

The Study of Opera and Garden Culture in the Ming and Qing Dynasties

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Abstract: The Ming and Qing dynasties was regarded as the study period and the garden culture as the visual angle of view, so the developments of opera and garden culture were regarded as the whole for the integral study among the disciplines. This paper was about the study of the relationship between opera and garden culture in the Ming and Qing dynasties. The innovation lied in that it was not necessary to make a rational inquiry into the traceability from the perspective of historiography, nor did it mean to make some artistic explanations from the perspective of art and architecture, but the relationship between the two was regarded as a spiritual phenomenon. The paper tried to explain how the garden of the Ming and Qing Dynasties was presupposed as the poet imprinting poetic premises of scholars, the opera of the Ming and Qing dynasties in what form fit the cultural taste and aesthetic taste of scholars who inhabited in the garden, how the opera in the garden and the garden in the opera interacted with each other and reflected the life consciousness and spiritual pursuit of the scholars and how the ups and downs of scholars' garden lives had influenced the development of the opera ecology and its evolution. Scholastic cultural traditions and their spiritual pursuit were taken as the main lines of thought to start the study.

1. Introduction

The prosperity of the opera and garden in the Ming and Qing Dynasties was not happened by chance, but also closely linked with the tendency of the intellectuals who pursued an elegant life in the Ming and Qing dynasties. People who pursued an elegant life were not in shortage, and a great number of scholars liked to do that in the Ming and Qing dynasties. However these scholars who lived a relatively well-to-do life-style had a negative psychology for retirement because of the political pressure, therefore they sapped their wills by indulging themselves in elegantly and leisurely pleasure; there were a lot of scholars who felt frustrated about the official career due to the hopelessness of wealth and fame. However, because they had received a rigorous arts literacy training and became gentlemen, they flaunted each other and made self-confirmations. These scholars tended to be comfortable in their daily lives because of their disagreeable heart and soulfulness. Through the development of garden life and the publicity of various demeanors, they gradually became conscious of their ability to contend with the social system by this manner.

2. Analysis of engraving illustrations of operas and novels in Ming and Qing Dynasties

Based on the effect field of the value optimization of the landscape context of the "storytelling" experience, the engraving illustrations of the operas and novels in the Ming and Qing dynasties acted as a traditional pictorial book of the space narrative text. The drawing and marking, as a kind of image duplication technology, was in accordance with the image production efficiency which was produced by photographic film repeatedly printed. Ke Lvge in the "*Chinese art*" on "Ming Dynasty (1368-1644): Printing" also pointed out profoundly: "As a multi-production technology, especially after 1580, the printing, through the wider public, has increasingly affected the applicability of cultural activities that have been constrained to this day. And previously oral knowledge, including artistic knowledge, began to appear in the form of books that provided the classic with authority and the painter's biography of famous painters. These catalogs and

assortments of printed matters for the first time was like techniques of writing' classification, which provided copycats and collectors with prestigious art works, of which one of the high-quality books was *Gu's Picture copybooks* issued in 1603. It had 106 paintings (black and white) created by masters from Gu kaizhi in 4th century to Dong Qichang still alive at that time. Zheng Zhenduo compiled *Chinese Historical Record of Printmaking*, and it included *Gu's picture copybook* that was edited by Ming Gubing, proofread by Xu Shuhui, Liu Guangxin Juan, engraved by Liu Guangxin. The printmaking which was attached to the copybook clearly reflected the scenes of landscape and garden-style elegant life, as shown in Figure 1, Figure 2, Figure 3, and Figure 4.

