination of Korean and Western instruments, we must evolve orchestration in our own style.

To this end, we must implement the principle of properly combining haegum (a four-stringed Korean fiddle—Tr.) and bamboo-winds that produce clear and elegant sounds with those Western instruments that suit our national melodies and the characteristics of our beautiful and temperate songs. Particular attention must be given to sustaining the characteristics of our bamboo-winds. The main principle of operatic orchestration is to give prominence to the national timbre of the music and to combine Korean and Western instruments accordingly. Either Korean instruments or Western instruments can, of course, make up the larger proportion as the circumstances require.

For our national instruments to be prominent in the orchestra they must play the leading role. If not, they will be of no significance,

however many of them are included in the orchestra. For them to play a leading role, our national instruments must play the leading melody in the principal part. However, it would be impossible for our national instruments to play the leading melody in all cases. Under certain circumstances, Western instruments can play it. In these circumstances, too, national characteristics must be kept alive in the resonance of the orchestra in general, and the combined performance of national and Western instruments must produce a peculiar timbre. If the timbre of Western instruments alone or that of national instruments alone is produced, the composition of a composite orchestra will be pointless. The aim of the full-scale combination of national and Western instruments is, in essence, to evolve a new orchestra congenial to our contemporaries by making the best use of the strong points of the national and Western instruments. Therefore, the national and Western instruments must be arranged correctly and employed according to the content of the work.

In order to sustain national characteristics in the new orchestra, it is necessary to improve and make effective use of the playing techniques peculiar to our national instruments. If they are played in an outdated fashion, the new orchestra, no matter how well combined, will not produce great results. Outmoded techniques should be eliminated from national orchestra and new ones perfected and, at the same time, the techniques of playing Western instruments must be developed in our own manner. In this way the new, popular composite orchestra of our own style will develop and flower to the full.

#### **(4) Musical Arrangement Is Essential**

Good musical arrangement is essential to enlivening songs and orchestral music in an opera.

Musical arrangement means making the sound of the original music polyphonic, expanding and transforming it and changing the original instrumentation. It is the creative work of amplifying and

deepening the ideological content and emotional tone of the original piece.

It is only when a piece of music is arranged well that the melodic idioms of the orchestra and its emotional tone can be amplified and deepened and a harmonious interpretation realized, and the stage brought to life by rich musical resonance through a skilful performance.

Excellent arrangement in the art of music is no less important than discovering new, melodic idioms. Composers must concentrate their energies on arrangement, regarding it as an important aspect of their creative work.

When arranging a piece of opera music, first of all, the structure must be worked out well.

Arranging opera music is the work of interpreting the theme and thought of the production with stronger emotions by building up contrast and harmony and unifying the whole of the opera music in a single mood while sustaining the idioms of the different songs and the orchestral music. Unlike the arrangement of an ordinary song, the arrangement of opera music can be completed only through complicated processes. It requires solutions to a host of problems—how to arrange all the songs and the orchestral music from the overture to the finale, how to integrate different songs and orchestral music into a single mood, how to organize and play the instruments, and so on. The composer can find satisfactory solutions to these problems only through careful work in structuring all the musical pieces involved, on the basis of his profound understanding of the production. The structural plan of arrangement is what a design is to architecture. As an architect must draw up a good design in order to build a magnificent building, so a composer must frame a musical arrangement to the last detail in order to arrange his opera music excellently. If he becomes absorbed in portraying separate songs or an individual piece of music for a scene without his own original plan for the structure which fits the distinctive features of the work and the character of the music, he cannot produce a good arrangement of opera music. Bearing in mind the significance of

framing the structure of the arrangement of opera music, composers must give it definite precedence.

Opera music must be arranged in such a way that it is easy to understand, pleasant to hear and has a national flavour. It is an important principle of musical arrangement to embody popular character and national features.

In order to implement this principle, the ensemble must be dealt with skilfully. An excellent song gives people a strong impression because it contains profound meaning and noble emotions; but these qualities cannot be represented fully by a melody alone. The breadth and depth, the delicate emotional tone and the profound meaning of the melody can find expression only through musical arrangement. It is only when the arrangement matches the sounds of the several parts harmonically that the meaning will be deepened further and the emotional colour heightened.

Harmony in musical arrangement must be handled in such a way that, while using as many harmonized chords as possible, they are not monotonous but interesting. However, this does not mean that compound chords, dissonance and the like must never be used. In order to make a melody powerful and create a deep impression, compound chords or dissonance must be used where necessary. The point in question is how to use compound chords or dissonance effectively to retain the deep meaning of a stanzaic song's melody and intensify its national flavour.

