

*From “Feudal Rubbish” to “National Treasure”:
The Transformation and Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage of China
A Case Study of Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre*

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by

Chang Liu, M.A.
from Beijing, China

First Examiner: Prof. Dr. Marie-Theres Albert
Second Examiner: Prof. Dr. Klaus Mühlhahn
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ABSTRACT

This study examines the history of the transformation of the intangible cultural heritage of China and the efforts to safeguard it, using the case study of Huanxian Daoqing shadow theatre. A regional style of Chinese shadow theatre, Daoqing has undergone dramatic transformation from 1949 to 2013, from being labeled in socialist China as a form of “feudal rubbish” to be eradicated, to being safeguarded as “national treasure”. The changes in Daoqing’s social identity, function, value, interpretation, transmission and safeguarding efforts can be observed in the discourses of both the authorities and the practicing community. These changes may be understood as part of three different stages in the political and economic transformation of socialist China.

The researcher has collected governmental archives and conducted semi-structured interviews with Daoqing inheritors in an interpretative phenomenological analysis approach. This thesis analyses how, following Hobsbawm’s argument, Daoqing as an intangible cultural heritage involves an “invention of tradition” through joint actions of the Chinese government and the Huanxian community.

This research can help provide heritage policy makers, the community and other stakeholders with insights into challenges that may be faced in the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage. The theoretical framework, the methods and the research results from the government archives and interviews will hopefully serve to provide some new ideas as a prototypical approach to help future research on other forms of cultural heritage in China.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die vorliegende Arbeit beleuchtet die Geschichte der Transformation und der Wahrung des immateriellen Kulturerbes in China am Beispiel des Huanxing Daoqing Schattentheaters. Daoqing, eine regionale Spielart des chinesischen Schattentheaters, unterlag im Zeitraum zwischen 1949 und 2013 einem dramatischen Wandel: Einst abgetan und als "feudaler Müll" fast vollständig aus der kulturellen Landkarte Chinas ausgeradiert, wandelte es sich in der Betrachtung zum "nationalen Kleinod". Die Veränderungen der sozialen Rolle und Funktion, des kulturellen Wertes, der Interpretation, der Weitergabe des Verständnisses des Daoqing von Generation zu Generation und die Bemühungen diese Form des Schattentheaters zu erhalten, können sowohl im Diskurs des Staates, als auch im Diskurs der das Daoqing-Theater realisierenden Gemeinschaft dargestellt werden. Diese Veränderungen können als Teil einer dreistufigen Transformation verstanden werden, der das politische und ökonomische China ausgesetzt ist.

Die Autorin studierte staatliche Archive und führte im Rahmen eines interpretativ-phänomenologischen Analyseansatzes leitfadengesteuerte Interviews mit in der Tradition des Daoqing stehenden Personen durch. Eric Hobsbawms Argumentation folgend wird in der vorliegenden Arbeit dargelegt, wie Daoqing als immaterielles Kulturerbe eine "Findung der Tradition" durch gemeinschaftliches Wirken der chinesischen Regierung und der das Huanxian Daoqing pflegenden Gemeinschaft evoziert.

Die Betrachtung immateriellen Kulturerbes als ein organisches Gefüge innerhalb einer Gesellschaft, deren soziales Leben ständigen Änderungen unterworfen ist, impliziert auch eine Veränderung und fortwährende Umgestaltung des Daoqing Schattentheaters

in Huanxing. Die vorliegende Forschungsarbeit bietet Erkenntnisse, die der gesetzgebenden Instanz und der Gesellschaft nützlich sein können, die bei der Erhaltung und dem Schutz von immateriellem Kulturerbe auftretenden Herausforderungen zu meistern. Der theoretische Rahmen, die der Arbeit zugrunde liegende Methodik und die Ergebnisse der Analyse der Archive und Interviews können helfen, neue prototypische Ideen und Herangehensweisen für zukünftige Forschungsprojekte und Studien anderer Formen des Kulturerbes in China zu etablieren.

PREFACE

The people of Huanxian can never forget the events of early spring, before the traditional Chinese New Year of 1967. Their traditional rituals were banned and temples were torn down; the way of life that they knew just came to a halt. Towards the end of 1966, as the Cultural Revolution campaign was spreading in China, the new Communist government declared that certain rituals of the Daoqing shadow theatre in Huanxian community -- including praying for rain and celebrating the deities' birthdays in the temple -- were ideas of the feudal classes standing in the way of socialist ideas. Hence in the run-up to Chinese Lunar New Year, the government commanded the people of Huanxian to burn all shadow puppets and props and to pull down the temple buildings that hosted shadow theatre ceremonies.

This controversial move by the government was insensitive to the innocent cultural expression by the custodians of and participants in these collective rituals, which had been in existence for many centuries. Some local people expressed concern over the morality and authority of a government which had such low regard for cultural expressions.

As Chinese New Year approached, the people of Huanxian were not deterred and went ahead with the preparation of their rituals. On the first day of the Chinese New Year festivities, while the community was celebrating the Jade Emperor, ruler of the spirit world and the tutelary deity of the Huanxian community, Red Guards and soldiers stormed the temples and the surrounding area, to disperse the participants in the ceremonies and their audience. Protests followed, but the soldiers prevailed, and they went on to demolish the supporting pillars of the shadow theatre stage, the ancestral temple and the arrangements of religious objects.

As dawn broke, the Red Guards ransacked people's homes in Huanxian, destroying and burning any evidence of "feudal products" like shadow puppets and their production tools and musical instruments. Those who resisted handing in the items were imprisoned. In the dark of night, the frightened villagers began to look for places to hide their shadow puppets and instruments, since most families had some puppets in their houses. They dug secret holes in the ground, opened wells, and tried to find the most unlikely places to hide their props, even if this was in violation of the sanctity of shadow puppets. Some shadow puppetry masters were forced to flee their homes and hide in the mountains in order to escape the brutality of the Red Guards.

By early 1968, the Communist regime had successfully wiped out all the traditional shadow performances in Huanxian. Ritual ceremonies and other local activities related to Daoism and Confucianism were forcibly replaced by Beijing-style operas with revolutionary themes. The destruction of their shadow theatre was a pivotal event in a long succession of tragedies for the community in Huanxian under the new Communist power. This situation spanned the last 10 years of the Mao era (1949-1976). Two decades after the destruction of shadow theatre, and with the gradual relaxation of political control, people in Huanxian remained in fear and were cautious about giving performances.

However, the situation changed dramatically at the end of the 1990s. The Communist cadres came back to the families in Huanxian, persuading the people to practice Daoqing shadow theatre and produce the shadow puppets again, with the explanation that "Daoqing shadow theatre is the intangible cultural heritage of our nation". Painful memories and the unexpected change of circumstances created mixed feelings and confusion in the local community.

My interest in and quest for knowledge about Daoqing shadow theatre began

in 2009 when I visited Huanxian. I was fascinated by the art of shadow theatre and people's dedication to it; subsequently I published a book detailing the puppets of traditional Daoqing shadow theatre. After interacting with the local community, hearing and sharing their story, not only about the Maoist era but also the situation of Daoqing in the post-Mao era, I decided to undertake the study of Daoqing shadow theatre as my long-term research topic. Following up on this interest and experience, the goal of my research was to investigate the transformation of the intangible cultural heritage and the effort to safeguard it in socialist China. Daoqing shadow theatre in Huanxian is an ideal case study for this kind of research.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Writing a thesis can be a lonely journey and a stressful process. Some might say that doing a PhD is like persevering in the darkness of a tunnel, and I would have to agree. Completing this thesis has been one of the greatest challenges in my life. Looking back on the past few years, I have felt like someone being tested by walking in a dark tunnel, going from worry and despair to picking up the courage to go forward. I have stumbled, I have fallen, but I had to keep believing that I would find the way out. Even if I seemed to be going the wrong way, I could only sigh and start again, until I saw a little light at the end of the tunnel. During this process of exploration, I could not have made it through the difficult times without those who have shown concern and given me support as I walked towards the light. Now, I would like to express my gratitude here.

First and foremost, I would like to sincerely thank my supervisor, Prof. Marie-Theres Albert, for the tremendous support and constant patience throughout my doctoral studies in Germany. I have to say: your knowledge, your wisdom and your spirit of always striving for excellence will remain an inspiring example for the rest of my life. This dissertation would not have been possible without her guidance and encouragement. My gratitude and deepest appreciation are beyond what mere words can express. I feel very fortunate to have had Prof. Marie-Theres Albert as my supervisor since my Masters degree in Germany. I simply could not wish for a better supervisor.

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recommended me and the guidance you have provided for my thesis have helped me emerge from those times of major difficulties. During this long process of writing, whenever I was in self-doubt, speaking with Prof. Klau Mühlhahn would give me motivation to kick-start my research again.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Focus of the Research

1.1.1 Daoqing Shadow Theatre: a Living Tradition in Danger

In this research, the Huanxian Daoqing (Daoist Style) shadow theatre (*huan xian dao qing pi ying* 環縣道情皮影) (Daoqing hereafter) is used as a case study to investigate the efforts to transform and safeguard the intangible cultural heritage in rural areas of socialist China. Daoqing, performed in the region of “Huanxian” and other parts of Gansu province, is one of the representative forms of shadow theatre in China (C. Liu 2011, 2011a, 2012; L. Wei, 2008). Chinese shadow theatre, known as “leather shadow play” (*pi ying xi* 皮影戲) or “lamp shadow show” (*deng ying xi* 燈影戲), is one of the earliest performing arts in the world involving action behind a screen (Broman, 1995; Dolby, 1978; Grube, 1915; Hardiman, 1995; Jiang, 1991; Mair, 1988; Wimsatt, 1936; Osnes, 2010). The ancient Chinese people adopted light and shadow as a medium and created a kind of drama with a beautiful combination of folk literature, carving, painting, literature, songs, music and performance, embodying the social life, folk customs and habits of the people (L. Chang, 1984; Fan Pen Li Chen, 1999, 2003, 2004, 2007).

As one of the most representative schools of Chinese shadow theatre, with a long history, Daoqing is of considerable vocal and aesthetic interest; it reflects the beliefs, customs, folk knowledge and ecological understanding of the agrarian cultivators of the Loess Plateau region (C. Liu, 2012; Yang & Hao, 2009). It is an element in the rich intangible heritage that went into forming the identity of the Han Chinese ethnic group, who constitute the majority of China’s population.

However, in the 60 years of socialist China this ancient tradition has

undergone a painful transformation (Liu, 2011, 2011a, 2012; F. Zhao, 2010). For the first 30 years, it was labeled “feudal rubbish”, as part of the superstition which was to be eradicated all over China; in the subsequent 30 years, it became “national treasure”, as one of the most representative forms of intangible cultural heritage.

Today, Daoqing is on the verge of extinction. Its performing skills and production techniques are facing severe challenges in Huanxian. In her book, *Chinese Shadow Theatre: History, Popular Religion, and Women Warriors*, American Sinologist, Fan Pen Li Chen (2007), points out that the survival of Chinese shadow theatre is threatened. “According to Jiang Yuxiang, who travelled throughout China in search of shadow play troupes during the early 1980s, more than 85 per cent of the troupes he visited were no longer in existence by the end of the 1990s” (p. 3). The same fate has befallen Daoqing. The inventory conducted by the Huanxian government in 2003 shows that only 15 out of 224 Daoqing puppeteers were less than 30 years old (Figure 1, Figure 2). This means that Daoqing in Huanxian will be approaching extinction in 40 years (Compilation Committee of the Annals of the Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre [CCAHDST], 2006).

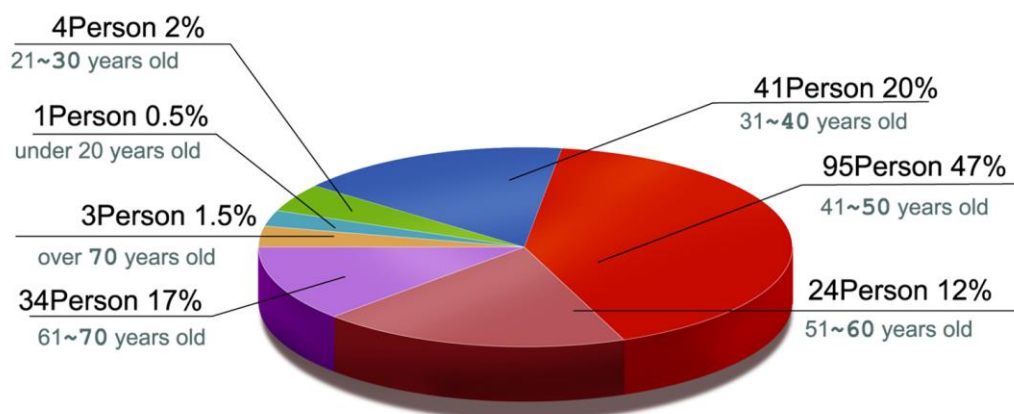


Figure 1: Age Structure of Daoqing Performers in 2003. Source: CCAHDST, 2006.

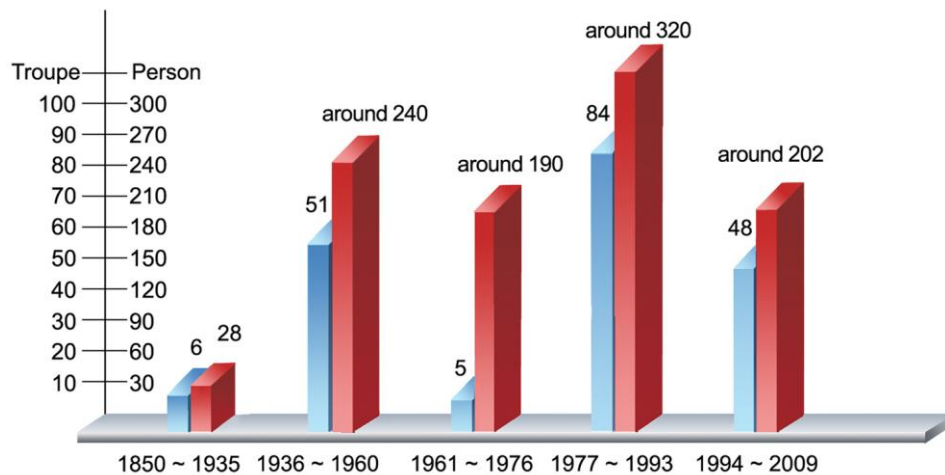


Figure 2: Daoqing Troupes and Performers in Huanxian from 1850-2009, Source: CCAHDST, 2006.

Daoqing has been popular in Huanxian for a long time as a form of daily activity of the Chinese illiterate and semi-literate people. The various aspects of Daoqing may be understood as an example of folk performing arts, as a traditional handicraft, as part of the rituals in folk belief and worship or as a form of rural entertainment, but for the purpose of this research, Daoqing will be identified as a “little tradition” (Redfield, 1956) which has developed over time in Huanxian county¹. Daoqing is shaped, orally transmitted, localized and practiced by Huanxian’s local people “in their village communities” (ibid., p. 70).

Daoqing as an example of China’s “little”, “low” or “folk” traditions has been relatively neglected by scholars. By contrast, those aspects of intangible cultural heritage such as Kunqu opera and the art of Guqin music which were enjoyed by the educated “elite” groups, in the “great”, “high” or “elite” tradition, have been relatively

¹ The terms “little traditions” and “great traditions” were first postulated and elaborated by anthropologist Robert Redfield in his book *Peasant Society and Culture* (Redfield, 1956), and further developed by Jorgensen (1997). “Little traditions” refer to those that are constrained, orally transmitted, localized and practiced by a particular ethnicity “in their village communities” (Redfield, 1956, p. 70). By contrast, “great traditions” are often considered as more sophisticated, structurally complex, practiced mainly by professional artists in urban centers with “a codified set of norms, beliefs, and aesthetic and intellectual achievements by a ruling elite” (Randal, 1997, p. 427). According to Redfield, “little traditions” and “great traditions” are “interdependent” (p. 71).

well investigated. Fan Pen Li Chen (1992) suggests that understanding a “little tradition” like China shadow theatre “can give us insight into the idea and sub-cultures of the traditional illiterate masses – indeed, of the vast majority of the Chinese population” (p. 13). Thus, the focus on the changing of a “little tradition” form like Daoqing in socialist China can give one some insight into the efforts to transform and safeguard intangible cultural folk heritage.

1.1.2 Research Objectives and Research Questions

Taking Daoqing as a case study, the research will focus on the history of the transformation of the intangible cultural heritage in socialist China. The past constrains the present, and from the present arise varied possibilities for the future (Mühlhahn, 2009). Intangible cultural heritage “moves from the past to the present, and by which it shapes the futures” (Albert, 2010a, p. 19). Thus, to understand the unique discursive formation of the intangible heritage of China and what is transpiring in the intangible cultural heritage today, one must understand the events of the preceding period. In this research, the exploration of Daoqing in the past, in the broader framework of the political and economic transformation of Chinese society, helps to illuminate its current status and the scenario for the future.

Therefore, the broad research objective of this study is to trace the transformation trajectory of the intangible cultural heritage in socialist China in the process of political-economic change. Three specific objectives delineate the research. The first is to capture the major pattern of the transformation of Daoqing from 1949 to 2013 and to clarify how Daoqing was affected by political and economic change. The second objective is to study the differences and similarities between the state’s discourse and the community’s discourse with regard to the interpretation of Daoqing, attitude to it and efforts to safeguard it, in three different eras, and to draw conclusions

about the relationship between the state and community concerning Daoqing. The third is to explore Daoqing's development for the future.

To guide the research, the following research questions are proposed:

- How many periods of major transformation has Daoqing experienced in the past 60 years, under the administration of the Chinese Communist Party? What are the features of Daoqing's transformation in each of these different eras?
- How have the policies for and interpretations of Daoqing changed in the authority's discourse in China in these different eras or stages, and how have the interpretations and safeguarding activities of the community changed correspondingly in the same eras? What is the relationship between the state and the community in negotiating the use of Daoqing for different goals?
- What are the general problems or challenges for China in safeguarding the intangible heritage? How is this reflected in the question of Daoqing's survival?

1.2 Conceptual Framework of the Study

1.2.1 Conceptual Diagram

This research focuses on Daoqing's transformation during the period under the Chinese Communist Party, from 1949 to the present. The transformation trajectory is divided into three significant historical periods in which changes in Daoqing may be noted, namely the Mao Zedong era (1949-1976), Deng Xiaoping's Economic Reform period (1978-1997) and Hu Jintao's Harmonious Society period (2002-2013). In these three different periods, the research relies on three specific historical events to analyze the research data and approach to the research questions, namely, the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), the Initial Period of Economic Reform (1978-1997) and China's ratification of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) (hereafter, Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention).

Two key dimensions provide the general interpretative framework in this research. The first of these is the dimension of the state, or the government's intervention on Daoqing's transformation and safeguarding. As a power institution, government has the capacity to allocate social, cultural, economic, educational and legal resources to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage and is able to intervene in each phase. The official interpretation of Daoqing, national safeguarding policy, and the political and economic intervention into Daoqing all have to be taken into account in studying Daoqing.