Table 1 Examples of Scholars' Garden Artistic Activities in the Ming Dynasty

Scholars	Times	Garden	Sources of Materials
Xu Lin	Hongzhi Zhengde	Kuai Garden	“Kuai Garden was built at the east of city where people can have full fun at watching the music performance. Xu was good at creating tunes and Chengnan was good at writing lyrics which were all melodious. During the break of playing chess and drinking, ordering the servants to prepare for the music, and then the music was spread and sung by citizens”(Qian Qianyi: <i>Biography of Poetry Anthology</i> , Top of the Third Set ‘Xu Ran, Xianlin’).
Gu Lin	Hongzhi Zhengde	Xi Garden	“Gu Huayu, the ministry in the prosperous period of Ming dynasty, enjoying the joy of music and instruments in the garden, was the first scholar with talent and romance in Jiangzuo”(Gan Xi: <i>Notes of Nanjing Anecdotes</i> , Volume 1). “When coming back, Gu had a rest at Xi garden, and always had many guests in the house” (<i>History of Ming</i> , Volume 286 ‘No.147 of Biography-Wenyuan 2).
Wang Ao	Hongzhi Zhengde	Zhaoyin GardenYilao Garden	“Wang had a house at Dongting lake, and the house was named Zhaoyin garden” <i>Wu County in Republican period</i> , Top of Volume 39). “Yilao garden was situated at the Xicheng bridge. After Wang retired from the court, he was found of living in the forest, so the officer ordered craftsmen to replicate the things in the forest to please him. When it came to Qing dynasty, the garden was called the ministration of policy.”(<i>Suzhou Prefecture in Qianlong period</i> , Volume 27 ‘House with Garden 1’) “Zhongshe scholar tried his best to decorate his house and courtyard, living a pretty luxurious life with many music performers in his backyard, silk clothes and playthings in the storage, all of which were prepared for amusing his families and relatives”(Huangfu Fang: <i>Huangfu Sixun's Collection</i> , Volume 53 <i>Epitaph for Wang Magistrate of Si'nan Prefecture in Ming</i>).
Yu Xian	Jiajing	Duxing Garden	“The building with several floors and pavilions which was very gorgeous” (Zhou Pei'an: <i>Xijin Kaocheng</i> , Volume 2 ‘Duxing Garden’). “There were pools, music performers, playthings, etc., all of them were superb, the garden was the best in Jiangnan”(Huangyin: <i>The Record of Xijin</i> , Volume 10 ‘Former Assessment-Shengse’).
Zhu Wenshi	Jiajing	Wen Garden	Qingjinping, a rock of Hufeng, bought with rice for several hundred kilograms, was carved exquisitely.....And it was removed into Wen garden, then Qingjin pavilion was built especially for entertainment” (Li Shaowen: <i>Rough Awareness among Folks</i> , Volume 2).
Yao Qiujuan	Jiajing	Shiyin Garden	Jin Baiyu: <i>A Flower-Writing of Shiyin Garden of Yao Qiujuan Attached Qu</i> , Feng Weimin: <i>Zuihuayin-Jin Baiyu Be a Guest at the Garden of Yao Jianqiu Attached Qu</i>
Fan Zhongfang	Jiajing	Xiao Garden	“The prefecture chief and prince's descendants of Hanyang tended to Xiao garden for drawing the peony in spring. They played the jade flute and enjoyed the music accompanied by the moonlight the east wind” (Wang Shizhen: <i>Fan Intoned Sun Drawing the Green Peony</i>).
Gu Zhengxin	Jiajing	Xi Garden	“Xi Garden, situated at Jishan bridge in the east of city, was built by Gu Zhengxin.....The melodious songs were always sung out of the splendid garden” (<i>Songjiang Prefecture in Kangxi Period</i> , Volume 24 <i>The Residence</i>). “Gu' eastern garden and northern garden were the best in Song County. The eastern garden was named as Xi garden which was big enough to have a broad pools and pavilions surrounded the pool. The whole scene was like a fairy place” (<i>Casual Writing Among Folks</i> , Bottom of Volume). “Gu garden was located at the eastern suburb with 100 mu.....Gu garden was full of beautiful songs, green trees and transparent waters, where many girls and scholars got