In musical arrangement contrapuntal melodies and changes of key must be used well. These are necessary to sustain the principal melody through various musical sounds; so they must be used accordingly. If, in disregard of this requirement, contrapuntal melodies are used and keys are changed frequently in the musical arrangement, the smooth flow of the principal melody will be hindered and the national flavour will be lost. In particular, it is not our way to use an unnecessary contrapuntal melody on the pretext of using countermelody or to force a singer to produce a loud or long sound in the last part of a song on the pretext of making the song dramatic. Our art must cater to the tastes and emotions of our people. To meet this requirement art must be fully popular. Artistic quality

separated from popular character is of no use. When a composer uses a chord or a contrapuntal melody or changes a key, he must do so in such a way that it is understood and accepted easily by anybody, and this he can do by at all times basing himself on the standpoint of serving the people.

Musical arrangement must be original and unique. In an opera each song must be arranged in a unique way; only then can the timbre of the song be sustained and the musical interpretation be idiomatic.

In order to create a new, idiomatic musical interpretation in the arrangement, the composer must think in a creative manner with a correct point of view on musical arrangement and with great enthusiasm. Without thought and passion, he cannot produce an excellent musical arrangement. The composer must always set and pursue high objectives. He can produce a new, original musical arrangement only when he thinks hard, devotes himself totally to his pursuit and burns with creative passion.

In order to produce an original musical arrangement the composer must have his own definite creative opinions and audacity. The composer cannot succeed in arranging a musical piece if he cannot interpret the original work in his own way and conceive an audacious creative plan for portraying it in an idiomatic way. He might fail in the pursuit of a new musical arrangement. Yet the composer who, afraid of failure, deals with a musical arrangement timidly can never produce a brilliant work. The composer must not be afraid of failure but create new portrayals continually.

In musical arrangement the content of the original and the mood of the opera music must not be sacrificed for the sake of originality. In opera musical arrangement is necessary to emphasize the ideological content and emotional colour of the original and unify the modalities of the songs and orchestra. He must, therefore, pay close attention to ensuring the unity of the modalities of the overall opera music while sustaining the characteristics of individual songs. Only the composer who always adopts a fresh approach towards the original and creates new musical interpretations without interruption by means of arrangement can master the art of arrangement.

For the composer to arrange music well, he must be highly skilful. Musical arrangement is a re-creative effort to enrich the meaning of the melody of the original and its timbre, so the composer must know how to use his skill. If a musical piece is arranged in a simple manner, on the pretext of making it easy to understand, the music will become too monotonous to the ear; and if it is arranged in a complicated manner, on the pretext of using skill, it will be impossible to create musical interpretations that suit the tastes and emotions of our people. Composers must know how to arrange music in a fresh manner to suit the tastes and emotions of the people of our times, while making wide use of all the progressive and excellent techniques of interpretation that have been evolved.

#### **4) MAN AND LIFE MUST BE DEPICTED IN SONG**

In opera the skilful organization of the musical drama is essential to representing man and his life realistically.

The organization of the musical drama means the method of portraying man and his life dramatically in various musical forms and by various musical means. In other words, it means the method of organizing drama by means of songs and the orchestra.

Opera is the largest form of the musical art comprising various forms of songs and orchestral music. A single opera includes dozens of songs sung by the characters, pangchang songs and a variety of orchestral music. But these songs and music, no matter how many and no matter how varied, will be meaningless unless they are fused to clarify the theme of the opera and to describe the characters' personalities and lives. They become powerful means of portrayal only when they are arranged properly to meet dramatic requirements and to accord with the logic of portrayal, and when they form a natural flow of feelings and emotions. Whether an excellent drama is portrayed or not by harmonizing the songs and orchestral music depends entirely on the organization of the musical drama.

##### **(1) There Should Be a Theme Song in an Opera**

What is important in the organization of a musical drama is to produce characterization by means of songs and orchestral music. Characterization is only possible when the ideological and emotional depths of the characters are depicted. An opera can depict a man's ideological and emotional depths to the full by means of music, dance, fine arts and acting. The point in question is how to describe the characters' personalities vividly by using the descriptive possibilities of the opera.

The portrayal of the hero is essential in musical characterization. The principal character represents the quintessence of the seed and theme of the work and leads the drama, standing at the centre of events. In works of art and literature the life-like portrayal of the heroes can have a profound artistic effect and enhance the ideological and artistic level of the works.

In the organization of a musical drama the principle of concentrating the songs and orchestral music on giving life to the hero must be maintained. All the songs in an opera have their own parts to play, so their content and emotional tones vary. But they must be subordinated to clarifying the seed of the work and must contribute to the characterization of the hero.

In opera the theme song holds an important place in the characterization of the hero. The theme song plays the pivotal role in bringing out the theme of the opera, giving life to the personality of the hero, developing the drama and unifying the modalities. In other words, it represents the opera music. There are many songs in an opera, but not all of them play a direct part in clarifying the seed. Some of them emphasize the characteristics of the period, some of them describe the situation in scenes and some of them describe the beauty of nature and the change of the seasons. Of all these the theme song embodies the seed of the opera and the characteristic features of the hero most vividly, and plays the pivotal role in developing the drama.