The second dimension is the local community's understanding and their involvement in safeguarding Daoqing. To focus on the Huanxian community is one of the core features of this research. Community members are the people who really practice, transmit and develop Daoqing in Huanxian. However, the fact is that their voices are always neglected because "they differ from those experts that are members of the so-called *authorized discourse*" but "belong to the *non-authorized discourse*" (Albert, 2013, p.13).

Based on the three significant events in three historical periods, the conceptual framework assumes a perspective that Daoqing is located and can be examined within a social system, in terms of political-economic transformations in socialist China. According to A. Kroeber's argument (1917) that "the social or cultural is in its very essence non-individual" (p. 192), Daoqing is identified in this research as a "Superorganic" system (ibid.), or "a living entity" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004, p. 53) encompassing "the masterpieces, the people, as well as their habitus and habitat" (ibid.).

This research is purposely limited to analyzing the changes in Daoqing's

interpretation, social role, function, value, transmission and safeguarding effort, both in the Chinese authorities' discourse and the practicing community's discourse, in different time periods depending on three historical events. Apart from background information on the historical origin and religious significance of Chinese shadow theatre in the period from the Han dynasty to the Republic of China, the time span of this research extends from 1949 to 2013. In doing so, the research also identifies three significant eras, in each of which the intangible cultural heritage of China experienced a different kind of change, as a critical dividing juncture for comparative purposes (Figure 3).

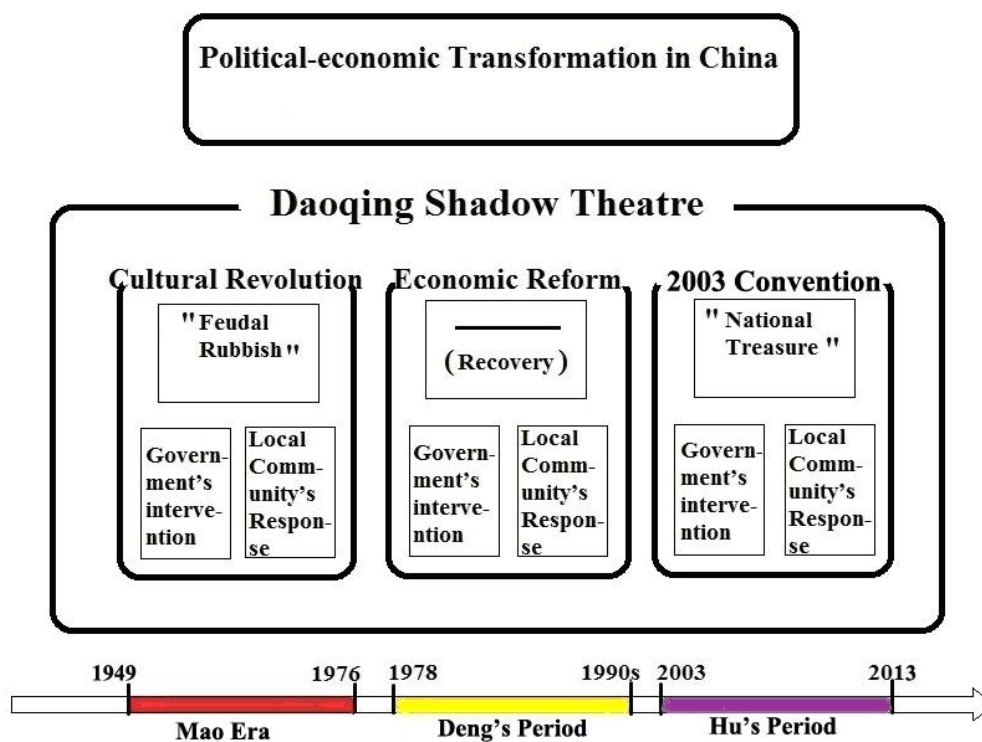


Figure 3: Conceptual Diagram

1.2.2 Applying a Socio-Historical Approach

Considering that heritage studies itself is “interdisciplinary” (Albert, 2013; Harrison, 2010, 2013; Harvey, 2001; Evans & Boswell, 1999; Carman & Sørensen, 2009; L. Smith, 2006) in scope and approach, it stands at a crossroads of cultural

sciences, history, art history, geology, sociology, archaeology, anthropology, folkloristic, museology, architecture, urban planning, ecology, law and politics (Albert, 2013; Carman & Sørensen, 2009; Baugher, 2013; Harrison, 2013; Gao, 2007). Among these academic fields, this research is located in the field of history, but at the same time it involves an intersection between historical studies and sociology. In her paper *World Heritage and Cultural Diversity: What Do They Have in Common?* Albert (2010) states that “heritage can be considered in the context of time and space” (p. 20). This point of view is also applicable to studying intangible cultural heritage, and serves as the basis for building the conceptual framework. In this research, “time” is considered as the historical dimension from a historical perspective and “space” refers to the social dimension from a sociological perspective.

These concepts of “time” and “space” led the researcher to adopt “a holistic and socio-historical interpretation” (Albert, 2006a, p, 35) for studying intangible cultural heritage in China. Without a holistic and socio-historical interpretation of a cultural asset, this asset would be reduced to the construction of a cultural object, which is determined by its temporal and spatial limits. This point of view underpins the socio-historical approach on which this research is based. It is the “combination of two widely-recognized dimensions: a systematic dimension (social) and a chronological dimension (historical)” (Kang, 2009, p. 6). By adopting a socio-historical approach, the historical development of the intangible cultural heritage is observed as the chronological dimension, through a timeline, in order to explore the connection between the past, the present and the future; issues concerning the influence of political and economic interests, national policy and involvement of the community in safeguarding activities are addressed as the sociological dimension.

In examining intangible cultural heritage, historical orientation and sociological perspective are not contradictory. At one time or another, the academic

fields of history and sociology have been interdisciplinary highways, and both have also been complementary to each other (Giddens, 1979; Burke, 1980; Goldthorpe, 1991; Wolff, 1959; Oppenheimer, 1927)

On the one hand, historical studies provide a scientific approach for studying heritage. Research on tangible heritage has been presented from a historical point of view by many scholars, such as von der Heide (2010), Derkovic (2010), Klimpke (2006) and Tadmoury (2008). As with tangible heritage, the dynamic feature of intangible cultural heritage determines its internal connection with historical studies in theme and method. McLaren (2010), in her paper under the title *Revitalisation of the Folk Epics of the Lower Yangzi Delta: an Example of China's Intangible Cultural Heritage*, dedicated a special section to discussing the impact of history on changes in Chinese living traditions, because “the most obvious cause of the transformation of intangible heritage is to be found in a nation’s history” (p. 15). Kurin (2007) emphasizes that one can only understand the methods and issues in intangible heritage today by “historically-based assessments” (p.11). Historical studies are not merely used in order to understand the case studies of tangible and intangible heritage in different nations, but also contribute to the UNESCO Convention itself. Albert (2010a) points out that “World Heritage for human development most notable lies in the understanding of how human interventions in material and immaterial culture have created heritage from a historical point of view” (p.18).

On the other hand, the relationship between sociology and history in heritage studies is complex, because heritage is “the product of a social interpretation of both the present and of history” (Albert, 2006a, p. 23). Scientific research studies in the field of sociology which also have a historical perspective include the paper by van der Auwera and Schramme, published in 2009 under the title *Civil Society Action in the Field of Cultural Heritage* (Van der Auwera & Schramme, 2011), Ma Xiao and

Zhang Rong’s (2011) *Sociological Inquiry into Protection of Agricultural Heritage through the Development of Tourism*, Wang Shuyi’s (2008) *Tradition, Memory and the Culture of Place: Continuity and Change in the Ancient City of Pingyao, China*, and Guo Maorong (2011) *The Reconstruction of Traditional Craft Organization and the Protection of Rural Cultural Heritage: Analysis Based on the Survey of Yongchun Painting Basket Handicraft Industry in South Fujian*, and so on.

In studying Daoqing, the historical method is to examine the longitude of Daoqing in a chronological dimension, while the sociological approach is used as a systematic dimension to explore the latitude of Daoqing’s system. Juxtaposing these two dimensions represents the socio-historical approach to this research (Figure 4).

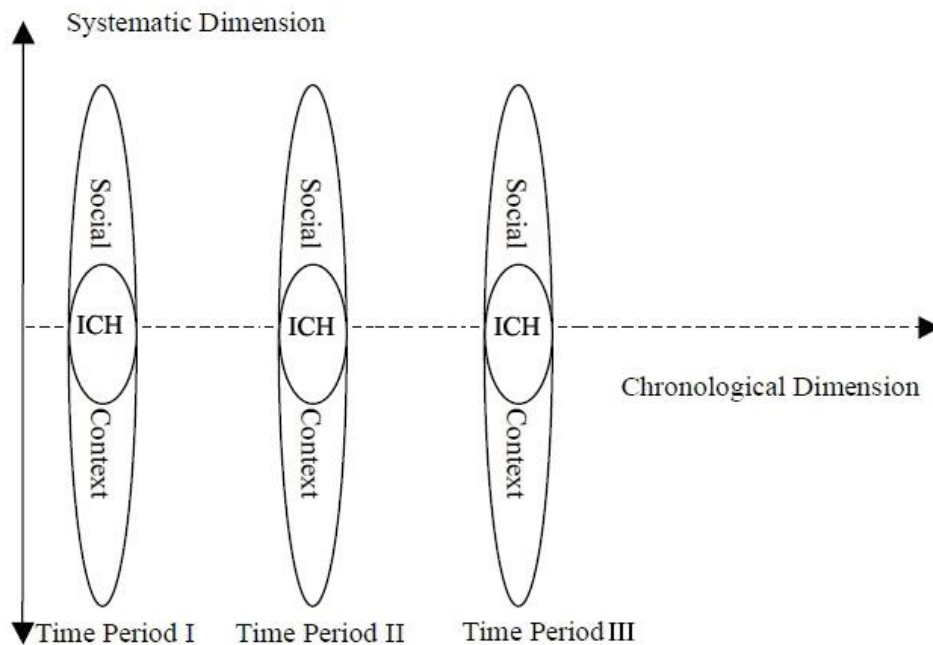


Figure 4: A Socio-Historical Approach

The following are the two main hypotheses that underpin the socio-historical approach in this study: firstly, we assume that “heritage is made up from the historic elements of cultures, which are handed down from generation to generation” (Albert,

2006a, p. 22). In order to examine the transformation of Daoqing, the historical structure of Daoqing has to be explored. In doing so, the significant historical events affecting the changes in Daoqing need to be identified and classified into different eras based on their historical occurrence. The horizontal axis is based on a chronological perspective, so as to explain the peculiarities of each era as they relate to changes in Daoqing. History retains the past and influences the future (Lowenthal, 1985; Mühlhahn, 2009). The earlier state and the later development of Daoqing are strung together on the horizontal axis as an entirety.

The second hypothesis is that intangible cultural heritage is “a living entity” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004, p.53) or a “superorganic” (Kroeber, 1917, p. 192) system, which is influenced by other social sub-systems in the process of transformation. According to Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2004), intangible cultural heritage encompasses “the masterpieces, the people, as well as their habitus and habitat” (p. 53). She further describes intangible heritage or culture thus: “culture like natural heritage, it is alive”; and one may also consider that “the task is to sustain the whole system as a living entity” (ibid.). This vision considers intangible cultural heritage not only as a consecrated masterpiece of the past to be venerated and maintained, but also as a result of particular social and ecological activities that are developed by a certain cultural community. Attention should not merely focus on the artifacts, but above all on the persons, as well as on their entire habitus and habitat, which is understood as their life space and social world (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004).

The notion of habitus developed by Bourdieu further helps to understand how intangible cultural heritage is a sub-system. The habitus, according to Bourdieu (2010), “is an infinite capacity for generating products – thoughts, perceptions, expressions and actions – whose limits are set by the historically and socially situated

conditions of its production” (p. 55). In the case of intangible cultural heritage, habitus refers to the socio-historical and cultural background of the people who are involved; this does not just mean the environment in which they live, but also the particular situations in which the cultural expressions are enacted.

If intangible cultural heritage is understood as “a living entity”, then it is also one of the sub-systems located within the social system and crossing with other sub-systems. This is because “cultures are never closed systems” (Albert, 2010a, p. 19). Within the social system, politics and economy are also recognized as a kind of sub-system crossing and paralleling with each other (Johnson, 1961; Yu, 1997). They influence and are influenced by each other and become a combination of forces on intangible cultural heritage. Therefore, the development of intangible cultural heritage is not only the result of the interactions between other sub-systems, but is also governed and interpreted by the interactions between the intangible cultural heritage sub-system and various sub-systems in which it is located. In the case of Daoqing, the sociological approach provides a systematic dimension to analyze how political and economic sub-systems interact with and affect Daoqing and how Daoqing fits into the whole social context.

The historical perspective and the sociological view are inextricably interlinked to form the socio-historical framework as a single entity. They cannot be seen as separate components. The conceptual framework applied in this research, which is based on a socio-historical approach, contributes not only to delineating Daoqing’s transformation but also to explaining the experience of other folk traditions in socialist China.

1.3 Scope of Study

1.3.1 Perspectives on Intangible Cultural Heritage

In October 2003, the UNESCO General Conference approved the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention. Its Article 2 describes the intangible cultural heritage as “practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills, that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage” (UNESCO, 2003). The Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention identifies oral traditions and performing arts, social practices, forms of knowledge and traditional craftsmanship transmitted within communities as the categories of intangible culture heritage (Kurin, 2007). The Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention aims “to ensure the survival and vitality of the world’s living local, national, and regional cultural heritage in the face of increasing globalization” (ibid., p. 10) and its perceived homogenizing effects on culture (Albert, 2010, 2012; Matsuura, 2004, Aikawa, 2009; Hafstein, 2004, Bedjaoui, 2004).

It is the first international legal instrument that aims at safeguarding living human practices and expressions as independent objects but not as “an accompaniment to tangible heritage” (Stefano, 2009, p. 120). It “becomes the standard-setting instrument for the safeguarding of living cultural heritage and a routine part of state and institutional practice” (Kurin, 2007, p. 12). The concept of intangible cultural heritage in the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention stretches the definition of cultural heritage beyond its former delimitations, and exposes the limitation of what the World Heritage Convention defined as cultural heritage in 1972 (Ruggles & Silverman, 2009). The motivation for preserving the past in the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention lies beyond the materials of fabrication.

Moving away from the paradigm of the World Heritage Convention, which

centered on preserving the objective materiality of history, and away also from putting experts in the dominant position within conservation activities, the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention redirected the approach towards the subjective introspection of the human being, and drew attention to reserving a vital role for the communities to which the cultural heritage is attributed, not only as the practitioners, but also in a decision-making capacity (Hafstein, 2004). Where tangible heritage focuses on the objective material culture and on authority and takes an archival approach, intangible cultural heritage centers on the subjective human “dynamic process” (Albert, 2013, p.13), community participation and a “process-oriented approach” (Bortolotto, 2007, p. 22). It reveals the innovation and “a radical paradigm shift” (Ruggles & Silverman. 2009, p. 11) of UNESCO’s involvement with heritage.

a. From Objective Cultural Object to the Subjective Human Dynamic Processes

The Intangible Cultural Heritage is defined by William Logan (2007) as the “heritage that is embodied in people rather than in inanimate objects” (p. 33). In other words, it is living heritage practiced and expressed by certain communities and the human beings within them, in the form of oral traditions, performance, music, festivals, rituals, systems of knowledge and craftsmanship (Kurin, 2004).

The new definition proposed by UNESCO suggests that the intangible cultural heritage is not only the products, objectified remains of living cultural forms; there is continuity in its practice and it has to be dynamic and sustainable within the cultural community (Seitel, 2001). As Kurin (2007) argued, “it was not the songs as recorded on sound tapes or in digital form, or their transcriptions. It is the actual singing of the songs” (p. 12). This means that intangible cultural heritage does not rest on the immateriality of cultural expression, but rather on the underpinning philosophical idea that it is to be understood in terms of the “subjective experience of

the human being” (Ruggles & Silverman. 2009, p. 11). Hence, it involves a progressive shift away from conceiving the elements of cultural heritage merely as objects to understanding them as dynamic human processes.

The idea of the World Heritage Convention proves the success of UNESCO’s work on heritage, but from 1973 until the end of the Cold War, it was criticized by international society for its inadequacies in the definition of heritage, the exclusion of non-physical heritage and its limitation to the traditional categories of classical tangible material manifestation (Bortolotto, 2007). The World Heritage list, as established by the World Heritage Convention, concentrates merely on “great” monuments and “elite” civilizations, conceived as artistic masterpieces. Although the new category “cultural landscape” was brought into the Convention later, the intangible value was merely seen as an attachment to tangibility.

For instance, in 1973 the government of Bolivia confronted the problem of the exclusion of popular cultural expressions from the concept of cultural heritage, and proposed to develop a new tool for the protection of folklore to the Universal Copyright Convention (Geneva, 6 September 1952; revised, Paris, 24 July 1971). In 1982, the World Conference on Cultural Policies, held in Mexico City, raised the issues of living cultural expressions again and extended the definition of heritage to the whole of cultural tradition. “The cultural heritage...includes both tangible and intangible works through which the creativity of that people finds expression” (UNESCO, 1982, p.43).

Moreover, the Intergovernmental Conference on the Administrative and Financial Aspects of Cultural Policies, held in Venice in 1970, made a similar statement that “the concept of heritage had evolved considerably ... the attention now being given to the preservation of the intangible heritage may be regarded as one of

the most constructive developments of the past decade” (ibid., p. 14).

Based on the series of debates and international gatherings focused on the inadequacy of the definition of heritage and issues of folklore, the *Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore* was adopted by UNESCO. Although the evaluation of feedback on its application implied that little interest was raised among member states, due to the vast under-institutionalization and under-elaboration in the field of traditional culture, it showed that the legal instrument for the protection of folklore was at least starting to develop. After the end of the Cold War, UNESCO’s member states became more interested in developing international policies in this field.

After a series of initiatives between 1995 and 1999, the *Proclamation of the Masterpieces of Intangible Cultural Heritage* came out in 1997. It filled the gap and balanced the geographical disproportion in the World Heritage list and paid “tribute to outstanding masterpieces of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity” (Aikawa 2001, p. 16). Even if the foundation of this program lacked a satisfactory legal instrument and did not build on any international convention, it contributed to the eventual formation of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention.

This is a brief account of how UNESCO enlarged its focus from tangible heritage to intangible heritage with its dynamic nature. Intangible cultural heritage is distinctive from objective cultural objects, and is understood as a subjective human living process, a socially articulated and consciously manipulated heritage. The maintenance of cultural identity is not merely archived by protecting fixed monumental masterpieces, but also through practicing a living tradition passed down continuously as part of daily life (Albert, 2012b).