			“together to visit” Mengzhu: Essays About Life Experience, Volume 10 Ranking No.1).
Gu Zhengyi	Jiajing	Dijin Garden	“The sunglow was shielded by the pavilion of garden and the sounds of playing and singing were full of here owned by a wealthy man” (<i>Songjiang Prefecture in Kangxi Period</i> , Volume 24 <i>The Residence</i>). “(Dijin garden and so on) all of them were grand and the flowers, stones, pavilions like that in the gardens ranked top at that time”(Wu Lvyan: <i>Notes of Wurong</i> , Volume 1).
Wang Xijue	Wanli	Nan Garden	“When Wang Wnesu, the prime minister in ancient China, retired from the court, he went to live in Nan garden and always liked to communicate with Zhao Zhanyun so that their friendship became closer” (Chen Jiru: <i>Wanxiang Hall</i> , Volume 8 <i>Biography of Zhao Zhanyun</i>). “Because remembering the promise and went to the prime minister Wang in Lou River to play (<i>The peony Pavilion</i>). Wang said: ‘I was old, these days I was always felt sorry for that play’.(Tang Xianzu: <i>Crying for Women in Lou River</i>). “Preparing wines and meals for the guests.....and enjoying the legend of <i>Female Number One Scholar of Golden Flower</i> ” (Feng Mengzhen: <i>Collection of Kuaixue Hall</i> , Volume59). “The music was sung in the chrysanthemum pavilion and spread to the Paeonia lactiflora.” Note: “Nan Garden of Wang” (Wang Shizhen: <i>Poem on Two Ordinary People in Xin'an</i> , Volume 6 <i>Three Songs for Zhao Wulao</i>).
Dong Fen	Wanli	Guizun Manor	“A winding poor, a tower many flowers and trees were arranged in Guizun manor. The sounds of birds can be heard when you looked up and the fishes can be seen when you looked down. The sounds of songs and instruments were penetrated into the night with the moonlight reflected down the river, however nobody realized it came to dawn” (Mao Kun: <i>Collection of Mao Lumen</i> , Volume 13 <i>Birthday Congratulation for Dong, Bo Deyang</i>). “The minister Dong was richest in Sanwu with an area of thousands of acres.....There were more than one thousand servants and over three hundred boats in the manor. Moreover over fifty performers were divided into three groups for wind music, opera performances and served beside the guests. Every time the banquet was held, the manor was filled with songs and laughter all that showed a lively and jolly atmosphere” (Fan Shouji: <i>Tunes Never Stop</i> , Volume 2).
An Shaofang	Wanli	Xilin	“Maoqin boasted of abundant goods and had a garden named Xilin where was very gorgeous” (Chen Tian: <i>Chronicle of Poems in Ming</i> , Gengqian Volume 27“An Shaofang”). “There was a rock in Xilin where had tall trees, clean creek, several pavilions and flowers, so they usually walked or rode through the garden”(Chen Jiru: <i>Wanxiang Hall</i> , Volume 9: <i>Biography of An Yanting</i>); (Jiang Shaoshu: <i>Silent History of Poetry</i> , Volume 4).
Gu Dadian	Wanli	Harmony Garden	“There were harmony garden and Qingyin pavilion in Gu’s house with wonderful scenery. He was good at music and can compose it by himself. Nowadays more and more music performers have appeared in Songling which was inherited from him” (Qian Qianyi: <i>Biography of Poetry Anthology</i> , Middle of Fourth Set “Gu Dadian”) “There was a music of Qingshang in my house.....Sometimes Gu played the music made by himself with orchestra, at that time Shenjing, the officer of personnel, also was skillful at music, so he always sang with Gu. Others envied them and started to trained music performers, thus the music was prevalent at the beginning of them two”(Pan Guaizhang: <i>Songling Literature</i> Volume 9). “This was a famous place where I once travelled. I remembered the pavilion and beautiful flowers with bright moonlight. The past good indeed was not reoccurred but the talents and romance of famous people would last forever”.....(Shen Yongcuo: <i>Magnolia·Feeling for Old Times at Harmony Garden in Winter</i>)



Figure 1



Figure 2

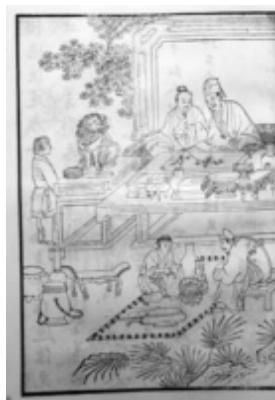


Figure 3



Figure 4

Sense of mechanical replica. When the rubbing was directly removed from the antiquities, it became a plane substitute for the antiquities. Because of the things from ancient times, they also had a sense of history. ... Interestingly, the rise of Chinese literati paintings started in the Northern Song Dynasty and epigraphy was exactly appeared at that time. Both of them were the products of literati culture. ".