The theme song must be a masterpiece in terms of both words and music. The words of the theme song must portray the theme of the work and the hero's thoughts and emotions deeply in succinct, poetic



words; its melody must be fresh and refined and convey the deep meaning of the words of the song. The words and music of the theme song must be deeper in philosophical meaning and more beautiful than those of other songs. They must be perfect. The theme song must have strength to connect the drama and heighten it at every important moment of the opera. Only such a song can provide a realistic description of the hero's mental and moral traits and personality and play a satisfactory pivotal role in the organization of the musical drama.

In opera other major songs must also be well-composed. In opera the personality of the hero cannot be described fully and deeply by the theme song alone. An opera needs, along with the theme song, other major songs that support the theme song. A supporting song is a song which contributes to the portrayal of the personalities of the hero and other major characters and the theme thought, while playing no less an important role than the theme song in developing the lines of the characters and events. An opera contains an entanglement of various characters and events, lines, with the hero at the centre; in the course of the development of these events, the spiritual world of the hero and other characters is clarified, the drama deepened and the theme brought out. The supporting songs, dealing with each of the lines of the characters and events and drawing them into one flow, contribute to revealing the personalities of the hero and other characters and clarifying the theme. The song *Do Not Cry, Ul Nam* in the revolutionary opera *The Sea of Blood* is sung at the moment when the curtain rises and is repeated several times until the scene where Ul Nam falls, hit by an enemy bullet; it also develops the line of warm tenderness between the mother and her son consistently and provides a profound clarification of the process of the formation of the heroine's revolutionary outlook on the world. The song *When Women Are All United*, sung in the scene in which the mother goes to the town on the first mission given her by the revolutionary organization, is repeated in the scene of sending supplies in support of the guerrillas and in the scene of the meeting of the members of the Women's Association at a mining village, showing the growth of the personality of the mother after she has understood the meaning of

the revolution and stressing the idea of unity. As you can see, while being sung along the action line of the principal and other major characters and the line of major dramatic events, the supporting songs deepen the theme of the opera, emphasize the personalities of the principal and other major characters from various angles and give strong impetus to the dramatic development. If the theme song is referred to as the pivot of opera music, a supporting song can be called a second or third theme song which plays the role of a beam supporting the pivot. Therefore, in order to portray the personalities of the hero and other characters in song, the supporting songs must be composed well and used effectively.

Impressive use of the hero's initial song is important in characterizing the hero. The hero's initial song describes the features of the period and the circumstances and aspirations of the hero and lays the foundation of the characteristics of his personality. Therefore, the hero's initial song must be impressive and easy to understand.

In order to ensure the prominence of the hero in the opera, the personalities of other characters must be portrayed skilfully in music. A man always lives in social relations. Even the hero who appears in a work of art or literature can display his personality only in the course of mixing with other characters. In a work of art or literature the secondary characters must not be treated lightly on the ground of emphasizing the hero. If the hero alone is made to sing the excellent songs and the other characters only the ordinary songs, the line of the hero cannot be sustained. In opera, satisfactory characterization can be produced only when the inmost depths of both the hero and the other characters are portrayed in full by means of songs and orchestral music.

## **(2) Music and Drama Must Be Closely Allied**

In opera an important task in the organization of the musical drama is to ensure a close alliance between the music and drama.

The ideological content of an opera is developed through the storyline and brought out by the characters' actions. The ideological

content of an opera would be inconceivable without them. The storyline of an opera is developed by the songs, not by the characters' speeches, and the characters' actions take place in the midst of songs. Hence, the importance of allying music closely with drama in the creation of opera.

It is not easy in practical creation to synchronize music and drama. In an opera musical pieces cannot last too long in disregard of the dramatic situation for the sake of sustaining the music, nor can a lot of characters' actions and speeches be performed in order to give prominence to the drama. A piece of music, however excellent, cannot be sustained, nor can it give life to the drama, unless it is synchronized with the drama. In conventional operas a close alliance between music and drama was impossible. A satisfactory solution to this problem has been found through the introduction into Sea of Blood-style operas of stanzaic song and the pangchang.

In order to provide a close unity of opera music and drama it is necessary to find a solution to the problem of combining lyrical and dramatic elements. In Sea of Blood-style operas the music can be allied easily with the drama because the characters' personalities and the dramatic situation are described not only in a lyrical manner but also in an epic and dramatic manner on the basis of the stanzaic songs which perform various functions. In addition, their alliance is facilitated by the pangchang, which describes the characters' actions and the situation objectively, developing the drama by fulfilling a number of functions which cannot easily be performed by stage songs.

In order to synchronize the music and drama, you must use songs and orchestral music to suit the scenes. The scene is the basic unit of dramatic composition. It is a dramatic phase in which human relations are established, events are developed and the elements of the dramatic development are concentrated. Through the natural sequence from one scene to the next the human relations are deepened and the drama makes steady headway, thus bringing out the characters' personalities and the theme of the work. Only when the scenes are highly dramatic and artistic can the drama develop

steadily. Therefore, composers must channel their efforts into portraying each scene in the opera as a musicodramatic scene.