However, this does not mean that intangible culture heritage excludes any material substance (R. Smith, 2009). The nature of intangible cultural heritage both rectifies and rejects the materialism inherent in the heritage concept. On the one hand, the immateriality of intangible cultural heritage is often conveyed in and linked to a certain material substance. In some cases the material aspect of intangible cultural heritage is inextricably linked with the immateriality (Ruggles & Silverman, 2009). A dichotomization in studying intangible cultural heritage should in any case be considered and applied carefully. On the other hand, the nature of intangible cultural heritage makes a clear distinction between material and immaterial, dedicating itself to the latter (ibid.). Therefore, it assumes a wide divergence of views on intangible cultural production and safeguarding issues.

b. From Authority to Community Participation

Another significance of the intangible cultural heritage lies in its concern for the value of the communities, groups or individuals who practice that heritage. The Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention not only involves creating the category of intangible cultural heritage, but also putting forward and emphasizing the involvement and development of the “grassroots community” (Kurin, 2007, p. 13). The role of community is given central place in the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, but not government or academic institutions (Aikawa, 2001; Nitzky, 2013; 2004; Fennell, 2009)

As a core notion of the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, community is defined by UNESCO as follows: “Communities are networks of people whose sense of identity or connectedness emerges from a shared historical relationship that is rooted in the practice and transmission of, or engagement with, their living tradition” (UNESCO, 2006, p. 3). The definition of community can also

be found in scientific research. Chirikure and Pwiti (2008) conclude that “a community is a body of people inhabiting the same locality. Such a community can be insular or cosmopolitan; insular community residents are usually bound by common ancestry, heritage, and culture, while diversity is a hallmark of cosmopolitan communities” (p. 468).

The emergence of the key position of community brought another paradigm shift. The early UNESCO concern about heritage, as reflected in the 1972 World Heritage Convention, was an historical and philological one, heir to an academic understanding of heritage based on the value of authenticity and outstanding universal value (Albert, 2006; Bortolotto 2007). This requires work and research by authorities such as governments, experts, academic institutions and other organizations, who play the leading role in heritage protection.

By contrast, the new cutting-edge conception of intangible cultural heritage highlights the communities’ participation, not only as the practitioners but also in a decision-making capacity, because communities’ activities shape their own pasts, drawing on the intangible aspects of their tradition. Intangible cultural heritage does not consist of the cultural objects, but of the way of making them, and the people who are the bearers of this knowledge, the ways of life, the healing of people, ultimately all aspects of life within a community (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004). It can only be preserved in communities whose members practice and manifest its forms. The communities are the practitioners and carriers who adopted their cultural tradition as a symbolic and living space (Pratt, 2013).

In short, intangible cultural heritage is the reflection of the knowledge, identity, and social relationships within a community (Ruggles & Silverman, 2009). No government, university or other institution (in general terms, authorities) can

decide on the significance of intangible cultural heritage and on activities to safeguard it, but rather members of the concerned communities themselves (Fennell, 2009).

c. From Archival Approach to Interdisciplinary Approach

Intangible cultural heritage requires the rehabilitation of a scientific approach to deal with living tradition apart from tangible heritage. This shift of approach refers to a “movement from an archivist approach which is rooted in Western academic perspective and method, to a process-oriented approach based largely on the Japanese paradigm” (Bortolotto, 2007, p 22). If the theoretical framework and method for tangible heritage relies mainly on an elitist, Western, and academic-oriented perspective focusing on documentation, intangible heritage, by contrast, looks for a dynamic and interdisciplinary approach which concentrates on safeguarding the living processes and the grassroots communities.

Initially, the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention was initiated by a range of non-Western countries. Japan, in particular, has used its international standing in a variety of ways to intervene and influence the development of the Convention (Aikawa, 2001). From 1993 to 2003, assisted by its key and high-level positions within UNESCO, Japan was able to play a major role in facilitating and promoting the intangible cultural heritage programs (Hafstein, 2004). Based on a non-linear view of history, Japan presented and introduced an Asian paradigm for understanding and interpreting heritage in a dynamic way (Aikawa, 2004). This anthropological and process-oriented approach quickly attracted responses from Korea and was supported by many developing countries, especially African countries (Hafstein, 2004; Bortolotto, 2007).

The extensive support by developing countries reveals a wider “discontent concerning the narrow and provincial Western approach to heritage, as defined in the

1972 Convention” (Bortolotto, 2007, p. 24). Many countries disputed the persistence of the traditional elitist conception of heritage in international discourse, because when heritage is appraised according to aesthetic and historical criteria, this leads directly to the domination of tangible heritage. By contrast, intangible cultural heritage requires a more interdisciplinary and process-oriented method, focusing on the oral, the profane and the vernacular, rather than on the monumental, the literate and the sacred perspectives (Albert, 2013; Harrison, 2010, 2013; Evans & Boswell, 1999; L. Smith, 2006).

The dynamic nature of intangible cultural heritage and a community-oriented principle challenge the philosophical constructs that underpin and have authorized Western perceptions of heritage, as regulated in the 1972 World Heritage Convention. The need to expand the existing methods and bring an interdisciplinary approach to understanding the dynamic process of culture is strongly stressed, thereby shifting the emphasis from the protection of the object to the human dynamic process enabling its production.

Such observations about the shift in scientific approach in order to deal with living tradition make an important contribution to understanding the innovation of intangible cultural heritage and the key aspects of work to safeguard it. This could help to identify appropriate methods to ensure the “viability of the intangible cultural heritage” (UNESCO, 2003).

1.3.2 Transformation of Intangible Cultural Heritage in China: From “Feudal Rubbish” to “National Treasure”

To understand the essence of the transformation in terms of intangible cultural heritage with regard to specific cases in socialist China, one must take into account the particular trajectory of China’s revolutionary history over the past one

hundred years (McLaren, 2010). After a lengthy period of dominance by Western penetration, Chinese revolutionaries overthrew two thousand years of imperial rule and set up a republic in 1911 (Fairbank, 1986, 1998). In the early years of the Republic, the transmission of traditional culture, which had underpinned Chinese society for thousands of years, was under severe attack by the leading intellectuals of the May Fourth Movement² (Y. Lin, 1979; T. Chow, 1963; Mitter, 2004; L. Chun, 2010). From the beginning of the 20th century, traditional culture, including both tangible and intangible cultural heritage, was seen as a great obstacle to the realization of modernization in China (McLaren, 2010, K. Yu, 2010). The leading intellectuals at that time adopted extremely totalitarian and anti-traditionalist attitudes towards China's inherited culture, which was regarded as being closely integrated with the imperial political system (Y. Lin, 1979).

As the anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973) has pointed out, whenever a society experiences social and political crisis, this is accompanied by a cultural crisis brought on by a sense of loss of cultural orientation; this society will be most in need of an ideology. It is in this context that the Communist Party took Marxist ideology as a weapon and emerged in China (Fairbank & Goldman, 1998). After the formation of the People's Republic in 1949, China's culture was refracted by the Chinese Communist Party through the lens of the Marxist view of the world. Traditional culture was labeled as "feudal" or as "superstition" and traditional rituals, practices and beliefs, such as oral and ritual performances like the Daoqing Shadow Theatre and other folk arts, were allocated to the category of religious or superstitious beliefs.

2 The May Fourth Movement was "an anti-imperialist, cultural, and political movement growing out of student demonstrations in Beijing on May 4, 1919, protesting the Chinese government's weak response to the Treaty of Versailles. These demonstrations sparked national protests and marked the upsurge of Chinese nationalism" (T. Chow, 1963). It is "known for vehemently rejecting tradition, admiring Western culture (especially science, democracy, and individualism), promoting anti-imperialist nationalism, and seeking to use radical ideologies to reshape the Chinese nation and society" (Ip and Hon et al., 2003, p. 491).

During the period of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), traditional culture was suppressed and rigorously removed from every corner of China³ (Macfarquhar, 2010; Han, 2010; Tan, 2010). One aspect of communist ideology in China was to try to accelerate the modernization process by simultaneously abandoning traditional Chinese cultural heritage, as the latter was deemed an impediment to modernization. According to this ideology, modernization and cultural traditions -- which were in turn representative of cultural heritage -- simply could not coexist. As a result, Chinese cultural heritage was seriously in danger of becoming a relic of the past. Almost all the living folk traditions were first reformed, in order to be used as a political tool, then, during the Cultural Revolution, denounced as “feudal rubbish” and their practice prohibited.

After the end of the Mao period in 1976, the new leadership led by Deng Xiaoping began from 1978 to open up the economy; cultural controls were gradually relaxed in the social and private domains⁴. Although various policies were formulated to help the recovery of traditional culture, the damage caused during the Cultural Revolution left scars and suspicions in the culture heritage and among the people.

At the beginning of the 21st century, China was able to endorse the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention. The perception of Chinese traditional culture and its heritage changed positively, they were no longer viewed as “feudal rubbish” and the nation began appreciating its past and its intangible heritage.

3 The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (*wu chan jie ji wen hua da ge ming* 無產階級文化大革命), “commonly known as the Cultural Revolution, was a social-political movement that took place in the People’s Republic of China from 1966 to 1976. Set into motion by Mao Zedong, then Chairman of the Communist Party of China, its stated goal was to enforce communism in the country by removing capitalist, traditional and cultural elements from Chinese society, and to impose Maoist orthodoxy within the Party” (S. Han, 2010).

4 This refers to the Chinese economic reform. It is the “program of economic reforms called Socialism with Chinese characteristics in the People’s Republic of China that were started in December 1978 by reformists within the Communist Party of China led by Deng Xiaoping. The goal of Chinese economic reform was to transform China’s stagnant, impoverished planned economy into a market economy capable of generating strong economic growth and improving the well-being of Chinese citizens” (Segal & Yang, 1996, p. 66).

Following a series of events, Chinese masterpieces were designated to be on the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*. This was a turning point in China's attitude to its living traditions (Gao, 2008). Many living traditions which had been known to nobody became well-known, as "national treasure" (Gao, 2011). This created a great wave of discussion, exhibitions, research and promotion of living tradition in Chinese society, both in official and community discourse.

In the last decade, during which so-called "feudal rubbish" has changed its social status to "national treasure" and been given the title of "intangible cultural heritage of UNESCO", it has become an economic resource to stimulate consumption and revive the economy in China. One can observe a close association between intangible cultural heritage and the cultural industry, including the cultural tourism industry, which is becoming a new trend in China (Goodall, 1993; Peters, 2001; Bak, 2007; J. Zhang, 2003; Silverman & Blumenfield, 2013). As Albert (2013) pointed out, the "heritage had changed from being a good to a product and finally to a commodity and a commodity, by nature, could not be valued under cultural aspects, but instead under economic criteria" (p. 12).

But this raised and still raises some serious issues in relation to safeguarding the intangible heritage (Bak, 2007). The elements of intangible cultural heritage are being used everywhere as instruments in the cultural industry market. The intangible heritage is modified as an artifact into the form which people think would be more attractive in the market, either as commercial products or tourism souvenirs (C. Liu, 2011). In particular, traditional activities such as music and dance performances are being modified and have become commercial, to attract and satisfy more tourists. Therefore, the extinction of living tradition is not only threatened because of the irretrievably vanishing traditional patterns of agrarian labor and life-style of rural

communities, but also through over-development of the commercial sector.

By tracking briefly the history of the transformation of the cultural heritage in socialist China, one can see how changes in the intangible cultural heritage are influenced by the ever-changing political landscape and economic circumstances. This also involves the issue of modes of culture in the last sixty years in China (W. Yu, 1997). Reviewing the history of the People's Republic of China, the first thirty years represent certain cultural modes with very different qualities from the subsequent years (ibid.). Regarding the cultural mode of China since 1949, Yu Wujing (1997) concluded that "the culture of the first thirty years, like traditional Chinese culture, regarded politics and ethics as being of basic importance to the society, but the culture of the subsequent years has been one that regarded economic development as basic to the nation" (p.13). The conflict between political and economic concerns in the process of social transformation has provided the basic motivation in the evolution of contemporary Chinese intangible cultural heritage.

1.3.3 Challenges for Safeguarding Chinese Intangible Cultural Heritage

The above analysis of the transformation of intangible cultural heritage may be extended to two basic issues which directly influence the work of safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of China. The first issue is how intangible cultural heritage is defined, interpreted and designated by the state power in different historical eras. It is an act of "interpretation and re-invented tradition in order to achieve certain political interest and economic benefit in socialist China" (Z. Qi, 2012, p. 70). The second issue can be observed in the process of transformation, as the relationship between the state and the community concerning safeguarding action. The people who actually create and practice the traditions are almost absent from safeguarding discourse; instead, the authority and its institutions control the whole scenario.

China ratified the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention in 2004. Although the Chinese State Council issued a series of directives concerning relevant plans and also established specific application guidelines for the intangible heritage, the implementation of its policy faces various challenges (Hottin & Grenet, 2012). A discussion of the above-mentioned two important issues, namely, the living traditions themselves and the stakeholders involved, may help in identifying and understanding the difficulties of safeguarding work in China. The first relates to the fact that the intangible cultural heritage keeps changing in the course of time -- what is to be safeguarded and which part of it should be safeguarded. The second concerns the way in which the community and the government can work together in an appropriate manner to carry out the safeguarding task.

a. Authenticity or Invention

According to Article 2.3 of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention (UNESCO, 2003)

Safeguarding identifies some measure aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, presentation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage.

Among these key points, “revitalization” is seen as a controversial measure for safeguarding. It was a point of contention in the early phase of negotiations for the new Convention and in the drafting of definitions. Member states and scholars have long argued over this term “revitalization” in connection with safeguarding issues.

The Director-General, Koishiro Matsuura, declares that the “urgency of the situation has caused UNESCO to make the revitalization of intangible heritage one of its priorities” (Hafstein, 2004, p. 94). In his opinion, also supported by Korea and some other developing countries, “revitalization is an umbrella term in much the same way as the convention uses safeguarding to cover a broad spectrum of other measures, such as identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement and transmission” (ibid.). Revitalization is given a central place in safeguarding activities.

However, the notion of a need for revitalization has been found unsatisfactory and unacceptable by some European delegations. The member states of the European Union stated that “certain notions are rejected: ... that of reconstituted tradition, and above all that of a complete revitalization, which would render the entire safeguarding process artificial” (cited in Hafstein, 2004, p. 92). The Netherlands delegation claimed strongly that a revitalized intangible cultural heritage is “the copy one” (ibid.).

Clearly, this debate points at deeper issues concerning the authenticity of intangible cultural heritage. Whereas the notion of authenticity, referring particularly to the case of tangible heritage, is abandoned in the domain of intangible cultural heritage, alternative forms of expression for this notion are found in other terms: the real from the fake, the genuine from the spurious, the original from the copy, the first-hand and the second-hand, and the old from the invented. Since intangible cultural heritage is not fixed but constantly changing in form, by nature of its fluidity, the paradox lies in deciding what is to be safeguarded and which parts should be considered as its original form and hence in need of preservation. Identifying and distinguishing the essential form of the tradition becomes the premise for using the measure of revitalization (Hafstein, 2004).

Judgment on which aspects of an intangible heritage are to be safeguarded is often challenging, given the mutable essence of much of that heritage. Alterations to the essence of a living tradition are often the result of, or subject to, a number of varying factors: the changing nature of the knowledge that is passed on from master to student with each successive transmission; the changing fashions, influences and technologies to which living tradition may be exposed; the changing marketplace to which artisans must respond.

This issue has previously been raised with regard to problems in implementing the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention. Kurin (2007) has expressed the following opinion:

Intangible cultural heritage is not something fixed in form that remains constant forever, safeguarded when only found in its pure, essential form. While various types and expressions of intangible cultural heritage may be articulated at certain points in history by their practitioner communities as the pure, real or authentic form, such judgments need to be regarded as historically-based assessments, subject to change - even within the community - and to alternative formulation by various segments of the contemporary community...What then is authentic or pure, and what is to be safeguarded? (p.13)

This clearly reflects his concern for the assessment of traditions that should be safeguarded. There may be more common ground between the concepts of the old and the invented than is acknowledged, while both are discussed with an academic purism that seeks to distinguish its own representations of culture from those produced outside the ivory tower.

The dualism of the original and the re-invented, which has been central to historical approaches to the analysis of the idea of tradition since the publication of Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger's influential work *Invention of Tradition* in 1983, might offer some insight into this paradox. They may seem to perpetuate the dichotomy between the real and the fake, or the first- and second-hand, old and invented traditions, with their innovative term "neo-tradition" (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983, p. 237). Neo-tradition was described by them as "responses to novel situations which take the form of reference to old situations" (ibid., p. 2)

Similar arguments were made by Raymond Williams in his book *Marxism and Literature* (1977), where he came up with the view that it "is not just a tradition but selective tradition: an intentionally selective version of a shaping past and a pre-shaped present, which is then powerfully operative in the process of social and cultural definition and identification" (p. 116). In the same vein, Handler and Linnekin (1984) express that it is impossible to separate spurious and genuine tradition because "is not handed down from the past, as a thing or collection of things; it is symbolically reinvented in an ongoing present" (p. 280).

From this point of view, claims of authenticity, genuineness or traditionalism are regardless of who makes them. Intangible cultural heritage, as tradition, is a second life as meta-culture: tradition of tradition, or tradition to the second degree. Thus the protection of intangible cultural heritage leads to difficulties in reality to establish objective criteria for what is to be safeguarded and how to implement the preservation work, because the judgment and assessment is an act of interpretation based on the relation of power. Therefore, different nations have different interpretations and make choices according to their respective domestic contexts (Kurin, 2007).

b. Communication and Collaboration between Government and the Community

Another extremely crucial issue in the implementation of safeguarding work is the communication and collaboration between the government and the community. According to Article 13 (b), each nation is to designate or establish one or more competent bodies to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage present on its territory (UNESCO, 2003). In this Article, the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention makes it clear that a “hybrid body” should carry out the tasks of implementation and realization of the Convention. The “hybrid body” refers to an association between the authorities and the community itself. However, it does not elaborate on how they should collaborate in the process of safeguarding work, and how they should find a balance in working together (Kurin, 2007; Garces, 2007).

Among the various stakeholders involved in safeguarding processes, the government is probably designated as the unit in charge of safeguarding. It has the capacity to legislate for intangible cultural heritage, drawing from fiscal resources, distributing human resources, initiating collaboration among different governmental sectors and organizing social activities in accordance with the requirements of the Convention. After all, government is able to allocate social, cultural, economic, educational, and legal recourse to safeguard intangible cultural heritage (Kurin, 2007). However, the power and resources a government holds could lead to an intervention in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, and may escalate the conflict on power balance between government and community (ibid.).

As a power institution, government has the capacity to intervene in each phase of the implementation process, from making decisions on nominations of intangible cultural heritage to allocating financial and human resources to communities, creating national inventories, devising training programs and designing

promotion work. This tends to create a situation whereby the government will decide which examples of intangible cultural heritage are to be preserved, how they are to be preserved, which specific cultural groups or minority communities should be safeguarded first, and what measures are to be taken for them to transmit their tradition (Graham, 2009). This is particularly unfortunate for safeguarding work because “in many countries around the world, minority cultural communities do not acknowledge the governments as representing their interests - particularly when it comes to their living cultural traditions” (Kurin, 2007, p.13).