3. Landscape engraving analysis in "illustrative plates style"

"Copybook" included stone copybook, picture copybook, book charts, and music in the tastings and creations of traditional Chinese art. Once a form of art has become an "illustrative plate style", it meant there was a standard sample (classification, type), the form of law, the type of culture and the pattern of design. For example, the illustrative plate of garden design was filled with the landscape design meaning of garden theme, which contained a kind of typical routine of landscape construction. The compositions of landscape architecture, flowers and trees or characters portrayed were all in a mature manner with a very detailed depiction and the clear slightest lines.

And until Wanli and Tianqi of Ming Dynasty, not only Gu bing of Wulin edited *Gu's picture Copybook*, Wang in Wanling published *Song Poems' picture Copybook*, Huang Fengchi of Huizhou selected and complied *Tang Poetry' picture Copybook*, Zang Maoxun of Changxing compiled *Yuan Songs Selection*, all of them integrated" poetry • book • painting • text "into the entirety which have come out in succession in an illustrative plate type. "Stone" in the garden appraisal in the Ming and Qing Dynasties occupied an important position, and *Vegetable Garden's Stone Copybook* created by Lin Youlin made a detailed explanation for the uses of stone like overlaying rockery and miniature rockery. *Juzhen Version Program for the Hall of Martial Valor* was composed by Jin Jian in Qing dynasty from standards like the movable type size, layout length, the size of type page to define the levels, terms and drawings instructions, as well as recorded and summed up for details the processes of the wooden movable type word and its printing and engraving. In particular, the book was also equipped with illustrations for the spectral arrangement and landscape construction of the scene.

The "garden" in Qing Liyu's *Mustard Seed Garden Paintings* was also the conciseness and extraction of landscape image features in various categories of past paintings (including printmaking illustrations of operas and novels in the Ming and Qing Dynasties), which were the collection and identification of garden images of historical materials, just like Li Yu's intention of "people who love landscape in the world have the joy of mountains and rivers" (Figure 5, Figure 6, Figure 7).

Moreover, the visual form mechanism of garden image had the effect of schema construction and spillover effect of garden art in the form of garden-style propagation, practice and reconstruction. From the visual presentation of "the image of the landscape world" and "the tension of the ideal landscape" to the garden materialization process of garden image, it would also experience the re-creation process in the materials and traditional process technology. In the aspect of structural art research of its cartography, the principle of "parallel" landscape formal structure has become the

integral mechanism of "compactness, multi-core and flexibility" of the entire spatial form, which ensured the uniformity, compactness and integrity of landscape structure modeling, the design and planning features in the *Hung Snow Legend* complied by Qing linqing and painted by Wang Chunquan was very prominent (Figure 8, Figure 9, Figure 10, Figure 11).

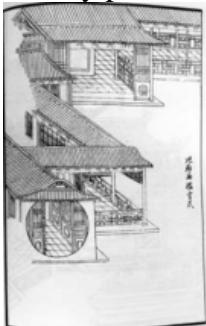


Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8

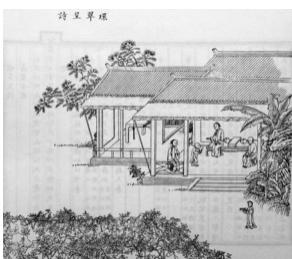


Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11

Thanks to the depth caused by the reversibility of the point of view and the vanishing point, the third dimension was revealed by this part of the garden expansion. In the process, visitors can experience the static state of multi-dimensional art and the three-dimensional imagination would be happened from that.

4. Landscape engraving analysis in "illustrative plates style"

Literary and artistic content has never been lacking in the life of ancient Chinese scholars. Throughout the history of Chinese literature, the development and evolution of new literary and art styles were often driven by the participation of the scholarly class. The same was true for poetry, Ci, Sanqu and novels, meanwhile opera was no exception. During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, operas gradually entered the life of scholars, and rapidly became the art form of aesthetic concepts and interests of the scholar class. In the meantime, the spirit of the building garden for scholars was prevalent, under the impetus of this lifestyle, the art of Chinese classical garden completed its ultimate aesthetics.

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