In order to use songs and orchestral music in accordance with the content of the scene and the dramatic situation, songs which match the characters' personalities and music which matches the emotional colours of the events must be used. There is no song which accords with all times and all places. An opera requires music which suits the characters' personalities and the dramatic situation. Although there are many songs in an opera, it must be considered that there is only one song which suits a particular characters' personality and a particular event and situation.

In order to provide close unity between the music and drama it is also essential to use songs and orchestral music in a variety of ways by means of various techniques to suit the dramatic moment and situation and the changes in the characters' feelings. The musical interpretation of scenes must be varied and logical. In order to present the music in a scene in a varied way, you must decide the moments in scenes which are appropriate for a song, orchestral music or pangchang. Even the same song gives a different musical interpretation to a scene according to whether it is sung as a solo or chorus. The same is the case with orchestral music; it varies with instrumentation. It is only when these problems are solved in accordance with the dramatic moments and situations and the characters' psychological states that variety can be provided in the musical interpretation of scenes.

In order to ensure a close alliance between drama and music, the orchestra must link the scenes skilfully. The music in scenes alone cannot provide a full solution to the problem of an alliance between music and drama. A scene in an opera is the continuation of the previous scene and a precursor for the next scene. In the course of the steady heightening of the drama from one scene to the next, the characters' personalities develop and the theme of the work is further revealed. In opera the music must deal skilfully with the connection of scenes and the continued heightening and development of the drama.

### **(3) Emotional Delineation Is the Main Aspect of the Organization of Musical Drama**

Emotional delineation is a method of representation which reveals the essence of a character's personality emotionally while showing his emotional world in a natural way in accordance with the logic of life. A man's feelings are based on life and change continually as life changes and develops. In the course of shaping one's life, one experiences various feelings, and their combination forms one's emotional world.

It is a basic requirement arising from the nature of art to explore man's world of feelings, his emotional world.

Opera provides a musical interpretation of a living man's concrete thoughts and feelings and the emotions arising from life. That is why music is called an art of emotions. In opera the characters' personalities and lives can be portrayed more impressively only when the method of showing their inmost selves is employed and their thoughts are brought out through strong emotions. In opera, unless the characters' inmost depths are revealed in full, they cannot be depicted as living men; and unless their thoughts are brought to light through their emotions, the portrayal cannot avoid being abstract. All the artistic requirements of opera can only be met in full through the skilful delineation of emotions. In operatic creation, therefore, emotional delineation must be regarded as essential in the organization of the musical drama, and all the songs and orchestral music must follow the line of the emotions.

Ensuring that the songs and orchestral music follow the line of the emotions means that various emotional changes in the course of the characters' actions are linked into one musical sequence in accordance with the logic of life.

To ensure that the songs and orchestral music follow the emotional line it is essential skilfully to weave the sequence of emotions that underlie the characters' lines of action. When there are ups and downs in life, emotions are bound to change; and when life develops continuously, emotions are bound to change continuously, going through the process of strain and relaxation, build-up and

qualitative leap. This means that when there is a line of events in the drama, there is also the line of emotions which follows it. When the sequence of the characters' emotions of different colours arising from the events is linked into one musical sequence, the opera songs and orchestral music can be said to have been put on the emotional line. The characters' inmost depths must be penetrated in order to grasp the line of their emotions that arise from the events. You cannot grasp the emotional line if you are preoccupied with major events alone in the interests of dramatism, instead of exploring the characters' inmost depths. Even when dealing with a small or ordinary event, the composer must know how to penetrate and experience the inmost self of the character who is living through it.

When the composer has grasped the emotional line emanating from the line of the events, he must tune all the songs and orchestral music in keeping with the sequence of emotions. Opera songs and orchestral music must always be in tune with the most leading and essential emotion the character experiences when he encounters an event. Only then will the opera delineate the emotions in music, penetrating the characters' inmost depths and clarifying the theme.

An important factor in keeping the music on the line of the emotions is to provide preconditions and moments in life that occasion the characters' actions, and to build up and develop their feelings by means of songs and orchestral music. In order to build up and develop the characters' emotions by means of music, their psychology and the emotional atmosphere must be shown deeply from various angles at the moment when the line of their destiny alters. That moment is a dramatic phase in which their accumulated emotions are brought to a head. In opera such moments must be penetrated by songs and orchestral music, and a proper musical timbre chosen to accord with the psychology of the characters and the emotional atmosphere. When I say that a proper timbre of music should be chosen to be in tune with the moment when the line of the characters' destinies alters, I do not imply that it must be changed at each moment without a unified plan for the whole course of the development of their personalities. It is natural that the characters experience vicissitudes in their lives, but they always experience

them in particular situations. Therefore, at the moment when the line of a character's destiny alters, the music, while being used in a varied way, must become a part of the unified structure of the characterization. The variety of musical timbre which is used at the moments when the line of a character's destiny changes is inconceivable apart from the manner in which the elements of musical interpretation are used. Composers must explore the situation in the scenes and the inmost depths of the characters at such moments and choose appropriate means and methods of portrayal.