As analyzed above, a government’s full control over safeguarding work may ignore the voice of minority communities. Unlike other international treaties, the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention distinguishes itself with a “bottom-up” (Kurin, 2007, p.15), “grassroots” (ibid.), participatory provision that shifts responsibility to the cultural community whose cultural traditions are being safeguarded. Several articles reflect the central position of the communities in carrying out the safeguarding work.

According to Article 11 (b), each State Party shall:

Identify and define the various elements of the intangible cultural heritage present in its territory, with the participation of communities, groups and relevant non-governmental organizations. (UNESCO, 2003)

According to Article 15, under “Participation of communities, groups and individuals”:

Within the framework of its safeguarding activities of the intangible cultural heritage, each State Party shall endeavor to ensure the widest possible

participation of communities, groups and, where appropriate, individuals that create, maintain and transmit such heritage, and to involve them actively in its management. (ibid.)

Consequently, governments cannot simply be appointed as the main implementation agencies to define the intangible cultural heritage and undertake its presentation, documentation and protection. It is important that the communities be involved in consultation, decision-making, training programs, promotion work, tactics for safeguarding and so on. Hafstein noticed and argued that “one of the 2003 Convention’s major accomplishments is to envisage community as a rising, alternative holder and center of power to the state” (cited in Kurin, 2007, p.18).

The community is to be an equal partner with government and other cultural institutions in identifying, researching, documenting, promoting and propagating its living expressions. Whatever the social environment of the country, the community is actually the body to practice the tradition. The members of the community as folk should fully participate in any or all decisions related to the safeguarding of their tradition, because it is they who have learned from the people who practiced them in the past, they identify with them and carry on the identity (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1995).

However, in reality, “different stakeholders pursue different interests, and when different people or groups with different interests meet each other, conflicts are inevitable” (Albert, 2012, p. 32). This is exactly reflected in the rationale of the conflicts between government and community in China. Communities are often ignored or excluded from safeguarding work in China. They do not represent themselves but are represented by the government. The members of a community are not encouraged to do participatory self-research and to work with government in

formulating and carrying out plans or inventories, considering the presentation of their tradition, or developing appropriate methods for safeguarding it. Even if it is officially designated as the body responsible for creating, practicing and transmitting the living tradition, a community may not provide its input at each and every step of the safeguarding work.

Preventing these problems “depends on complex communication and negotiation” (Albert, 2012, p. 36), because “communication is not only targeted to improve the World Heritage Convention, but to implement UNESCO’s objectives in general” (ibid., p. 37). Communication here refers to relevant action to “increase public awareness, involvement and support for World Heritage through communication” (cited in Albert, 2012, p. 37). Institutions and communities need to find an approach to working collaboratively, because “only in doing so will lasting protection and sustainable use become possible” (Albert, 2013b, p. 37).

1.4 Innovation of the Research

The innovation of this study lies in three aspects. First of all, this is the first piece of research, either in Western or Chinese scholarship, to explore the transformation history of Huanxian Daoqing shadow theatre. This is also the first time that anyone has travelled so deep into the heart of north-western China, to the rural area of Huanxian, for field research on the historical development of Daoqing shadow theatre and the issues around its safeguarding. No one before this researcher has carried out such extensive interviews and archival research on the Huanxian community for the sake of research on Daoqing, or collected so many documents which have not been accessible to the public to date.

Secondly, the major significance of this research lies in the construction of a theoretical framework on the transformation of the intangible heritage in socialist

China based on a socio-historical approach. This framework has been constructed on the basis of a comprehensive review of the literature in the fields of heritage studies, cultural studies, folklore, political studies and economics. The application of this framework to analyze the transformation of Daoqing can be valuable to other scholars who are interested in doing interdisciplinary studies in the field of intangible cultural heritage in China.

Thirdly, based on this framework and case study on the transformation of the intangible heritage in China, this research also provides heritage policy makers, communities and other relevant groups at different levels with a concrete analysis of the problems and challenges with China's safeguarding of its intangible cultural heritage, as seen in the case of Daoqing.

1.5 Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into six chapters (Figure 5).

Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the study. It gives some background information on Daoqing shadow theatre and explains the scope of the study. It focuses on the research objectives and the research questions, and introduces the conceptual framework and socio-historical approach applied in this research.

Chapter 2 offers a detailed exposition of the theoretical issues and the methodology employed in this research. The first part of the chapter discusses a theoretical perspective adopted for the research for this thesis, as part of the theoretical framework for the analysis. It mainly involves Hobsbawm's concept of "the invention of tradition". In the second part, the methodology and specific methodological tools used for this research are described. Details of the research

design, including the use of semi-structured interviews, the basis for participant sampling, collection of primary historical materials and the analysis of data are given.

Chapter 3 attempts to review the evolution of Daoqing shadow theatre over time, more specifically in ancient China before the establishment of socialist China in the modern era. It also gives an overview of the origin, history, art form and neglected religious functions of Daoqing in the past hundred years in China.

Chapter 4 analyzes how Daoqing shadow theatre came to be condemned as “feudal rubbish” in Mao Zedong’s era of Cultural Revolution and Deng Xiaoping’s period of economic reforms. This involves analyzing official archives and conducting interviews with Daoqing artists. The first part of the chapter will demonstrate and analyze how Daoqing was penetrated by political forces, used as a publicity tool and eventually forbidden in the Cultural Revolution. The second part will analyze how Daoqing recovered from a period of silence, disengaged itself from politics and found the preconditions for becoming an intangible cultural heritage and national treasure, and how this was connected to the economy, paving the way for its later industrialization.

Chapter 5 serves to explore how Daoqing, as part of the harmonious society propagated under the new government of China in Hu Jintao’s period, became part of mankind’s intangible cultural heritage: what actions the government and the people of the Huanxian community undertook to safeguard it; how it became a form of commodity under cultural production as propagated in China and what this may lead to; how the state and the people of Huanxian community may understand Daoqing differently as part of this process, and how these different forces interact with each other.

Chapter 6 consists of the conclusions from this research and also discusses the outlook for future studies on the intangible cultural heritage in China, for which this thesis may help provide a model or prototype.

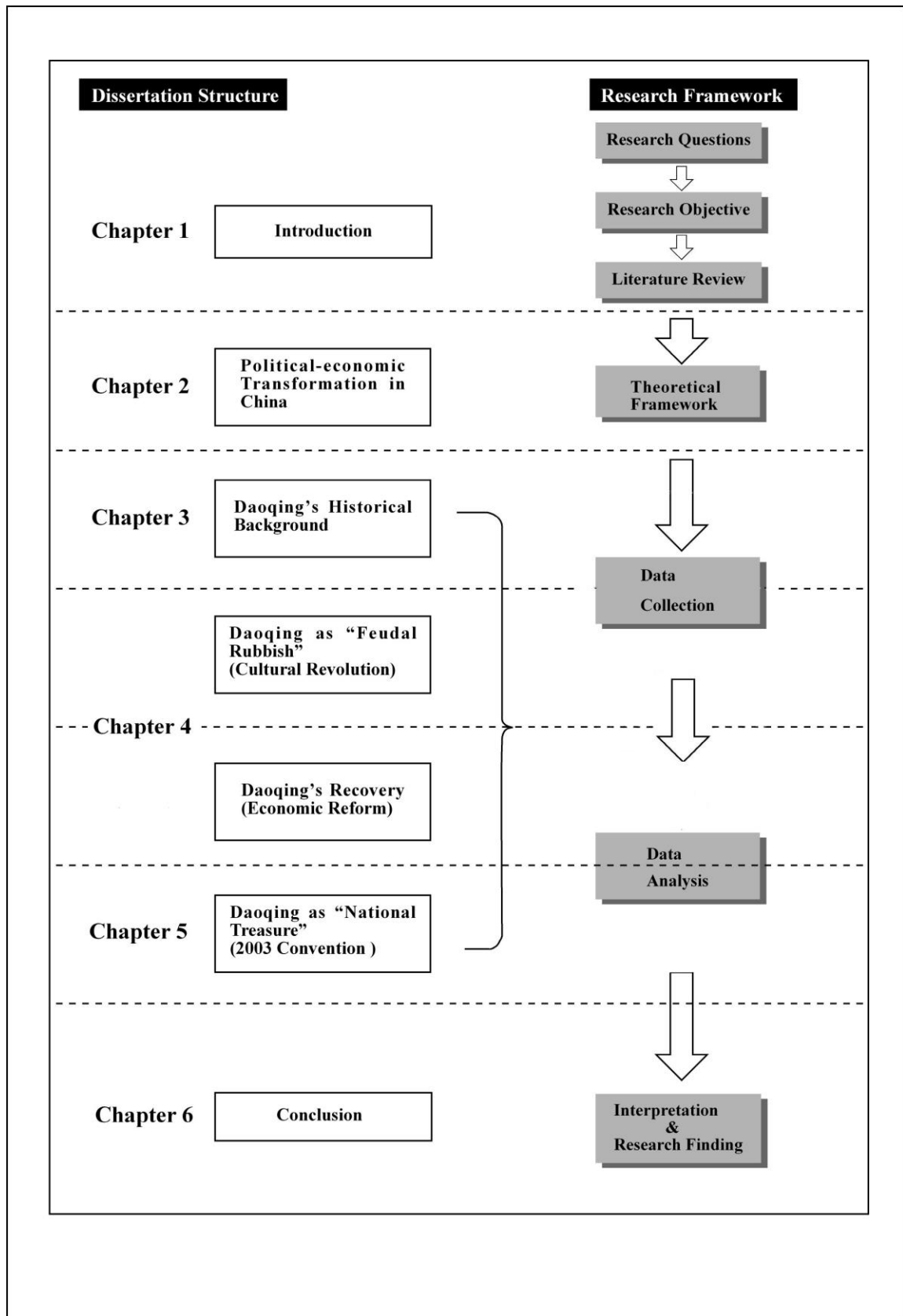


Figure 5: Organization of the Dissertation

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter offers a detailed exposition of the theoretical issues and the methodology employed in this research. The first part of the chapter discusses a theoretical perspective adopted for the research for this thesis, as part of the theoretical framework for the analysis. It mainly involves Hobsbawm's concept of "the invention of tradition". In the second part, the methodology and specific methodological tools used for this research are described. Details of the research design, including the use of semi-structured interviews, the basis for participant sampling, collection of primary historical materials and the analysis of data are given.

2.1 Theoretical Framework: The Invention of Tradition

This section will discuss the theoretical perspective adopted for the research for this thesis, and thereby elucidate the theoretical framework for the analysis in this thesis based on this perspective. It mainly involves Hobsbawm's concept of "the invention of tradition".

In his ground-breaking study entitled the *Invention of Tradition*, the historian, Eric Hobsbawm, explored the relationship between tradition and society. He suggests there that practices which are claimed to be old traditions are "often recent in origin and sometimes invented" (Hobsbawm, 1983, p. 1). Such "traditions" may actually not be old, but have instead been invented and established through repetition, to symbolize continuity with the past. He "uses this concept to describe a certain form of social practices, along with norms and collective values that they serve to inculcate, which are invented or constructed to legitimize an institution by giving it an aura of being old and well established" (Heiduschke, 2006, p. 20).

Hobsbawm's perspective not only suggests the manifestations and modes of invented traditions, it also helps point to the link between invented traditions and

social transformation. Based on this line of argument, Hobsbawm's theoretical perspective may be adopted as the main framework to observe and analyze Daoqing in the context of socialist China. Daoqing as the object of research in this thesis may be understood as an example of folk performing arts, as a traditional handicraft, as part of the rituals in folk belief and worship or as a form of rural entertainment, but for the purpose of this research, Daoqing will be identified as a tradition of folk culture which has been developed over time in Huanxian.

Since the establishment of the People's Republic of China by the Communist Party in 1949, Daoqing has experienced the influence of power under political and later economic forces, and has been gradually divorced from its traditional functions to serve other goals. From a folk tradition that the rural people of Huanxian enjoyed, it was then condemned as a residue of feudal society, only to be elevated later as intangible cultural heritage. In the course of more than 60 years, its social status has been transformed many times, as it was re-formulated and re-interpreted.

In the theoretical area involving the concept of "tradition", it was considered fruitful for this research to adopt Hobsbawm's perspective on the invention of tradition. This facilitated an analysis of the transformations of Daoqing as an aspect of China's social structure under socialism, and an exploration of the interrelationship between the nation and the community on issues of safeguarding this heritage. At the same time, in order to reinforce or expand the explanation of how this perspective supports the case study, this research will refer to other theoretical perspectives wherever relevant.

2.1.1 The "Invention of Tradition" According to Hobsbawm

a. Hobsbawm and the Invention of Tradition

The *Invention of Tradition*, edited by Eric Hobsbawm (1983), Emeritus Professor of Economic and Social History at the University of London, and Terence Ranger, Rhodes Professor of Race Relations at the University of Oxford, discusses the modes in which "traditions" were produced on a large scale in the 19th and 20th century. Examples cited in the book include the costumes and musical instruments in

Scottish Highland culture, the new rise of Welsh society, the transformations of English Royal ceremonies, the authority of British India, the invention of traditions in colonial Africa and so on. Many of the cultural practices that people today take for granted as tradition are revealed as having been created at a particular time for specific reasons. Hobsbawm (1983) identifies “invented tradition” thus:

The term ‘invented tradition’ is used in a broad, but not imprecise sense. It includes both ‘traditions’; actually invented, constructed and formally instituted and those emerging in a less easily traceable manner within a brief and dateable period – a matter of a few years perhaps – and establishing themselves with great rapidity. (p.1)

In the introduction to the book, Hobsbawm elaborates on the concept of invented tradition, elucidating his concept as follows:

‘Invented tradition’ is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past. (ibid.)

According to Hobsbawm, an invented tradition is characterized by an attempt to establish continuity with an appropriate historical past, as a response to a new situation, or by an attempt to establish a past by using an almost compulsive form of repetition. In the second chapter of the book, for instance, Ranger (1983) points out that the Scottish kilt, assumed today to be an old tradition, is in fact a relatively late invention from the 17th or 18th century. In this invention, political motivation, cultural and commercial activities all played very important roles.

In a similar way, one might ask whether the processes during the Cultural Revolution - in which Daoqing was forcibly segregated from its traditional functions, reformed, and eventually condemned as the residue of a feudalistic society and therefore banned – also reflected the desire of a new political power to establish its legitimacy and authority by reinventing, reinterpreting and reshaping traditions. One

might also consider whether the various research activities and safeguarding work for Daoqing shadow theatre, when Huanxian nominated it as intangible cultural heritage in 2000, could perhaps be understood as a reinvention and reshaping with their own motives.

Hobsbawm's concept of the invention of tradition provides a theoretical perspective to help explain the changes and contradictions surrounding this Chinese folk tradition in terms of social status, safeguarding policy and the responses of the local community, which result in the tradition being reinterpreted and reinvented. This approach helps one to understand how the tradition is constructed and how it is actually responding to the specific political challenges and to economic development in the changing social contexts.

b. Conceptual Understanding of Tradition

Before analysing the concept of invented tradition, we need to first understand the definition of tradition. The word "tradition" is derived from *traditum* in Latin. It refers literally to some way of life that has been transmitted from the past, and hence it may cover anything from beliefs, behaviors, customs and ceremonies to institutions. The term "tradition", as a word and a concept, has been pervasively employed in some humanities and social disciplines, such as anthropology, history, folklore and cultural studies. Various scholars have claimed tradition as their research territory and thereby established guideposts to locate some of their most fundamental theories. Regardless of their subjects, they have invariably linked tradition to ideas of the past, continuity and homogeneity.

In his book *Tradition*, Edward Shils (1981) maintains that "in its barest, most elementary sense, [tradition] means simply a traditum; it is anything which is transmitted or handed down from the past to the present" (p. 12). Similarly, Gross (1992) defines tradition as "a set of practices, a constellation of beliefs, or a mode of thinking that exists in the present, but was inherited from the past" (p. 8). Luo Zhitian (2003), a Chinese historian, suggests that "traditions are the cultures and customs of the past" (p. 22). While few of them would locate such traditions in a precise time-frame, tradition is generally equated with a heritage of the past and understood

“as a relatively inert, historicized segment of a social structure: tradition as the surviving past” (Williams, 1977, p115).

In pursuit of the implications of the term in academic discourse, some scholars have identified tradition as referring to a super-organic whole, associated with notions of continuity in time and the homogeneity of groups of people. Handler and Linnekin (1984) stated that one of the most common meanings of tradition is “a core of inherited culture traits whose continuity and boundedness are analogous to that of a natural object” (p. 273). According to this idea, tradition groups together practices, beliefs, rituals and customs, and is presented as a super-organic whole with a life of its own. This super-organic tradition is associated with notions of continuity and homogeneity, understood to mean contributing to the integration of a group of people by passing down or passing on common beliefs, sayings, and songs. These may be referred to specifically as the oral tradition (Bauman, 1971).

As can be seen in the above propositions, tradition is frequently viewed as something from the past and correlated to continuity and homogeneity. In the perspective of Tuohy (1988), “tradition - first associated with one culture, group, or country in some historical point in time and, second, as a coherent body of materials or ideas of that culture - is said to have a life and death of its own” (p.42).

c. Authentic Tradition vs. Invented Tradition

If some traditions are invented, what kinds of traditions may be considered natural? Hobsbawm (1983) divides traditions into those invented by the nation, state or movement and those based on “what has actually been preserved in popular memory” (p. 22). According to him, authentic tradition is opposed to what is false and consciously created. Levenson (1971) expresses a similar opinion in his study of 20th century China. He states that “for [traditions that are] authentic in the past on local ground ... Self-consciousness [is] the blight on the natural, local idiom ... Consciousness fatal to provincial authenticity, is essential to cosmopolitanism” (p. 59).

Other contemporary scholars differ in opinion on the distinction between

genuine and spurious traditions. Handler and Linnekin (1984) dismiss the formulations of authenticity and argue that “social life is always symbolically constructed” and reinvented (p. 281). They reject any distinction between authentic and invented traditions. Giddens (1993) remarks that the notion of invented tradition includes semantic confusion and logical impossibility, and that invented tradition, which at first sight seems almost a contradiction in terms, and which is intended to be provocative, turns out on scrutiny to be something of a tautology. “For all traditions, one could say, are invented traditions” (p. 93). Hoelscher (1998) raises a similar point to Giddens (1979), writing that “all traditions are invented, and the search for real tradition versus invented tradition follows a circular path” (p.21). This may be understood as suggesting that as invented tradition assumes the existence of a real tradition, this creates circularity and is illogical. In a review of the invention of tradition, Lilla (1984) also criticizes clear distinctions between genuine and spurious:

All tradition has its deepest roots in the nontraditional, and most are born as conscious breaks with some previous tradition [...]. We will never find a tradition that was not, at one time or another, invented. To live with tradition is to learn to live with this “inauthenticity”. (p. 38)

Following this point of view, Handler and Linnekin (1984) extend the relevance and scope of invented traditions, stating that they are more like cultural revival and “not restricted to such self-conscious projects” (p. 276). Traditions are the “ongoing reconstruction of tradition” (ibid.), but are not preserved because the contexts in which they are performed are “utterly different from their prior, unmarked settings”. The new meanings are emerging and reinterpreted, selected and reformulated in the changing social environment. “The opposition between a naively inherited tradition and one that is consciously shaped is a false dichotomy.” (ibid., p. 285)

The argument concerning authentic versus invented traditions above is grounded in certain ideologies of society. What lies behind the critique of tradition is the argument of belief, value and ideology. The assumptions of “a real location of authenticity ignore the involvement of the people while professing to be based on a humanistic perspective” (Tuohy, 1988, p.61).

2.1.2 Invented Tradition, Social Transformation and Power

a. Invented Tradition in the Context of Social Transformation

The above-mentioned conceptualizations immediately require one to consider how and why tradition may be construed in one way or another. I would argue that tradition, in terms of the way in which it is perceived and identified, has to be located in the discourse of social change. Tradition is strongly influenced by social change and reflects some sort of social change, and in turn it also has some persistent influence on how social forms or social settings change. It serves particular functions in social change: on the one hand, people within the tradition continuously instill their new ideas into it, in order to justify their social activities, and on the other hand, tradition keeps changing in accordance with social change. Eisenstadt (1973) described the relationship between tradition and social change as follows:

[It] was not only that the great variety and changeability in traditional societies were rediscovered, but there developed also a growing recognition of the importance of tradition in modern societies — even in its most modern sectors, be it ‘rational’ economic activity, science, or technology. Tradition was seen not simply as an obstacle to change but as an essential framework for creativity. (p. 3)

Social change here may be deconstructed as a paradigmatic change in the political-economic structure. It can be understood as the structural transformation of political and economic systems and institutions to create a more equitable and just society (Shils, 1981). Accordingly, tradition is influenced by a paradigmatic change in the political-economic structure and is itself constantly reinterpreted to serve the needs of formulating a new political-economic entity. If the reinterpretation and modification of tradition is based upon the degree and scale of the political-economic changes in society, then the ways in which tradition is reinterpreted or invented in the face of political and economic change may be considered by adopting Hobsbawm’s theoretical perspective on “the invention of tradition”.

Hobsbawm (1983) not only suggests the manifestation of and means for realizing an invented tradition, but also indicates the link between invented tradition and social transformation:

There is probably no time and place with which historians are concerned which has not seen the 'invention' of tradition [...]. However, we should expect it to occur more frequently when a rapid transformation of society weakens or destroys the social patterns for which 'old' traditions had been designed, producing new ones to which they were not applicable, or when such old traditions and their institutional carriers and promulgators no longer prove sufficiently adaptable and flexible, or are otherwise eliminated: in short, when there are sufficiently large and rapid changes on the demand or supply side. (p. 22)

An example of this might be a minority group perpetuating their value and social norms through the use of appropriated symbols. Oral tradition, religious practices, performing arts, ritual and festival are selected and further invented by the initiatives of a minority group, to represent and act as vehicles for their material needs in the context of rapid change of social context.

b. Power of Naming and Controlling Tradition

The formation of tradition as an aspect of political and economic systems involves the issue of authority and hegemony (H. Wang, 1995). According to Foucault's (1980) conception of power, knowledge is tied to "power structure; the development of knowledge in any human sciences is closely bound to the execution of power" (p. 177). Generally speaking, social elites, revolutionaries and political intellectuals all play a critically important role in establishing power relationships, creating political and economic systems and maintaining social order in a society. If a tradition is seen as a set of social norms of belief, value, and behavior by the majority of social groups in a society, it is always institutionalized gradually and imposed on the whole society by social elites and intellectuals. In the words of Wang Huiyun (1995), "A society based on a collective consciousness must integrate various social groups through the institutionalization of social beliefs, collective identities, and

moral norms and through the charismatic construction of intellectuals and political authorities.” (p. 43) It produces traditions as an institutional part of the social order and makes the majority of society accept them by means of moral or rational persuasion and political or religious power (ibid.).

If the formation of tradition is seen as a process of transformation in which the elite minority imposes social norms upon a large segment of a society, then tradition can also be identified as an imposed social order that people have to follow. Shils (1981) underscores this point: “Those traditions or parts of tradition which are accepted are, in many cases, accepted because, in a situation in which action is thought to be required, they appear to be self-evidently the actions which are called for.” (p. 201) Revolutionaries and political elites often selectively adopt images of the past into the present and recast past experience in relation to present and future expectations for some political or economic exigency. The purpose of their reconstruction of tradition is to create a sort of new tradition, establish a new social order and facilitate their current actions.

People select what they consider to be the most convenient and appropriate way to achieve a goal suited to the situation. This process in cultural production requires “an examination of the institutions and formations, and the social relations of the production artists, markets, academics, and media” (R. Williams, 1982, p. 30). This is because the selection of symbols is a complex issue which involves political and economic change. The process of political and economic change creates new symbols or selects symbols to fill in the new meaning. I would argue that rather than considering symbols without their social context, one should note that the selection, recombination and adaption of traditions suggest a new relationship between symbols and society, that is, between the objects and the context.

Theoretically speaking, the process of selecting and naming certain objects, and reinterpreting and communicating their meaning, would require power. Conceptualizing a kind of object and philosophically elaborating on the ideas in relation to tradition would require people called specialists (Gramsci, 1972). The selecting and naming of objects for a tradition is always associated with the powerful and often actually helps create authority. The power to give names to tradition

requires and reinforces authority. Whisnant (1983) views a group of people who hold authority as “cultural interveners”:

By virtue of [their] status, power, and established credibility, [they are] frequently able to define what the culture is, to normalize and legitimize that definition in the larger society, and even to feed it back into the culture itself, where it may be internalized as real or traditional or authentic. (p. 260)

Similarly, the control of meanings is also related to power. The purpose of controlling meanings is to “coordinate of actions among groups of people and shared or common symbols which define objectives and rules of action” (Shils, 1981, p. 22). Those groups of people with power, based on one particular viewpoint and set of aims, often influence others in intended or unintended manners. They change the shape of a culture in the direction they wish to preserve and propagate, even if this is contrary to the beliefs or values of others. They have the power to name, change, control and disseminate. Herzfeld (1982) has remarked on “the extent to which the Greek folklorists exerted the kind of influence which may have caused the folklore itself to conform increasingly to their preconceptions” (p. 9).

The dissemination of symbols invented by groups of people, through various channels, is closely associated with power issues as well. These channels may be mass media, television, ceremonies, festivals, literature and even formal and informal education. Singer (1972) points out that those symbols can be disseminated through newer media and used for the “cultivation of new regional and cultural identities” (p. 247). However, although these media are based on the older forms, they do not replace previously existing ways of legitimizing the new regime.

2.1.3 The Invented Tradition in Socialist China

a. The Invented Tradition as Political Tool and Economic Resource

The use of Hobsbawm’s theoretical perspective as a framework is very well suited to the exploration of Daoqing as an intangible cultural heritage which has experienced various transformations in socialist China and is now witnessing attempts

to safeguard it. Invented traditions always respond to rapid social transformation, especially with the emergence of new power and of modern nation states to replace the old political systems.

In the case of China, the transformation of society, in terms of political and economic change, is an important factor in stabilizing these symbols, to demarcate one society from another. In the process of social transformation in China, the past, continuity, authenticity and representation of tradition are all brought into play. Large-scale social transformation and invented traditions have accompanied each other in the past 60 years of China. Newly-founded China managed and developed new social formations based on traditions that the political elites invented; meanwhile, new traditions were assimilated into the new political system of the nation. As Hobsbawm explains, invented traditions aim to achieve social stability during rapid and major social transformation, in order to mitigate the negative aspects of regeneration.

Hobsbawm distinguishes two types of invented tradition: those which have been invented, developed and formally established, and those which emerge in certain short periods of perhaps a few years and are subsequently rapidly established. However, invented traditions in the local context of China seem to have gone even further. They have been closely bound with cultural capital as well as political and economic capital. It is inevitable in the Chinese context to link “invented tradition” to the way in which traditions have been recreated and reshaped under social transformation, in order to serve as political tool and economic resource.

China is a country with a rather strong foundation in agricultural civilization, whereby tradition plays a very important role in maintaining social stability and economic development. From a political viewpoint, within an ethnic or local community, interpersonal relationships are largely maintained by traditional culture as an informal social control. Traditions may even be as effective as legal control in Chinese villages. Chinese cultural traditions, especially folk cultural traditions, are composed of complex ingredients and are a major force in society. They have led to a strong sense of identity among the Chinese, with a high level of nationalist consciousness.

These traditions provide an extensive psychological basis for practical life in an agricultural society, as well as internal cohesion for the organisation of a feudalistic society. Many such traditions still hold power in today's society, so that even in the modern age many people cannot but follow the age-old customs. This is mainly a form of the inertia force of institutions. The power of traditional institutions to most people in society tends to be a kind of habit due to effects of the unconscious, the power of the collective unconscious together with the powerful force of inertia.

From an economic standpoint, tradition may also be seen as a mode of resource allocation. According to the perspectives of new institutional economics, traditional culture as a form of "informal control" is also one component of the system. Douglass North (1990) pointed out that "in our social evolution, our cultural traditions and our belief systems are all part of fundamental regulatory factors, factors which still need to be considered" (p. 12).

From the consideration of Chinese folk tradition itself, the importance of traditional forces is not to be overlooked. The people of certain regions may have experienced fundamental changes in lifestyle and thinking after contact with foreign cultures, but they still revive old habits or start to practice traditional customs anew, incorporating them into their new lifestyles. Firth (1957) believes that the people of a community tend to be most receptive towards those progressive factors which offer some kind of continuity or similarity to their existing traditional values and organisational structures. Even if they are pursuing something completely new, they often still adopt an old structure or principle familiar to them, to represent the new organisational structure. Hence it is not difficult to understand why traditions are used as a resource, tool or capital by political leaders or other forms of power in a country.

The concept of culture as a form of capital is relatively recent. It was through the work of Bourdieu that culture came to be seen as "capital". Bourdieu applied the concept of capital for social analysis. In his description, this may be divided into three basic types: economic capital, social capital and cultural capital, whereby cultural capital and economic capital may be interchangeable under certain conditions (Bourdieu, 1977; 1977a). Bourdieu argues that "culture shares many of the properties

that are characteristic of economic capital” (Weininger & Lareau, 2007, p. 230). Weininger and Lareau in their study of Bourdieu point out: “[Bourdieu] asserted that cultural ‘habits and dispositions’ comprise a resource capable of generating ‘profits’; they are potentially subject to monopolization by individuals and groups; and, under appropriate conditions, they can be transmitted from one generation to the next” (Lareau & Weininger 2003, p. 568).

Despite the lack of a clear definition for cultural capital, Jonathan H. Turner (1974) believes that Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital refers to informal skills in interpersonal communication, habits, attitudes, stylistics, educational qualities, tastes and lifestyles. Bourdieu (1977a) believes that culture is a mark of social class, and that the system of distinction in culture is derived from the same structure as class divisions into social milieus. Culture can never be divorced from its relationship with the power of social allocation, that is, cultural capital is produced through the association between culture and capital, with power as the medium. Hence as soon as a culture has been empowered by the political system, it becomes interchangeable with economic capital.

This would apply to the case of Daoqing having been designated part of the intangible cultural heritage of China since the year 2000. The recognition of a tradition as intangible cultural heritage is as good as its admission into the system; it is henceforward considered as “having historical, cultural and scientific values, and conforming to current human rights standards, as a healthy, positive, beneficial and outstanding cultural heritage” (Q. Qi, 2006, p.6). This elevates it from the domain of ordinary “traditions”, to become a form of cultural capital which is interchangeable with economic capital.

In this way, tradition becomes capital and a resource for political and economic activities. In socialist China, traditions are frequently reconstructed and reinterpreted by political elites and intellectuals for certain political and economic goals, as this thesis will demonstrate with the example of Daoqing. This corresponds to Hobsbawm’s theory of the invention of tradition. Hobsbawm (1983) analyzes that:

The peculiarity of ‘invented’ traditions is that the continuity with [the historic

past] is largely fictitious. In short, they are responses to novel situations which take the form of reference to old situations, or which establish their own past by quasi-obligatory repetition. (p. 1)

Where politics are concerned, the People's Republic of China has been continuously striving to establish its legitimacy since its foundation in 1949. In his book *Nations and Nationalism*, Ernest Geller (1983) suggests that only a nation with uniform political and cultural boundaries has legitimacy. Thus the Chinese Communist Party has always been "striving to make culture and polity congruent, to endow a culture with its own political roof" (p. 43). To this end, folk traditions rooted in the rural villages became a most convenient and powerful political tool for the Communist Party. The Communist Party reinterpreted the cultural tradition represented by Daoqing as a form of anti-socialist belief, as anti-people, anti-progress for Chinese society, in short as a negative form of culture that was a residue of feudal society. That served the purpose of propagating its own political ideology, and thereby establishing its own legitimacy and consolidating its political power.

The use of traditions as political capital was not restricted to Daoqing. Chang Tai Hung (2005) has pointed out in his study of another form of Chinese folk performing arts, namely Yangge: "the Communist were outraged by the spiritual and erotic elements in old yangge, and they quickly moved to transform it into a new dance... the new dance became closely identified with the Chinese Communist Party as a tool for political indoctrination" (p. 10), and "the popular yangge dance was not entirely new; it was an invented tradition to borrow Eric Hobsbawm's term" (ibid.). Through the reinvention and reinterpretation of a tradition, the Chinese Communist Party managed to "convey socialist messages and nationalistic appeals" (ibid.) to the population.

In terms of the economic aspect, the reforms initiated by Deng Xiaoping had no precedents anywhere in the world that could provide a model as a reference for socialist China. The Communist Party urgently needed to find a path of its own for economic development. Under the premises of national economic development, whereby the building of a new economic structure has to take central place, traditions have again been reinterpreted and reshaped to become intangible cultural heritage.

The activities of the Communist Party as part of national politics have penetrated and deeply influenced the daily lives of people in China, at a rate and degree unprecedented in history. Tradition has become a carrier of political and economic capital. Such action on a national level has increasingly led to an invention of tradition in society, as national symbols are incorporated into traditional practices. Folk traditions as represented here by Daoqing have been reinvented to become the main ingredient and tool for political and economic goals.

b. Resistance against Invented Tradition

In his discussion of traditions, Hobsbawm did not consider the resistance by people against the “invention of tradition”, as executed and propagated by ruling elites. But if one considers invented tradition in terms of mechanisms for cultural adaptation, it is useful to observe the aspect of resistance, in order to get a better understanding of the nature of a tradition in transformation.

This research, in its discussion of the reinterpretation and reshaping of Daoqing by the Communist Party and political elites, will also take into account the resistance or responses of the people of Huan county in this respect. Unlike a case of resistance in the sense of a conflict involving blood and violence, the reinvention of Daoqing involved activities led by local government officers, who followed cultural strategies taking the national principles for nation-building and cultural development as their blueprint. While this process also saw a period of prohibition of Daoqing during the Cultural Revolution, the activities of reinterpretation and reshaping by the Communist Party were generally based on the guiding principles of “cultural and economic policies”.

This supports the argument by Luo Shujie (2011) that many invented traditions are largely invented by the agencies of national power and the elites as a tool and hence become an official system that has to be obeyed in official activities. In response to such cultural inventions, the society and Huanxian community have also displayed different forms of behaviour at different periods. The resistance by the people in Huanxian in the transformation and safeguarding of Daoqing is an aspect

not to be overlooked. It is hoped that with the exploration of this aspect, this thesis may help to fill a gap in Hobsbawm's theory.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 Interpretive Phenomenology as Research Methodology

The methodology applied in this research is interpretive phenomenology. Interpretive phenomenology is “the study of lived experience or the life worlds of human beings coupled with the science of interpreting human meaning and experience” (Crist & Tanner, 2003, p. 202). The aim of interpretive phenomenology is “to transform lived experience into a textural expression of its essence” (Van Manen, 1990). The concept of lived experience (life world, *Lebenswelt* in German), as introduced by Husserl, refers to the whole of a person's lived experiences. In its investigation of meanings, it lays the emphasis “on the world as lived by a person, instead of the world or reality as something separate from the person” (Valle et al., 1989, p. 77).

Husserl (1859-1938) is seen as the founding figure in the development of modern phenomenology. He argues that phenomenology is a turn “unto the things themselves”, a return to the things of the world as they are presented in any given experience from the participants' perspectives. The core of Husserl's philosophy is a rejection of the existence of anything more fundamental than experience. Experience here is defined as a “system of interrelated meanings that is bound up in totality of the life world” (J. Smith, 2008, p. 12). Husserl further pointed out that scientific approaches are inappropriate, because human meanings are the key to studying lived experiences, as opposed to causal variables (Ricœur, 1967). He described phenomenology as the answer to embracing a radically genuine science of ontology. It is the study of lived experiences as they spontaneously manifest themselves in

individuals' environments before personal reflection begins.

If phenomenology as a methodology aims to describe phenomena, then a phenomenological approach is used to “focus on the structure of experience and the organizing principles that give form and meaning to life” (Polkinghorne, 1982, p. 47). It attempts to “elucidate the essences of these structures as they appear in consciousness – to make the invisible visible” (Kvale, 1996). In research, a phenomenological approach is meant to “allow the researcher to explore the core composite of a fundamental human experience through the explication of essential themes” (cited in J. Smith, 2003, p, 24).

In this sense, it requires the researcher to gain access to the phenomena and to achieve a thorough understanding and full elaboration of the phenomenon. The phenomenon is the topic described by the participants; it is the topic studied by the researcher. In order to make the essence of phenomena clear, a phenomenological method involves a mode of data collection and analysis that presents the participants' experiences precisely from their particular perspective. Therefore, phenomenology is a qualitative research method.

Interpretive phenomenology follows the same philosophical stance as phenomenology. To achieve its goal, interpretive phenomenology usually uses semi-structured interviews as a method of collecting data, in order to access the phenomenon itself. The interpretive aspect allows for an explanation of the data from the interview, with the purpose of obtaining a valid and common understanding of the meaning of the text (Kvale, 1996).

In interpretive phenomenological research, data is converted into text and is studied as being contextual, continually expandable, and emergent in relation to the

life world. The next step in interpretive phenomenology research is to analyze the text. This is a process that attempts to find the meaning of the text, to identify its structure and reduce it in a scientific way. The central principle of this systematic procedure is “whole-parts-whole” (J. Smith, 2003).