#### **(4) The Musical Line Must Be Established**

Since opera is a dramatic art that employs music as the principal means of portrayal, the musical line must be established. A distinct musical line in opera can make the structure clear, reveal the depths of the ideological content of the work emotionally and harmonize the interpretations of all the songs and orchestral music.

In order to establish the musical line in opera, it is necessary to provide a theme melody and make it run through the whole representation.

A distinct theme melody running through the operatic representation can make it possible to establish the musical line, unify the musical interpretations and keep the audience's interest and expectations alive at all times. For the establishment of the musical line and for making the theme melody permeate the whole of the operatic portrayal, the theme song and other excellent songs must be repeated at important moments of the dramatic development.

Repeating the theme song and other excellent songs at important moments is a fundamental method of organizing the musical drama so as to establish the musical line and make the theme melody penetrate the representation. This technique is important in intensifying the impression made by the songs, portraying the personalities of the major characters, describing the process of their development and unifying the modalities of music. In conventional operas using excellent songs repeatedly was inconceivable because stanzaic songs had not been introduced. The introduction of stanzaic

songs in the new operas and the repetition of excellent songs when needed have blazed trail of musical dramaturgy and enhanced the popular character of the opera.

When repeating the theme song and major supporting songs the requirements of dramatic structure must be taken fully into account so that these songs are used in the scenes where the main thought of the opera is given intensive expression. Song of the Sea of Blood, the theme song of the revolutionary opera *The Sea of Blood*, is repeated three times: first, it is played as a prelude, giving a hint to the seed and leading the audience into the world of drama; second, it denounces the bestial atrocities of the Japanese imperialists by being played by the orchestra and sung as a pangchang in the scene of the massacre by the Japanese imperialists and in the scene in which Yun Sop is burnt alive; and third, it describes the fighting spirit of the people who resist the Japanese imperialists by being sung as a solo by Kap Sun and as a grand pangchang in the scene in which Ul Nam is killed. This method of representation, unlike the techniques of conventional operatic musical dramaturgy, fully accords with the logic of life and of representation. The death of Ul Nam is inconceivable separately from the death of his father, Yun Sop. It is the Japanese imperialists who brutally killed the father, and it is also the Japanese imperialists who killed Ul Nam. The sacrifice of their lives was for the sake of the country and the nation, for the sake of the revolution. The scene of Ul Nam's death, the epitome of the situation in Korea in those days when the whole land was a bloodbath, is a serious dramatic scene which sheds light on the truth of the revolution that where there is exploitation and oppression, there is resistance and the struggle of the people. If another song relating to the death of Ul Nam, not the Song of the Sea of Blood, is sung in those scenes, the tragedy of the family cannot be shown in one unified musical sequence, nor can it clarify the profound thought that Ul Nam's death is not the death of an individual but the misfortune and suffering of the whole nation. Because the song which was sung so bitterly in the scene of the massacre, in the scene where Yun Sop was burnt alive, is repeated by Kap Sun as a solo and as a grand pangchang in the scene of Ul Nam's death, the audience,



thinking not only about the death of Ul Nam but also about Yun Sop's sacrifice, boils with resentment at the Japanese imperialists who have killed both the father and his son and plunged the whole village and the whole country into a sea of blood.

Furthermore, the audience is moved to think a great deal by the song *You Have Brought Medicine for Your Mother* in the revolutionary opera *The Sea of Blood*, which Kap Sun sings while embracing Ul Nam, who has bought medicine for his mother by selling the fish he caught, just before he is killed by the enemy. The melody of that song is that of the song *Don't Cry, My Dear Ul Nam* which his mother, with him, an innocent, suckling baby, on her back, used to sing quietly as a lullaby with Kap Sun, and a meaningful melody which is played by the orchestra for the future of young Ul Nam at the time when his mother, bereaved of her husband, was wandering from place to place. By repeating the heartrending song for the last time just before his death, Kap Sun makes his death seem more tragic. Thus, it is only when the theme song and the major supporting songs are repeated to tell of the eventful story of the principal character's life at important stages of the drama that they add to the philosophical depth of the interpretation and emphasize the ideological content of the work.

The theme song and the major songs that support it must be repeated at important moments which show the development of the characters' personalities. These songs have deeper meanings, cover a wider scope of portrayal and rouse richer emotions than any other songs; so when they are repeated at those moments, they can describe more vividly the process of the development of their personalities and the shaping of their revolutionary outlook on the world. If they are needed to show the characters' inmost thoughts and feelings and develop the drama they can be repeated even within a single scene in various forms. The melody of the song *It is an Honour to Be Alive or Dead on the Road of Revolution* is repeated in different forms within the one scene of departure in the revolutionary opera *Tell O Forest* so as to describe the character's inmost depths and to add momentum to dramatic progress.