In this simultaneous, iterative and non-linear process, researchers constantly compare the full texts as a whole with meaning extracted from parts of the text. As Crist and Tanner (2003) point out, the interviews, transcriptions, reflections, and developing lines of inquiry can take place simultaneously and iteratively as the study progresses, with the meanings and interpretations emerging as the study proceeds. Van Manen echoes (1990) this with his view that the hermeneutic phenomenological analysis is an attempt to grasp the essential meaning of a phenomenon. He stated that we analyze phenomena in order to determine the structures of experience (ibid.).

Thus, the purpose of such a study is not to develop a theory, or to look at individuals in their particular situation, to find causality, or to describe an underlying cultural mechanism (Creswell, 1998). The purpose lies in studying the essence and whole structure of a particular phenomenon in a specific social context.

In general, interpretive phenomenological methodology is especially useful for research into experiences with no tangible physical manifestation, phenomena whose essence is hard to grasp. As a phenomenological researcher, the general goal of this research is to summarize the meanings of Huanxian community’s experience and their interpretation of Daoqing in three historical eras, which may also be summarized later on in a scientific format. Within an interpretive phenomenological framework, this research collects qualitative data through semi-structured interviews with Daoqing masters including performing troupes and puppet-producers in Huanxian. It provides a detailed description of their stories on how they safeguarded Daoqing

during the Cultural Revolution, when it was considered a kind of superstition, and how they understood and used Daoqing after it was nominated for the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*, as a national treasure.

2.2.2 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis as Methodological Tool

The specific methodological tool used in the research is interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA hereafter). It is adapted to guide the interviews with the practicing community of Daoqing in Huanxian. IPA is a qualitative research method originating from Jonathan Smith. According to Smith and his colleagues, IPA derives from hermeneutic and phenomenological philosophies (J. Smith, 2003, 2008; 2009; Smith, & Osborn, 2003). The aim of IPA “is to explore in detail how participants are making sense of their personal and social world, and the main currency for an IPA study is the meanings particular experiences, events, state hold for participants” (Smith & Osborn, 2003, p. 53).

The IPA approach is phenomenological in the sense that it attempts to understand the individual’s personal experience of the life world, but does not focus on producing the objective perception of the event or object (J. Smith, 2003). It is interpretative because of the emphasis on the researcher’s active role in accessing the participant’s world, as a dynamic process. In other words, IPA is both phenomenological and hermeneutic at the same time. J. Smith (ibid.) claims that the individual tries to make sense of his or her experience, while the researcher tries to make sense of the individual’s sense-making. A “double-hermeneutic” (ibid.) emerges in this process, as an overlapping interpretative activity develops when the researcher attempts to make sense of the participants who are trying to make sense of their personal perception.

IPA involves a variety of research designs. In terms of data collection, it incorporates semi-structured interviews, self-reporting tasks, focus groups and participant diaries. However, the semi-structured interview is the most commonly-used method of data collection. The scientific procedure for IPA is as follows: first conduct semi-structured interviews, then transcribe the interviews, develop the pre-themes and create the overall themes, and finally write up a narrative about the results.

There are two main reasons for choosing IPA as a tool of inquiry here. Firstly, IPA provides a way of gaining access to a practicing community's personal experience without being biased by any preconceived ideas as recorded in government documents or other authorities' archives. Secondly, IPA serves as a remarkable empirical and reflective framework within which the qualitative details of the practicing community may be drawn out. The research on Daoqing will provide a model to guide other future research on marginal folk traditions in China.

2.2.3 Relevance of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis for Heritage Studies

The IPA approach is derived from psychology, where it is adapted to deal with complex issues (Smith & Osborn, 2003). In the field of psychology, there are a number of publications employing IPA as research method. However, in recent years IPA has been used in other academic fields, such as cultural studies, pedagogy, museology, anthology and folklore, because it concerns the rich subjective perceptions of the individual's world.

Scholars in the field of heritage studies are also aware of the importance and contribution of IPA as a scientific method in heritage research. Within the framework of interpretative phenomenology, IPA is an appropriate approach to surveying various

stakeholders' experience of cultural heritage. Through the application of IPA, a researcher involved in studying the management of heritage sites is able to understand different tourists' and visitors' perceptions of the very same heritage sites. It also allows an investigator to find out the deep feelings that visitors to a museum may have when encountering physical museum objects. Moreover, some historical towns face the permanent challenge of finding a balance between development and protection. IPA serves as a good tool to investigate how local communities conceive their living context in relation to a heritage site, and to find out their personal views on the utilization of heritage and its protection.

In the last ten years, IPA has been developed as a tool to explore issues in the field of heritage studies. Phenomenological study of visitor experiences at heritage sites was developed by Masberg and Silverman in 1996. Goulding employed IPA as a research method to study “dance culture, its link to postmodern identity fragmentation and the emergence of neo-communities” (Guolding, 2005, p. 301). These publications provide examples of how IPA is emerging and playing a useful role in heritage studies.

The IPA approach makes an appropriate tool for intangible cultural heritage research because of the compatibility of its characteristic features with intangible cultural heritage research. Three characteristic features of IPA are pointed out by J. Smith (2003): idiographic, inductive and interrogative.

IPA is idiographic as it is a dynamic process whereby several cases are respectively examined to reach saturation until finishing all cases in one research. Based on an examination of all the cases, the researcher is able to analyze and interpret the data from across case studies, examining the meaning-units and themes of each individual case for convergence and divergence. In the case of intangible

cultural heritage research, the different agencies, such as central and local authorities, academic institutions, NGOs, and the practicing community, always see some performing activity, festival event, ritual ceremony or handicraft production, as the main manifestations of intangible cultural heritage. It is convenient to use IPA to categorize these agencies into different logical groups, examine each of them as an individual case until saturation is achieved, and eventually conduct an overall analysis across all the cases. IPA is capable of exposing the shared experiences across all individuals representing different groups of stakeholders; while at the same time revealing the unique experiences of the participants. In this way, IPA is able to extract the subjective unshared aspects of experience from those who share an intangible cultural heritage.

The second feature of IPA is that, like many other qualitative research methods, such as grounded theory, it is inductive; it can unveil phenomena which may not have been presented in existing literatures or theories or discovered by scholars (Shaw, 2001). A large part of the folk art and intangible cultural heritage of China belongs to minorities or marginal communities. Most of these phenomena have been neglected by scholars and lack extensive literature that can be used as a basis for research. Thus, this data-driven and open-ended character of IPA provides the researcher with a good tool to identify or uncover phenomena in China's intangible cultural heritage that have not been explored previously. Through IPA, the various representatives of the different stakeholders involved in safeguarding local tradition are able to tell their experience in their own way, without this being predicted by preconceived opinions of the investigator himself or herself.

The third feature of IPA is that it is interrogative. This also benefits intangible cultural heritage research. Considering that IPA is characteristically data-driven rather than theory-driven, the first-hand data collection from a practicing community and the

scientific, in-depth analysis afterward will contribute to the existing body of literature regarding intangible cultural heritage research.

2.2.4 Semi-structured Interview vs. Primary Historical Materials

Semi-structured interviews with the practicing community, guided by IPA, serve together with primary historical materials as the source of data and are meant to help discover answers to the research questions. The combination of semi-structured interviews and document analysis can provide a comprehensive understanding of the interpretation of Daoqing in official and community discourse respectively, and provide knowledge that challenges dominant discourses on the transmission process and the safeguarding effort. They may be considered the integral components of this research and cannot be separated from each other.

a. Semi-structured Interview

During the research, I spent three periods of time doing fieldwork in Huanxian, in order to ensure credible data collection over a relatively long span of time.

My understanding of Daoqing was boosted by my participation in a series of courses on Chinese shadow theatre at the Central Art Institution in Beijing. After receiving a Masters degree in World Heritage Studies from BTU in May 2008, I went back to Beijing to reunite with my family. During that summer, I attended a course, *The Aesthetic Feature of Chinese Shadow Theatre and its Producing Skill* at the Central Art Institution (*zhong yang mei yuan* 中央美院), because of my interest in folk art. The lecturer, Mr. Bai Xueming (白雪明), a renowned Daoqing shadow puppet producer in Gansu Province, took note of my experience in heritage studies and invited me to visit Huanxian and watch Daoqing shadow theatre the following

Chinese Lunar New Year.

Hence I took a preliminary field trip to Huanxian in February 2009 and stayed there the whole of Chinese Lunar New Year holiday, for two weeks. Mr. Bai Xueming introduced me to four Daoqing shadow theatre troupes, and some other Daoqing shadow puppet-making masters. During the New Year holiday, I followed one troupe for five days to watch their performance in different villages within Huanxian. I traveled with them to the rural areas and watched two performances of Daoqing each day.

That wonderful trip provided me with a great opportunity to understand Daoqing and to get to know a lot of local people in Huanxian who are involved in performing, producing and safeguarding Daoqing art. The unforgettable experience during those two weeks inspired me to do my research on Daoqing, a folk art which may disappear forever.

In October 2009, one of the Daoqing troupes was invited by a conference committee to give a performance in Cottbus at a cultural event during the international conference, World Heritage and Cultural Diversity - Challenges for University Education. I was responsible for arranging and organizing their performance, before returning to Huanxian at the beginning of September the same year. I spent ten days there, both with the Daoqing troupes and with the local audience in Huanxian. I ate and stayed with the troupes, either in their homes or in the hostels that they lived in while performing in different parts of Huanxian.

In this way, I had the chance to talk with the local community, understand their history and development, their perception of Daoqing, and what they considered to be the important aspects of shadow theatre. I used audio-visual devices to record

almost all the performances, and photographed the shadow puppets. The local people were very friendly and welcoming. When the troupes were not performing, I visited some Daoqing shadow puppet-makers in their traditional family homes and watched the whole procedure of making Daoqing puppets.

While in Huanxian, apart from accompanying the Daoqing troupe, I also met Chinese officials and government staff of the Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre Protection Center, Huanxian Cultural Bureau, Daoqing Shadow Theatre Association and Intangible Cultural Heritage Office of Qingyang Government Cultural Department. Most of them were very open in answering the questions; others were more discreet about Daoqing on some sensitive questions but accepted my visit to their office.

Although people in the government also helped me to arrange the performance for the cultural event in Germany, they were usually reticent when asked questions about the Daoqing experience during the Cultural Revolution. Even though I put a great deal of effort into asking relevant Chinese officials and government staff members questions regarding former and current policies on Daoqingto, it was very difficult to draw out their personal opinions or new information; they tended to repeat the statements in government documents. They were quite reluctant to offer their own opinions and understanding of Daoqing, or any personal view on intangible cultural heritage policy, preferring to cite government policies and positions. This experience made me realize that it was not necessary to interview people who represent the Chinese authorities. Therefore, my next step was to analyze government archives. It was my opinion that the archives would offer enough material to assess government policy on Daoqing.

The third trip to Huanxian from March to mid-April 2012 was to conduct

formal interviews for my research. At that time, my research had reached an intermediate phase when the literature review was complete, the conceptual framework was constructed and the IPA approach had already been identified. The third trip was to be distinct from my preliminary visits. Before I conducted the interviews, I developed the interviewee selection criteria, designed the interview structure and prepared the questions. In order to obtain less subjective, free and open responses from the interviewees, I employed semi-structured interviews as the form of inquiry.

During the one and half months in Huanxian, I stayed with local families in rural areas with the assistance of Mr. Bai Xueming and government staff from Huanxian County Government (*huan xian ren min zheng fu* 環縣縣政府). No one tried to obstruct my interviews with shadow puppet-masters and -makers. I had the freedom to ask questions, talk and record the conversations during my interviews. There was no government interference in my research and the interviews were conducted without the presence of government staff.

A total of four people were selected to participate in interviews to aid my data collection: two Daoqing performing masters and two masters in shadow puppet-making. The interview took place either in the interviewee's home or behind the stage at the end of each performance. In contrast with government officials, the Daoqing masters were very open in their criticisms of the Chinese Communist Party with regards to current policy on Daoqing, and not reticent about the Cultural Revolution. My interviews were fruitful, particularly in the discussions on the topic of the "feudalism of Daoqing" and its religious implications. My interview sometimes attracted other members of the troupe and the audience, especially when it was conducted right behind the stage after performances. Many people offered their opinions on Daoqing's history and their experiences during the Cultural Revolution.

This information supplemented my knowledge of Daoqing, even though I did not use everything as valid data in my research. All interviews were recorded on a digital recorder with the permission of the interviewees.

b. Participants

Within the framework of IPA interviews, though no ideal sample number is given, a small sample size is recommended (J. Smith, 2003). The interviewees were selected from rural areas in Huanxian. To be selected, they had to meet the following participant criteria: Firstly, the interviewees must express their willingness to talk, answer questions and participate in an interview, after the entire research and the research questions have been explained. Secondly, the interviewees should be recognized as renowned masters by the local community, either for proficient performing skills in Daoqing shadow theatre or in producing the Daoqing puppets. Thirdly, they must be old enough to have experience or memories of Daoqing from the period of the Cultural Revolution onwards. Fourthly, they must have received basic education and be able to read and write. Fifthly, they have to allow me to record the conversation with a digital recorder and be willing to help me with the research.

Eventually, four masters were selected who agreed to participate in the data collection. Two of them are shadow theatre performers and the other two are shadow puppet craftsmen. Master Shi (史師傅), male, was born in 1947 in Huanxian. He is a master in maneuvering the Daoqing shadow puppets and playing instruments such as the four-string guitar, the drum and the erhu. He began to learn performing when he was seven years old. He is now the only *Inheritor of the Representatives of National Intangible Heritage (in Performing Category)* of Huanxian. Master Jing (敬師傅), male, was born in 1946. He is *Inheritor of the Representatives of Intangible Heritage at Huanxian County Level (in Performing Category)*. He learned the professional performing skills from his father at 18. Master Ma (馬師傅), male, was born in 1940

in Huanxian. He is a master craftsman in producing Daoqing shadow puppets. He started to learn from his father at the age of 12 and very quickly acquired the skills in puppet-making. Master Wang (王師傅), male, was born in 1945 in Huanxian. He is one of the most famous and respected Daoqing puppet-making masters in Huanxian. Fond of Daoqing since he was very young, Master Wang learned the production skills from his uncle at the age of 16. At the time of the interviews, the four participants were aged between 59 and 72. Their average age was 62 years.

The interview process was composed of three parts. The first part involved the participants in narrating their general experience with Daoqing, from their childhood memories until the present date. The second part of the process moved from a general description of the participants' experience of Daoqing to specific perceptions in different historical periods, namely the Cultural Revolution, the Initial Period of Economic Reform, and the Harmonious Society period. The last step in the process was to answer questions which were raised by the researcher.

Technically, there were three principles for the first and second parts of the above-mentioned processes during the interviews. These were: to collect experiential narratives, to keep bringing participants back to concrete examples of experiences of Daoqing, and to gather concrete stories of participants' experience with Daoqing within each historical era. The semi-structured interview schedule and the opening questions can be found in Appendix A.

Concerning the third step in the interview process, and consistent with IPA method, interviewees were told that there were no right or wrong answers to the questions, but that the researcher was merely interested in understanding their experience with Daoqing in the three different historical eras.

c. Data Analysis

IPA places data analysis at the center of research. Analyzing the data helps the researcher to study the complexity of the interview content. According to Smith and Osborn (2003), while one may attempt to “capture and do justice to the meanings of the respondents to learn about their mental and social world, those meanings are not available in a transparent way -- they must be obtained through a sustained engagement with the text and a process of interpretation” (p. 64). This clearly affirms that the data analysis of IPA always involves an interpretative relationship with the interview data. However, the analytic process is a free personal textural analysis without specific regulation, emphasizing the researcher’s active performance throughout the analysis process (Smith & Osborn, 2003).

Reduction and interpretation are the two main stages in interpretive phenomenological analysis. The data analysis commences by phenomenological reduction. It is defined by Van Manen (2002) as “a certain attitude of attentiveness.” It involves a scientific process of determining the meaning and themes in the phenomena being studied. A concept of “thematic reflection” proposed by Manen (2002) will be adopted in this research. This refers to “a process of recovering structures of meaning that are embodied ... in human experiential representations in a text” (Van Manen, 2002). Themes are described as “concise phrases which aim to capture the essential quality of what was found in the text,” (Smith & Osborn, 2003, p. 68). Briefly, thematic reflection can be divided into three steps. After the interview, the transcription is split into different meaning units. This is then followed by compiling and analyzing pre-themes between the original text and the meaning units. The last step is to arrange them into themes and write up the result.

J. Smith (2008) outlines the general process for reducing the data. Each interview is transcribed and analyzed, and then the whole transcription of interviews

is analyzed, based on individual analyses in order to draw out the results. In the case of Daoqing, This involves the following five specific processes:

1. A detailed review of individual interview texts and a transcription of the interviews is made;
2. Meaning units are divided and pre-themes are identified based on a holistic perspective of the four transcriptions;
3. Pre-themes are prepared across all the interview texts, and reviewed against each other in order to draw out the themes;
4. The final themes are developed, based on working back and forth between the original texts, pre-themes, and emerging themes;
5. Narratives of thematic results are written up.

After the thematic reflection is done, the researcher moves to the next analytical phase, that is, interpretation. In the interpretive step within IPA, the researcher needs to step back, to consider the larger meanings of what is going on in a particular situation -- with the understanding that the results are always tentative (Creswell, 2006). In this process, results play an active role and can integrate different theories. The process involves selecting appropriate theories and throwing them against the results, to see what the researcher gets (Dahlberg et al., 2001).

d. Primary Historical Materials

Apart from the interview, primary historical materials were also collected and analyzed. The strategy used to conduct a historical materials collection is document analysis. Krippendorff defined document analysis as “a research technique for making replicative and valid inferences from data to their context” (1980, p. 21). A two-category scheme is identified as the framework for collecting the materials

concerning Daoqing. The first category of historical materials would be official archives, including government policy, reports, regulations; the second category would be accounts in the commercial or public media, including newspapers, books, journals, magazines, videotapes and maps. The first category is created and released by the different levels of government for specific limited audiences, whereas the second category is developed for public consumption (Berg, 2001, p. 179-187). The purpose of surveying documents is to archive the events in three different historical eras.

During the fieldwork to collect the materials, 633 primary source documents were successfully collected from the government archives of Qingyang city in Gansu Province, and the local authority archives of Huanxian County in Qingyang. These include legal reports, government documents, policies and regulations concerning intangible heritage, shadow theatre and other relevant heritage properties from the Cultural Revolution, the time of Economic Reform and the period after ratification of the Intangible Cultural Convention; articles on intangible heritage, shadow theatre, cultural industry; and the chronicles of Huanxian recording important political events, industrial development, cultural events, and the almanac of Huanxian from 1949 to 2012.

There are three significant aspects to the document collection the researcher assembled. Firstly, it included some official documents from 1966 to 1976, namely the period of the Cultural Revolution, which means that these are top secret documents in China. They are not open to the public, or to academies or other organizations. Only province-level Communist governors are authorized to access these documents. Secondly, part of the official archive from the Economic Reform period is also not accessible. Thirdly, a series of internal application materials of Daoqing shadow theatre for inclusion in the *Representative List of the Intangible*

Cultural Heritage of Humanity has not been accessed by any other scholar yet, according to the visitors' records at the archives.