An operatic representation can be improved or impaired and the general sequence of the music can sound interesting or dull depending on how the songs are repeated. Therefore, songs must be repeated in a proper manner. Dealing properly with the repetition of songs is a creative process that requires thinking, inquiry and skill. If it is necessary to repeat songs, the logic of dramatic progress must first be considered carefully, and then the scenes where they should be repeated must be determined and the songs and the situation in the scenes must be allied closely with each other. If repeated songs do not suit the situations, they will sound superfluous; such a repetition will not be as good as providing new songs. Opera songs that are repeated must be seasoned with new flavour. Since the events and situations involved in the dramatic development do not repeat themselves, the songs that justify repetition must be developed and used in different forms and by different methods so as to produce a new flavour, as the logic of life requires. When the theme song is to be repeated, the theme melody can be re-arranged for the purpose or a song derived from that melody can be sung. When altering the melody, the original timbre must be preserved. The theme song and other excellent songs must be used in such a way as to retain and stress their original timbres despite being repeated in a varied fashion.

In addition to stage songs, the pangchang and orchestral music should be used widely for the purpose of repetition. The employment of the pangchang along with stage songs in various ways can increase the variety of the music, and the use of orchestral music produce a variety of emotional tones beyond the reach of vocal songs. No matter how a song is repeated, it must agree with the characters' personalities and the situation in the scene. This is the way to create a realistic musical interpretation.

In order to establish the line of opera music, it is essential to position songs and orchestral music properly and weave them closely.

It is an important principle in the organization of the musical drama of Sea of Blood-style operas to position songs and orchestral music properly and organize them carefully to accord with the

characters' personalities, the logic of life, the content of the scene and the requirements of the situation. The observance of this principle can sustain the music itself, establish a correct musical line, form a consistent flow of emotions by means of songs and orchestral music and forcefully promote the drama. It can also show the depth of the development of the characters' personalities and create a clear musical interpretation of the theme of the opera.

In organizing the musical drama, creative workers occasionally deviate from this principle and emphasize their subjective points of view or the so-called logic of music itself. This shows that they are not yet completely free from the old concept of musical dramaturgy. In conventional operas it was a set pattern to include a few recitatives before the aria sung by the hero, and to include an arioso after the aria. A departure from this pattern was considered a violation of the rules of musicodramatic organization. Such a pattern can result in a separation of the content from the form in art. In opera the logic of music must always be based on the characters' personalities and the logic of life. There can be no logic of pure music separated from the characters' personalities and life.

Opera songs and orchestral music must always be positioned and woven closely together to accord with the characters' personalities and the logic of life. Like the storyline of other forms of dramatic production, the plot of an opera consists of presentation, development, climax and resolution, involving the processes of strain and relaxation, build-up and qualitative leap. In opera these processes of representation must be realized through the music. Therefore, music must strain or relax the dramatic situation and build up the emotions and lead them to a climax. In this it is important to place the stage songs, the pangchang and the orchestral music in their proper positions, overlapping and linking them so as to form a single musical sequence. Only then can the opera songs and orchestral music agree with the logic of the development of the drama, and promote the drama forcefully.

In order to establish the line of opera music you must use songs and orchestral music scrupulously. If you use them inappropriately, they will sound similar to one another, obscure the characters'

personalities, weaken the musical impression made on the audience, cause the musical flow to become monotonous and relax the dramatic tension.

The use of many songs does not necessarily result in an excellent opera. You must not try to use a new song in every scene, simply because you have stanzaic opera songs at your disposal. Even in an opera of stanzaic composition, songs must be used sparingly. Experience shows that even in an opera of stanzaic composition, man and life can be described magnificently by means of only a few dozen songs. The musical line can be established in an opera only when the songs are not used at random but put in their proper positions, and the overall representation is run through with the theme melody.

An opera requires a good prelude, good music for the climax and a good finale.

The first impression of an opera depends on how the prelude is used, and the magnitude of the excitement an opera generates depends on the finale. An opera, no matter how good its content, cannot draw the audience into its drama unless the first impression made by the prelude is good; and the good impression it gives the audience will fall flat unless the finale is impressive.

The prelude must present or suggest the opera's theme and the events in it on the basis of the theme melody and major supporting songs. The use of these songs in the prelude is very important in leading the audience into the world of the drama before the curtain rises. Only when the prelude characterizes the personality of the hero by presenting or suggesting the theme of and events in the opera can the audience receive an idea of the topic of the opera, identify the hero and become interested in his destiny while being drawn into the world of the drama. A prelude which is based on the stanzaic theme song and stanzaic supporting songs can draw the audience into the drama more quickly than the prelude of conventional opera because it has a succinct and plain musical structure and communicates its message clearly.