CHAPTER 3

THE EVOLUTION OF DAOQING SHADOW THEATRE IN ANCIENT CHINA

Chinese Shadow Theatre is also known as Leather Shadow Play or Lamp Shadow Show. This involves the earliest form of shadow play as “backdrop art” in the world. Chinese people in ancient times adopted light and shadow as media and created a unique kind of drama with a beautiful combination of carving, painting, literature, singing, music and action as a staged performance. It is a special kind of drama, presented by projecting shadow puppets on to a screen. The stage consists of a large white sheet with the soft light source of a lamp behind it. The performers stand behind the big white sheet, holding the shadow puppets up to the back of the screen. By operating these puppets, they create the illusion of moving images. A talented performer can make several puppets walk, jump, dance and fight freely from one moment to the next.

Since the 17th century, shadow theatre in China has developed into two major varieties, the Southern schools (*nan lu* 南路) and the Northern schools (*bei lu* 北路). Daoqing Shadow Theatre, performed in the region of Huanxian and other parts of Gansu province, is one of the representative examples of the Northern schools. It is of considerable interest in its oral tradition and aesthetic forms, and reflects the beliefs, customs, folk knowledge and ecological understanding of the agrarian cultivators of the Loess Plateau region. Daoqing is an amalgamation of folk literature, music, crafts, fine arts, conducting and performance, embodying the local social spirit, religious ritual, folk customs and habits. It not only reflects the artistic ethos, but also the philosophy and moral thoughts of the Gansu region. It is one of the richest forms of intangible heritage that have come to symbolize the identity of the Han Chinese ethnic group (*han zu* 汉族), who constitute the majority of China’s population.

This chapter attempts to give an overview of the origin, history, art form and social functions of Daoqing in the past hundred years in China.

3.1 The Origin of Daoqing Shadow Theatre

3.1.1 Historical Overview of Shadow Theatre in Ancient China

A history of Chinese shadow theatre is also an exploration of popular cultural history, including study of the evolution of the misconceptions that frequently surround such minor forms of the performing arts (Fan Pen Li Chen, 2007, p. 14). Its development reflects the cultural and social patterns of Chinese history (ibid.). From the tales of the Han Dynasty (*han chao* 漢朝) (206 BC–220 AD), to the documents of the Song Dynasty (*song chao* 宋朝) (960–1279) and Yuan Dynasty (*yuan chao* 元朝) (1271-1368) to the existing shadow puppets and performance scripts of the Ming (*ming chao* 明朝) (1368-1644) and Qing Dynasties (*qing chao* 清朝) (1636-1912), the origin of Chinese shadow theatre has been the subject of many interesting hypotheses and is still a subject of controversy worldwide. Historians, anthropologists and theatre experts all hold different views as to its genesis. The various debates about the origin of the Chinese shadow theatre can be summarized in three main hypotheses: that it originated in the Shaanxi region during the Han Dynasty, in the Song Dynasty, or in Indian Buddhist sermons.

This section describes the most common perspective on the historical evolution of Chinese shadow theatre from the Han Dynasty to the Qing Dynasty. The sources of material used for this research are divided into two general categories: Ancient Chinese literature and recorded documents dating from the earliest times; and shadow puppets, scripts and traditional instruments which still exist in museums, shadow theatre troupes and private collections. These available sources are objective factual accounts of the historical development of Chinese shadow theatre, which

reflect how it is inextricably bound up with social history.

a. Tale of Origin in the Han Dynasty

The first historical record of a classical tale concerning shadow play is found in Ban Gu's (班固) *Hanshu* (漢書 *History of the Former Han Dynasty*) (111AD), under the section *Wudi Ji* (武帝紀 *Accounts of the Families Related to the Emperors Wu Di*).⁵ Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty was devastated after the death of one of his favorite concubines. He was obsessed with a great desire to see her again. A Daoist priest then used a “shadow trick” to conjure up her spirit and bring her to life. He carved the form of his favorite concubine with donkey leather, and used an oil lamp to make her shadow move behind a curtain. This romantic tale has been cited as the origin of shadow theatre and has gained popularity among Western scholars. As American Sinologist Fan Pen Li Chen stated, “This shadow trick should be considered in conjunction with shadow theatre and as evidence of its shamanic origin” (Fan Pen Li Chen, 2007, p. 23). Sven Broman (1995) also believed that either a lifelike puppet or simply a live substitute for the deceased person was most likely originally used in the earliest shadow theatre pieces (p. vii).

Furthermore, the story of Emperor Wu is also outlined in the book of *Sou Shen Ji* (搜神記 *In Search of the Supernatural*) by Jin Dynasty (317- 420) scholar Gan Bao (干寶) (315-336). A Song Dynasty scholar, Gao Cheng (高承) (ca. 1080), recounted this story in the shadow theatre section of his book *Shiwu Jiyuan Jilei* (事物紀原集類 *The Origin of Things*) and concluded that “this was the origin of the shadow theatre”. Many scholars have cited this as further evidence attributing the origin of the shadow theatre to this tale. A German anthropologist, Berthold Laufer (1923), interpreted Gao's theory to argue: “The shadow-play is, without doubt,

⁵ The *Hanshu* is a Chinese history book finished in 111 AD that described the history of China in the Western Han Dynasty from 206 BC to 25 AD. The work was composed by Ban Gu (32–92 AD) (Wagner & Ban, 1998).

indigenous to China” (p. 36).

b. Theory of Origin in the Tang Dynasty

Very little is known about shadow theatre in the period of the Tang Dynasty (*tang chao* 唐朝) (618-907). The only texts available from this period concerning shadow play are two anecdotal sources, Sun Guangxian’s (孫光憲) (900-968) *Beimeng Suoyan* (北夢瑣言 *Trivial Matters, Northern Dreams*) and Gao Yanxiu’s (高彦休) (854-?) *Tangqueshi* (唐闕史 *Missing History of the Tang Dynasty*).

Although surviving records do not mention any relationship between shadow puppets and Buddhism in the Tang Dynasty, numerous scholars of both Chinese and Western origin have suggested that shadow play has an indirect relationship with Buddhist *Bianwen*⁶ (變文 transformation texts) in the Tang Dynasty. There is mention of “Buddhist monks using shadow puppets to illustrate popular tales of the Buddha’s previous lives and of the working of karma” (Stalberg, 1984, p. 86). Renowned Chinese scholar Sun Kaidi (孫楷第) suggested that pictures that may have been used to accompany “transformation” recitations could have been the origin of shadow theatre. He writes, “Therefore I suspect that during the nighttime ‘transformation’ expositions by Buddhist monks, pictures may have originally been used. If my hypothesis is correct, this would have been the origin of the shadow theatre” (Sun, 1952, p.62).

A foremost scholar of “transformation” tales, Victor Mair has stood by Sun Kaidi’s theory. One of the main propositions in his work *Painting and Performance: Chinese Picture Recitation and Its Indian Genesis* is that a relationship exists between the performance of the “transformation” stories and shadow theatre. He argues that “it

6 *Verwandlungstexte* or *Wandlungstexte* in German

seems more likely that the shadow theatre received more direct influence from the storytelling tradition, which may well have developed from the transformation performances” (Mair, 1988, p. 12).

c. Validated Description in the Song Dynasty

The majority of scholars agree that shadow theatre became a folk art during the Song Dynasty (960–1279), because the records of real professional shadow theatre appeared for the first time in historical texts during this period. As Sun Kaidi states very clearly, no record exists of shadow theatre before the advent of the Song Dynasty (1952). The first explicitly historical description of professional shadow theatre can be found in the book *Shiwu Jiyuan Jilei*, which was written during the Song Dynasty by Gao Cheng. Cheng wrote that during Emperor Renzong’s (仁宗) reign (1023-1063) in the Song Dynasty, numerous plays about the story of *Sanguo Yanyi*⁷ (三国演义 *Romance of Three Kingdoms*) were performed by storytellers in the marketplace. Based on these narrations, “people made shadow puppets and began to give visual performances of the Three Kingdoms” (Chang, p. 1983, p. 22). This indicated that this professional theatre form was founded in the Song Dynasty.

During the Song Dynasty, seminal elements, such as different types of drama, poems, arts and crafts that may have contributed to the development of shadow theatre, all had an influence on the creation of the actual professional shadow theatre form as we know it today.

Evidence that shadow theatre had reached a high level of sophistication back then can also be gathered from one of the most valuable books on the subject, *Baibao*

⁷ *Sanguo Yanyi*, written by Luo Guanzhong (羅貫中) in the 14th century, is a Chinese historical novel based on the events in the turbulent years towards the end of the Han Dynasty and the Three Kingdoms era of Chinese history, starting in 169 AD and ending with the reunification of the land in 280 AD. (Lo & Brewitt-Taylor, 1980)

*Zongzhen*⁸ (百寶總珍 *Compendium of a Hundred Treasures*). The book includes a list of shadow puppets belonging to one shadow theatre troupe from the Song Dynasty period. According to this list, shadow puppets made of translucent, colored sheep or goat parchment were used. Although the work cannot be dated, it must have been written no earlier than the mid-Northern Song period (960-1127), since “the earliest Northern Song puppets were constructed of plain cardboard” (Jiang, 1991, p. 28).

The Compendium of a Hundred Treasures

listed 160 body puppets in large, medium, and small sizes; 120 body puppets that include thirty-two categories of warriors, two categories of drivers, two of officials and attendants, plus one of waiters and cavalry; 204 items such as horses, mortars, city walls, moats, boats, gates, tigers, tables and chairs; 40 pieces of weapons including spears and swords; and 1,200 heads of characters from the historical epics of the Eighteen States of the Warring States Period, as well as those of the Han, the Three Kingdoms, the Tang and the Five dynasties. (Fan Pen Li Chen, 2007, p. 34, translated in Chang, 1983, p. 22).

Based on these valuable descriptions, one can compare the Song shadow puppets with later puppets in order to identify the differences.

Performance records and Chinese traditional ink painting at that time also reflect the popularity and sophistication of shadow theatre. In her book, *Chinese Shadow Theatre*, Fan Pen Li Chen (2007) referred to various literary and performing art texts of the Song Dynasty, to determine the most popular form of shadow theatre during this period. In the Song Dynasty, the plays were mostly based on historical

⁸ Baibao *Zongzhen* was written during the Northern Song Dynasty by an anonymous writer. It described different shadow puppets and other information concerning Chinese shadow theatre (ibid.).

stories. Shadow theatre “was performed daily, rain or shine, to throngs of crowds in permanent theatre structures in the entertainment quarters of Hangzhou (杭州), the capital of the Southern Song Dynasty” (ibid., 2007, p. 39). Meng Yuanla (孟元老), born in the Northern Song Dynasty, related in his book *Dongjing Menghualu* (東京夢華錄 *Record of A Dream of Paradise in the Eastern Capital*) that “shadow plays graced private homes, public areas, temples during festivals, and even the court during special celebrations” (Jiang, 1991, p. 34).

d. Theory of “From China to the World” during the Yuan Dynasty

There are two theories concerning shadow theatre under the Mongolian emperors of the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368) which are endorsed by both Chinese and Western scholars. One is that the Mongolian government tried to prohibit various performing arts, including shadow play, in public. Shadow theatre seemed to have vanished from the major cities during the Yuan Dynasty, although *Yuanzaju* (元雜劇 Yuan Dynasty style drama or opera) flourished during that period. “A piece of archaeological evidence and personal jottings of a scholar indicate, however, that they did survive in the countryside.” (Fan Pen Li Chen, 2007, p. 36). A Yuan Dynasty tomb belonging to a shadow theatre performer was excavated at Xiaoyi (孝義) County in Shanxi, presenting one of the strongest pieces of evidence.

A second theory, suggesting that shadow shows spread to the West from China, is affirmed by almost all modern Chinese researchers and Western scholars dealing with shadow theatre (ibid.). “This theory is important because it leads to the conclusion that the shadow theatres of Iran, Turkey, Egypt, the Middle East, and North Africa all originated in China” (ibid.). Based on a generally recognized view espoused by Olive Blackham (1960) in *Shadow Puppets*, Sven Broman in *Chinese Shadow Theatre Libretti*, Chang Lily (1983) in *The Lost Roots of Chinese Shadow Theatre*, Susan Einstein (1976) in *Asian Puppets*, Genevieve Wimsatt in *Chinese*

Shadow Shows, Wilhelm Grube and Emil Kreb (1915) in *Chinesische Schattenspiele*, Georg Jacob (1933) in *Das chinesische Schattentheater*, and Nicholas Martinovitch (1933) in *The Turkish Theater*, shadow troupes entertained the Mongolian armies during their invasions and they performed at a Mongolian court in Persia. From there shadow theatre spread to the Arab region.

Judging from the footnotes in Jacob Landau's *Studies in the Arab Theater and Cinema* (1958), the idea that shadow theatre spread from China "through the agency of the Mongolians, the neighbors of the Turkish tribes ... into the Muslim Near East in the 12th or 13th century was probably first conceived by German scholars such as Georg Jacob" (ibid.). Despite the general lack of evidence of the proliferation of shadow shows during the Yuan Dynasty, one can perceive an increasing popularity of shadow theatre in China thereafter.

e. Shadow Theatre in the Ming and Qing Dynasties

During the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), shadow plays continued to be staged in cities and villages. They were not only popular among illiterate people of the lower class, but were also welcomed by educated people of the higher class. Several surviving sources on shadow theatre during the Ming Dynasty mentioned this performing art. A well-known Ming novelist, Qu You (瞿佑) (1341-1427), described the performance of shadow play during Lantern Festival⁹ (*yuan xiao jie* 元宵節) in his poem *Ying xi* (影戏 *Shadow Play*). Further reliable literary sources mentioning shadow theatre include a Ming Dynasty novel by an anonymous writer, *Tao wu Xian ping* (橈杓閒評 *Idle Critiques of a Blockhead*) and *Lijingji*¹⁰ (荔鏡記 *Romance of the Lychee Mirror*). Material evidence "for the existence of shadow theatre consists

⁹ The Lantern Festival is a traditional Chinese festival since Han Dynasty more than 2000 years ago. It is a festival celebrated on the fifteenth day of the first month in the lunar year in the Chinese calendar (Siu, 1999).

¹⁰ *Taowu Xianping* is a Ming Dynasty novel describing the fight between the Donglin faction and the Yan faction in the court of Ming Dynasty.

mainly of a few permanent stages used solely for the puppet and shadow shows next to temples, and some Ming Dynasty play scripts and shadow puppets” (ibid., p. 45).

The Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) was the next notable period in the development of shadow theatre in China. During this period, this art form was further elaborated and various local styles were established. Huanxian Daoqing shadow theatre (*huan xian dao qing pi ying* 環縣道情皮影戲 Huanxian Daoqing Daoist style shadow play) was gradually systematized during the late Qing Dynasty (L. Wei, 2008; J. Liu, 1988; Y. Li, 2011; Liu & Yao, 1998; D. Zhang, 1996; Chin, 1993). Daoqing shadow theatre saw its heyday at the end of the Qing Dynasty in the 19th century. Then it differentiated into regional flavors and the subject matter changed to more popular stories or novels, such as *Xi you ji* (西遊記 *Journey to the West*) or *Bai she zhuan* (白蛇傳 *Lady White Snake*). As the Qing Dynasty represented a time of Manchurian domination, several plays voiced social criticism about the foreign rulers. The Manchurians in turn reacted by suppressing the shadow theatre players.

3.1.2 The Origin of Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre

The above has been a general account of the history of China’s Shadow theatre. The next question is: What about the origin of the Huanxian Daoqing shadow theatre?

Though Daoist Ballads have a long history, there is no accurate historical record on Daoqing shadow theatre except for the following three documents: the old *Annal of Huanxian County* (*jiu huan xian zhi* 舊環縣志) compiled in 1754 of the Qianlong Period of the Qing Dynasty (*qing chao qian long* 清朝乾隆), the new *Annal of Huanxian County* (*xin huan xian zhi* 新環縣志) published in 1993 by the Huanxian County Government, and the *Annal of the Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre* (*huan xian dao qing pi ying zhi* 環縣道情皮影志) compiled and published in

2006 by the Huanxian County Government. In the *1993 Annal of Huanxian County*, it is stated that “the preliminary research reveals that Daoqing was introduced into Huanxian in the early Qing Dynasty and developed into a Daoqing opera with a unique folk style through folk artists’ continuous practice in the late Qing Dynasty and the early days of the Republic of China”. These words indicate that Daoqing shadow theatre was *introduced* into Huanxian County rather than having *originated* there.

According to the *2006 Annal of the Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre*, “In the fourth year of the Jiajing (嘉靖) Period of the Ming Dynasty (1525), the Shi xing zhuang Village (蘆家灣鄉), Lu jia wan Town (石興莊村), built a stage for shadow performance” (p. 66). This suggests that Daoqing may have existed in Huanxian County since the 16th century. But in the introduction to the *1754 Annal of Huanxian County*, it says that “Daoqing has experienced a long process of development. It appeared in the Song Dynasty (about 960) and developed, matured and became popular in the Ming and Qing Dynasties” (p. 4). So when indeed Daoqing originated, or more specifically was introduced into Huanxian, is not unified in the two official publications -- in fact, there is as big a difference as 600 years. The *1754 Annal of Huanxian County* has detailed records on the county’s history, agriculture, economy, culture and customs, but it does not have a single word about Daoqing, which indicates that Daoqing was not known as a traditional performance in 1754.

Despite the various descriptions in different official publications, most scholars in China hold that the Huanxian Daoqing is very similar to the shadow theatre of Shaanxi Province (陝西省) in terms of both performance and shadow puppets, so it is more likely that Daoqing was introduced into Huanxian from Shaanxi Province in the late Qing Dynasty by Xie Changchun and transformed through innovation into a new type of shadow theatre with its own unique style (L. Wei, 2008;

J. Liu, 1988; Y. Li, 2011; Liu & Yao, 1998; D. Zhang, 1996; Chin, 1993).

3.2 The Performance and Production of Daoqing

3.2.1 Social Background of Huanxian County

Huanxian is located at the junction of Gansu, Ningxia (寧夏) and Shaanxi provinces (Figure 10). As a border area with a mixed population, people of Han nationality and minorities, the county was an important military site in ancient China, as recorded in the *1754 Annal of Huanxian County*, “Huanxian has enjoyed a vital military position since ancient times” (G. Gao, 1990, p. 87). In 1936, the Red Army liberated the county and made it into a county-level prefecture. As of 2010, the Huanxian County, with a total area of 9,236 km², had 16 townships, 281 administrative villages and a population of 340,000 (Compilation Committee of the *Annals of Huanxian County* [CCAHC], 1993).