The prelude must be varied and idiomatic, according to the content and mood of the opera. Depending on the opera, the prelude

can be performed by the orchestra alone or by a combination of the various forms of songs and orchestra. In such revolutionary operas as the Sea of Blood, The Fate of a Self-defence Corps Man and The Song of Mt. Kumgang the prelude is played by the orchestra alone. Even when the prelude is played only by the orchestra in our new operas, it is not only succinct and clear in its form but also familiar to the audience because it is derived mainly from the melody of the theme song of the stanzaic composition.

The prelude to an opera should also comprise songs of various forms and orchestral music in combination. Since the prelude to an opera is aimed at presenting the theme and giving a hint to the coming events before the curtain rises, methods of interpretation appropriate to the purpose must be adopted.

The preludes to Sea of Blood-style operas have taken on a new form which combines orchestral music with the pangchang and several other forms of vocal music. In the revolutionary opera The Flower Girl, orchestral music in the prelude is combined with a song by the heroine and the pangchang. In the revolutionary opera A True Daughter of the Party, orchestral music in the prelude is combined with the pangchang. The prelude to A True Daughter of the Party, which comprises orchestral music and the pangchang, brings out the theme clearly from the outset and draws the audience into the world of the drama, while heralding a heroic act by the principal character. Whether the prelude should be performed only by the orchestra or with a combination of orchestral and vocal music should be decided according to the content and mood of the opera. If the prelude to a lyrical opera resounds with roaring and confusing sounds or if the prelude to an epic opera is performed only in gentle tones, it will conflict with the content and mood of the opera.

The music for the climax to the opera must be used properly. In the past the question of the standard for and principle of using music at the climax of the opera was interpreted in several ways. When Sea of Blood-style operas were being created for the first time in our country, some people insisted that the style of an aria or recitative should be used for the climax, claiming that this type of music was strongly dramatic, while some people were reluctant to use the theme

song or supporting songs on the ground that a new song that conforms with the situation must always be used at the climax.

Now that stanzaic music has been introduced into the opera, the music for the climax must make effective use of the characteristics of the stanzaic songs. The melody of the song Faith Moves Mountains in the revolutionary opera The Flower Girl and the melody of the Song of the Sea of Blood in the revolutionary opera The Sea of Blood have a strong impact on the audience because the dramatism of these theme and supporting songs welds with the dramatism of the scene of the climax.

A new song can be used at the climax of an opera, but it is still better to repeat the theme song or a supporting song to suit the situation. In repeating these songs at the climax, the dramatic effect must be sustained by combining various means of musical interpretation according to the dramatic requirements of the climax. At the climax, intercommunication between the characters should be realized by using the theme song or a supporting song in accordance with the requirements of the situation and with the flow of the characters' emotions, and the freedom of characters should be ensured by means of the pangchang in the scenes where it is needed. A pangchang should be sung at the moment when a character's action is more important than his song. At the climax various forms of music can be used, but they should be fused by orchestral music. Only when the stage is brought to life in this way will the climax be sustained.

The finale of an opera must be used skilfully. It draws the theme of the opera to a conclusion and also concludes the events. It is the final music, and it depicts the characters' future destiny. Success in drawing an opera to a conclusion depends upon the finale.

The form of the finale and the methods of its interpretation may vary in different operas; however, it should always emphasize the theme of the work and have a strong lingering emotional effect on the audience. It should have greater depth, breadth and impact than any other music in any other scene. The finale of an opera must not be like the finale of a music-and-dance epic or the finale of a song-and-dance ensemble. Music-and-dance epics often end with a chorus

which is combined with a magnificent dance. But the finale of an opera must not do so. The dramatic flow from climax to resolution in an opera is different from that in a music-and-dance epic and so is the resolution of the hero's destiny. The finale must, therefore, be suited to the content of the drama.

The finale of an opera should make effective use of the grand chorus and grand pangchang. The grand chorus plays a major role in sustaining the finale. In the finale the moment when the dramatic events are resolved, the process by which the characters' fates are settled and the emotional colours of the last part should be carefully analysed, the forms of the vocal should be determined accordingly and the orchestral music be properly ordered so that they produce a harmonious combination. Only then can all the musical means display their characteristics in completing the portrayal of the finale.

In opera the prelude and finale, the introductory scene and the last scene, must be linked artistically with each other. The prelude must present the theme of the work and the finale must bring it to a clear conclusion. The prelude to the revolutionary opera *The Flower Girl* and its finale set an example in dealing with them. In its prelude the introductory melody of the theme song *When Spring Comes Every Year*, which is played by the orchestra, gives a symbolic hint to the sorrow of our people who were deprived of their national sovereignty and their aspirations to a happy future; and then, the heroine's song and the grand pangchang say that beautiful flowers blossom every spring on the hills and in the fields, inviting the audience to hear the grievous story of why Kkotpun has to sell these flowers. In the finale the melody of this song is repeated but the song sings with jubilation of the dignified and happy life of the heroine who has won freedom in the warm sunshine and is sowing the seeds of revolution. The song is sung only twice in the opera, as the prelude and finale, but it renders an active contribution to presenting and clarifying the profound seed that the flower basket of sorrow and filial duty becomes a flower basket of struggle and revolution. As you can see, the prelude, finale and the music at the climax should be used in a consistent manner in keeping with the logic of life and portrayal;

only then can they sustain the musical line, depict the characters' personalities, develop the drama and bring out the theme to the full.

### **(5) The Mood of the Music Must Be Coordinated**

Coordinating the mood of the music is very important in providing unity of operatic portrayal. A work with distinct mood can sustain the emotional tones of life vividly. The mood of opera music is defined in the libretto. Nevertheless, an opera becomes unidiomatic unless the timbre of each piece of music is sustained. If you are to produce an idiomatic opera you must make effective use of musical timbre. Coordinating the mood of opera music does not mean coordinating the timbre of all the musical pieces included in an opera. It would be impossible to weave a legitimate drama with serious and solemn music alone, or a comedy with light and satirical music alone, or a tragedy with doleful music alone. There are joy and sorrow, laughter and tears in human life. Works of art represent various aspects of life. That is why a work of opera with distinct style includes different musical timbres. Only when each song and each piece of orchestral music are idiomatic enough to match the real tone of life can the emotional colour of portrayal be sustained. However, even though different songs have different characteristics and produce different emotional colours, they will not prove idiomatic unless they are welded into the general mood of the work. The complicated creative work of coordinating into one mood the emotional tones of the songs and orchestral music which are performed at different stages of the dramatic development can only be successful when the musical drama is organized skilfully.

In order to sustain the mood of the opera music, it is essential to make the mood idiomatic by means of the theme song and to harmonize other songs and orchestral music with the theme song and theme melody. The idiomatic timbre of an individual interpretation can remain alive only within the harmony. The unity of mood can be ensured only when all the songs and orchestral music harmonize with the theme song and theme melody while retaining their peculiar timbres.



If the consistency and unity of the mood of the opera music is to be ensured, the theme melody should be sustained not only by being used at important dramatic moments but also by generating derivative melodies. Deriving other melodies from the theme melody is an important method of portrayal for realizing the contrast and unity of music in an opera of stanzaic songs. In an opera, the contrast and harmony of the overall musical interpretation and the unity of their mood can only be achieved when the various melodies are derived mainly from the theme melody. Composers must be skilful in this technique and still compose masterpieces. An opera can touch the heartstrings of the people only when its various songs and its orchestral music, with their peculiar emotional colours, are coordinated harmoniously into one mood.

## **4. OPERA DANCE**

### **1) THERE SHOULD BE DANCES IN AN OPERA**

Dance is an important means of operatic portrayal. The ideological and artistic qualities of an opera can be enhanced by meaningful and beautiful dances. Dance was not regarded as an indispensable component of operas of the past. The means of portrayal employed in works of art may vary with the characteristics of the genre and the intention of the interpretation. But in employing the means of portrayal full consideration must always be given to the particular aspect of life to be interpreted by art and literature and to the people's aesthetic tastes.

Life provides subject matter for art and literature; it also defines their forms and methods. Art and literature which depict life realistically should employ the forms and methods required by life.

The contemporary requirement of art is that, in step with the development of our life in its variety and richness, the role of the group form of art should be enhanced and that individual genres be combined to create a new group form of art.

Theatrical art in our country is creating a new form of art combining music and dance. This form is now used widely in song-

and-dance ensembles and is developing into such an independent form of theatrical art as music-and-dance epics and music-and-dance tales. Creating a group form of theatrical art is a trend in the development of art in our times. This is an expression of a positive aspiration towards portraying the life of the popular masses, who are working enthusiastically for the revolution and construction, in greater depth and breadth.

Introducing dance into opera is a means of widening the scope of portrayal to meet the requirements of life and cater to the people's aesthetic tastes. Dances in an opera enable the opera to depict people's lives, thoughts and feelings in greater variety and richness and add a unique colour to the stage interpretation. Dance, with its own peculiar language, can delineate vividly what cannot easily be described by other genres. In the opera that has the task of representing life realistically on the stage, even the music and stage art can produce greater effect only when they are combined with dance. Just as life has various aspects, so the opera comprises different images and variety in its drama. Thus it is loved by the audience. If only songs are sung on the stage continuously, the drama will flow monotonously no matter how rich the songs are in their timbres. But a dance performed at an appropriate moment will create a change in the dramatic flow, adding to the variety of the stage representation.

Dances, showing the life portrayed in an opera profoundly in various aspects and changing the dramatic flow by various methods of interpretation, render the stage more colourful. When a dance is performed in an appropriate scene to suit the hero's personality and the requirements of life, the dramatic flow will be portrayed much more colourfully, by melodies and rhythmic movements alternately. It will also bring about a fresh change in the music and make the costumes, hand properties, sets and scenes more varied. Further, it will create harmonious formal beauty, revealing beautiful and magnificent scenes on the stage.

Dances make an active contribution to portraying the characters' thoughts and feelings and their lives, bringing out a work's theme, and to making the stage colourful.