Figure 6: Geography of Huanxian. K. Wang, October 2010

The county is an agricultural area and most of the population are farmers, yet it is not a fertile place as it is located in the hilly area at the edge of the Muus (毛乌素) Desert. Very uncommon terrains such as ridges, loess hills, steep hills, plateaus, junctions and palm-like terraces are commonly seen in this messy and diverse area.¹¹

¹¹ According to the Yearbook of Qingyang (2011), Huanxian County has 1.36 million acres (per capita 4.5 acres) of registered arable land, of which 1.359 million acres (or 99.9% of the arable land) are

The ecological environment is extremely harsh: drought, floods, snow, frost, wind, hail, insects, epidemics -- almost all known disasters are frequently experienced here. According to the *1993 Annal of Huanxian County*, the 37 years between 1949 and 1985 saw 36 droughts, 36 cold snaps, 36 floods, 37 hail storms, 17 pest disasters and 14 storms (CCAHC, 1993). Droughts are the most severe kind of disaster, with average annual rainfall only 400 mm or less (decreasing from south to north). It is among the 41 poorest counties in China and the 20 driest counties in Gansu Province.

The County is on China's poverty alleviation list. Its farmers have an annual income of only 1,300 yuan; 2/5 of the villages have no electricity. The county town, more developed than the towns and villages at lower levels, is centered round the county government building, the hospital, court, high school and cultural center, and a commercial street. Due to the difficult terrain, the county town, townships and villages are far apart from each other. It is not easy to travel to the adjacent cities or counties, either. Because of the geomorphology and disasters, the county has gradually become an "isolated island" through the long years, but that provides a relatively complete natural and social environment for Daoqing shadow theatre.

3.2.2 Elements of Daoqing Performance

Troupes are the basic units of Daoqing and troupes are composed of performers (or artists), a performing stage, a prop trunk (or performing suitcase), musical instruments and play scripts (or librettos).

a. Performers

Most Daoqing performers are half-artists and half-peasants, which means they farm during farming time and perform from town to town or village to village

planted with crops; its agricultural population accounted for 96% of the county's total population and agricultural revenue accounts for 80.6% of total revenue.

when they are free from farming. Some troupes are professional ones; performers in these troupes perform for a living. The troupes are usually based on families, or sometimes on a location. Some troupes have fixed performers and others do not. Normally a troupe has four to six performers, commonly described as “four, hasty; five, orderly; six, easy” (*si jin wu mang liu xiao ting* 四緊五忙六消停), meaning that four performers are not enough for a performance, as they must take care of different musical instruments, which is hasty; five performers are just enough so that the performance can be more orderly; six performers can put everybody at ease, which is an ideal situation.

The six performers are responsible for six different areas of duty: front stage (*qian tai* 前臺), drums (*si gu* 司鼓), four-string instrument (*si xuan* 四弦), bamboo flute (*san chui* 三吹) and suona, gong and clapper (*er shou* 二手), and erhu (*er hu* 二胡). The player responsible for the front stage is the one who operates the shadow puppets and sings behind the curtain, similar to the Dalang in Indonesian *wayang kulit*, which is a crucial role as he sings and performs throughout a play and the performance of the whole troupe depends first and foremost on his skills. He is the focus of the audience’s attention and can communicate with the audience directly; he is also the “commander” of the other performers in the troupe, who leads and conducts the others to perform in various ways while giving his own performance.

The people who play the drums, the four-string instrument and the other instruments are the ones sitting at the backstage, responsible for at least 12 musical instruments, including drums, flute, suona, gong, slit drum, etc. These instruments are usually played by four or five performers; they each have to play more than one instrument.

Daoqing shadow theatre usually takes place within a large open-air venue,

which may be a temple or the host's residence, depending on the occasion of the performance. In Daoqing shadow theatre, the performer and the musicians can be watched from one side of the screen and the audience generally faces the stage from the other side. The performance can normally be watched from both sides, but many people, particularly little children, prefer to watch the performers' side rather than the shadows on the other side of the screen. Behind the screen, the whole troupe is surrounded by shadow puppets. Along both sides of the screen, many puppets hang on an iron wire, ready to be chosen during the show and taken swiftly to the screen by the performer. The performers are hidden from the view of those on the shadow side, a barrier that is easily and frequently overcome when audiences walk behind the screen to watch the shadow puppets and the performers who control them.

b. Stage

The stage for Daoqing shadow theatre is very simple and portable (Figure 11). A raised platform or two horizontal traditional Chinese stools usually between half and one meter from the ground are enough to constitute the whole stage. The stage equipment is a lamp and a screen. A single lamp suspended above the performer's head illuminates the screen from the center. The lamp used traditionally is the oil lamp, generally with five wicks, which artists claim to be God's five fingers. There is also another saying that refers to the five Gods whom the people worship: the God of Horse, the God of Cattle, the God of Land, the God of Water, and the God of Grass. Later, oil lamps were gradually replaced by kerosene lamps, gas lamps, screened shell lamps, candle lamps, and electric bulbs. The position of the lamp is very important because it affects the manner in which the shadow is projected on the screen.

The screen is a wooden rectangular frame covered either by white translucent paper or cloth and used for projecting the shadows. The artists call it the "face of God". It is usually five or six meters long and one or one-and-a-half meters high. At the lower edge of the screen, there are often two traditional Chinese wooden stools placed horizontally to support the wooden frame. Sometimes the screen is placed on

the front edge of a constructed platform, instead of on wooden stools. The screen inclines slightly toward the performer. This helps, as the puppet's face can then be placed firmly against the screen without falling down.



Figure 7: The Stage for Daoqing. C. Liu, October 2009

c. Trunk and Music Instruments

The trunk or suitcase usually contains numerous labeled folders, large and small, containing the shadow puppets: humans, supernatural beings, animals, supernatural weapons, furniture and scenery, including clouds, winds and trees, the sun and so on. The trunk has many more heads than bodies because several heads may be used interchangeably on any specific body. The trunk may belong to the leading performer of the troupe. All the props for different performances can be packed into two wooden boxes. One donkey is sufficient to carry them for a performance tour anywhere.

Generally in one Daoqing shadow play, ten or fifty different puppets may be required, according to the scenes to be performed. The puppets walk and fly across the screen. They may appear from out of the ground, dive into water, fly with the wind, or disappear into the clouds. When they are in a battle story, some puppets ride

on horses, tigers or in a sedan chair. Skilled performers with magic-like dexterity can transform a beautiful lady into a white snake or convert Monkey King into different animals. Each puppet has its own personality, voice quality, and a movement style that is related to its physical characteristics. Whenever a puppet appears on screen, Huanxian audiences, most of whom have been watching Daoqing shadow play since childhood, immediately know whether the character of a puppet in the play is kind or evil, polite or aggressive, dignified or foolish.

Another important and integral element in Daoqing shadow theatre is the traditional group of musical instruments (Figure 8). This comprises the sixian, the erhu, the Chinese bamboo flute, the Dina horn, and the Suona horn. Some other musical instruments, such as yu'gu, jianban, sixian, shuaibang, flute, and fina horn are all handcrafted by the troupe themselves.



Figure 9: Play Scripts of Daoqing. C. Liu, October 2009

There is a variety of repertoire. The “Plays of gods” (*shen xi* 神戲), an important part of Daoqing repertoire, are stories about ghosts or gods: The gods always save and help the mortals in times of danger and disaster; mortals can become immortal if they have devout faith; the gods in Heaven or in the nether world correct unfair trials in the human world. These stories demonstrate the consistency between the ethical standards in Heaven and on Earth, and how human beings can borrow the power of gods or ghosts to build a just, harmonious and orderly human society.

For example, in the story *Visiting the Nether World for Three Times* (*san xia yin* 三下陰), the young man Bao Wen (包文) traveled to the nether world three times to find out the truth behind an injustice. The “eighteen layers of hell” (*shi ba ceng di yu* 十八層地獄) which he toured involve not only scenes in hell but also punishments corresponding to all sorts of human evils or sins. The story illustrates divine morality supplementing the human social order. In other words, cases that cannot be justly dealt with in the human world can be given impartial judgment in the netherworld, a habitat for many desperate souls. Justice in the human world is too muddled, whereas that in the underworld may rectify and enhance the effectiveness of traditional human morality to some extent.

3.2.3 Production of Daoqing Shadow Puppets

The production of Daoqing shadow puppets is an old traditional Chinese folk art. Shadow puppets are the essential physical assets in Daoqing shadow theatre performances. All the puppets are delicately carved and painted. No matter if they are human beings, animals, ghosts or vehicles, furniture, rocks, plants or sceneries, all the puppets have dramatized characteristics and are appropriate for theatre performances.

The making of the Daoqing shadow puppets is an extremely complex process (Figure 10). Cow skin is the superior material for making the puppets because it is shiny, well-tanned and can be treated to transparency. A puppet is made using at least 10 steps: cow skin selection, skin preparing, skin tailoring, pattern drafting, puppet carving, coloring, color sealing, silhouette drying, parts binding, and rod fixing. Some twenty to thirty tools are used during the process, such as scrapers, pins, pens, carving knives, cutting knives and carving pads (Figure 11). All the tools are handcrafted by the artists. All the Daoqing shadow puppets are finely decorated. The entire process of making one single piece of puppet may take half a month.

Daoqing characters are different from human beings, but human beings are the most important objects represented by Daoqing characters. A human Daoqing shadow puppet usually consists of seven parts, namely head, upper body, lower body, upper arms, forearms, hands and legs. The parts are tied together with a strong thread so that they are fully jointed. Around the neck there is a collar into which the detachable head is inserted, an ingenious technique enabling the performer to change at will the personality of the character in question. A Daoqing human shadow puppet usually has two movable arms and two movable legs, with a stick attached to each hand. The puppets can also be moved as a whole to express the movement of other parts of the body. In a small number of human puppets, some have additional mechanisms that make other parts of the body movable, such as the mouth, the eyes and hair. A metal rod is attached to the neck of the puppet and each hand to make the shadow puppet move and act. The lower part of the rod ends in a piece of reed or bamboo, serving as a handle for the performer. By these simple means, fascinating moving pictures are created, with puppets eating, drinking, fencing, riding and even somersaulting.



Figure 10: The Complex Process of Producing Puppets, C. Liu, October 2009

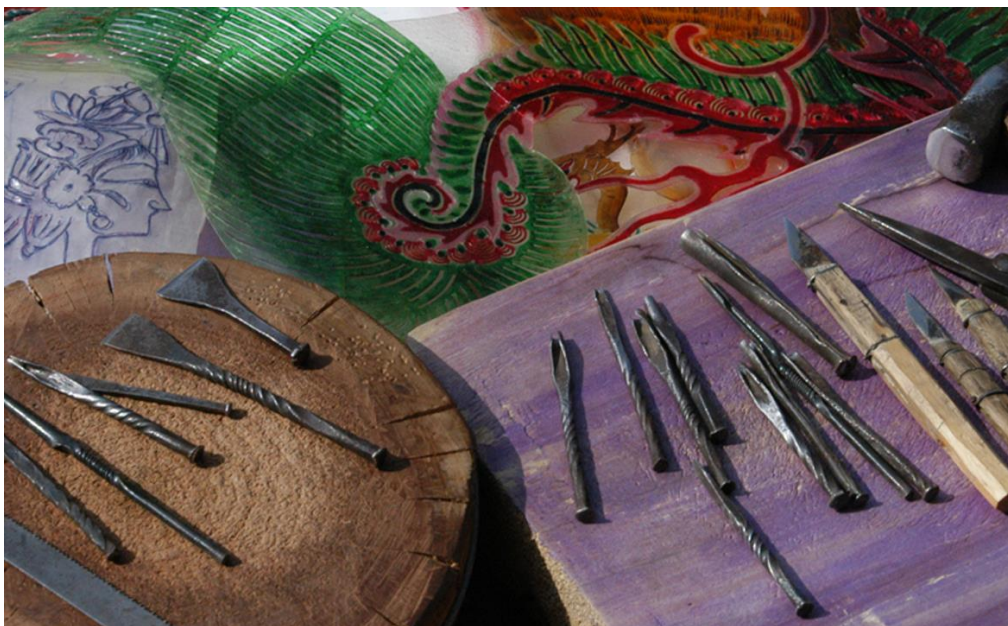


Figure 11: Handcrafted Tools. Source: C. Liu, October 2009

The shape of Daoqing human puppets' eyes, noses, mouths and hair, as well as their clothes and headgear, usually reveal something of their personality and behavior. The character types are the same as in Chinese opera performed by live actors (Appendix B). They also fall into the following five categories: Sheng (生 the role of a young male), Dan (旦 the role of a female), Jing (淨 the actor with a painted face), Mo (末 the role of an old-aged male actor), and Chou (醜 the role of a clown).

Sheng refers to the male roles, such as young men, civil officials, scholars, or military heroes. Dan refers to beautiful young or elderly ladies with dignified manners in a variety of female roles, such as a faithful wife, a vivacious young woman, a coquette, a comic female lead or a female acrobatic-fighting lead. Jing refers to the actor with a painted face, portraying a vigorous, bad character. Chou refers to the role of a clown with a white nose. Its varieties are Wenchou (文丑 a comic civilian role) and Wuchou (武丑 an acrobatic-fighting comic lead). Mo refers to the role of a middle aged or old-aged male character.

3.3 The Neglected Religious Function of Daoqing Shadow Theatre

3.3.1 Occasions for Religion-Related Daoqing Performances

The harsh natural and geographical environment prompted the Huanxian people to put their faith in the gods, in the hope of eliminating disasters and creating a better life. The regular temple fairs (*maio hui* 廟會) were a way to satisfy their wishes. Temple fairs were held in temples at various lunar festivals to thank and entertain the gods. Where there was a temple, there would be a religious ceremony; and where there was a religious ceremony, there would be performances. Theatre anthropologist Richard Schechner (1985), in identifying the relationship between theatre performance and rituals, points out that “performances” and “rituals” are not completely separate; they are the two ends of a continuum.

China's temple fairs are closely linked with drama, too. To get blessings from the gods, people had to please them, and to please them, people danced and did theatre performances. As early as in the Song Dynasty, temple ceremonies and theatre performances were combined, as described in Meng Yuanlao's *Record of Dongjing* (東京夢華錄 the then capital city): At the temple fair outside the Wansheng Gate (萬勝門), Bianjing City (汴京城), a musical platform was set up on the terrace at the front of the temple, in which Jiaofang (教坊 a musical institution) and Junrongzhi (鈞容直 a military music band) played music, while plays and dances were performed to the music.

In Huanxian County, temple fairs were accompanied by large-scale rituals for thanksgiving and entertainment of the gods. Daoqing was among them. As Fei Xiaotong (1989) put it, "Chinese people worshipped the gods for good weather and avoiding disasters, so the sacrifices were a bit like bribery." (p, 78, own translation). The Huanxian people performed Daoqing to worship and entertain the gods in the hope that the gods would help them get rid of bad luck and grant them a happy life.

Every village in the county has its own temple in which Daoqing troupes would be invited to perform at every birthday of the gods or on the anniversary of the deaths of deified personalities. Villagers from the surrounding countryside would come to the temple to worship the gods. On the day of a temple fair itself, people would arrive at the temple in the early morning or even at midnight to burn incense and pray for a good harvest the next year, and for the well-being of their family. When the ceremony began, people would shift from a secular mode to a sacred one, as everybody would watch the Daoqing performance intently and would have a solemn look on their face as the performers sang stories about gods and ghosts and burned incense and set off firecrackers to welcome the manifestation of gods. This is the process in which secular time turns into sacred time (L. Wei, 2008).

Besides temple rituals, Daoqing is related to other important activities, since the significant events in traditional Chinese society usually had something to do with religion. Such activities include civil weddings, funerals, and birthday celebrations, promotion, building a house or giving birth to a baby, which are all important moments that should be blessed by the gods. So people would thank the gods by inviting performers to play Daoqing. If temple fairs are “dominant” religious ceremonies, these everyday activities are “recessive” rituals. And be it public or private religious occasions, Daoqing is a must.

3.3.2 Three Types of Religious Performance

There are three kinds of Daoqing performance in terms of their religious function: “Tangying” (堂影), “Yuanying” (愿影) and “Huiying” (会影). Tangying refers to the kind of performance conducted on occasions when people build a house, get married, have a funeral or when the newborn baby is one month old. Tangying is only for the rich farmers who can afford to invite performers to perform in their house. Repertoire in the Tangying category should be in strict accordance with the content and purpose of the ceremonies. For example, *Blessings from Heaven* (*tian guan ci fu* 天官賜福) is a typical repertoire for weddings, whereas *Breaking through Five Passes* (*chu wu guan* 出五關) is for funerals, as it expresses filial piety and the salvation of dead souls. In addition, as filial piety is an important value to the Chinese, the Huanxian people would mark the 60th birthday of a parent with a ceremonial celebration.

Yuanying refers to the kind of performance conducted to pray for a person when he is sick or to give thanks to gods or spirits after a sickness or other disaster has been overcome. The praying performance is called *xu yuan* (許願 making

wishes), while the thanksgiving performance is called *huan yuan* (還原). The person who is making a wish or giving thanks to the gods for granting his wish kneels in front of the altar and burns incense till the Daoqing performance begins, which indicates he has made a wish or has made a promise to thank the gods when the disaster or sickness has been overcome.

Huiying refers to a kind of thanksgiving performance at temple fairs. It is similar to Yuanying, only on a larger scale, with its performers paid by villagers collectively, as most of the villagers are too poor to afford to pay for a Daoqing troupe. As each temple fair lasts for a few days, even up to ten days, the performance also lasts for the whole period of the fair. One important purpose of such performances is to pray to the gods for rain, a common wish of the villagers. Repertoires in this category are mostly about praising or worshiping the gods, as people are fearful of offending the gods.

3.3.3 Taboos

There are a few taboos or rules relating to Daoqing performances. The first involves the gender of performers. In traditional Chinese culture, especially in the remote rural areas, women were subordinate to men and were not allowed to take part in religious ceremonies or only allowed into a specific restricted range of activities related to them. For example, once the stage is set up, women are not allowed to enter the backstage or sit on the box of props, because it is believed that such behavior offends the gods and consequently brings disasters. The second involves where shadow puppets may be kept. Shadow puppets representing immortals, the sacrosanct theocracy, must be hung on the upper left of the curtain. Thirdly, with regard to the troupes themselves, no one should step on the performers' seats or stools; it was believed that such behavior would make the troupe no longer popular or qualified as a

medium to pass on God's will.

3.3.4 Neglected Religious Function

The occasions, specific repertoires and taboos associated with Daoqing all imply a strong sense of religion. It is fair to say that Daoqing, like other genres of China's shadow theatre, is closely tied to religious ceremonies in Huanxian County, despite its enlightening, entertaining and emotionally sustaining functions. Daoqing plays the role of a medium through which people can communicate with gods: It sends people's wishes and aspirations to the gods and passes on god's will to people; it brings representations of god into people's lives through shadow puppets. A major function of religion is to "provide human beings with psychological comfort and security from supernatural power" (S. Sun, 2001, p. 95). Such two-way communication brings the Huanxian community a sense of security and confidence for a better life. One may in fact say that the gods and spirits in traditional Daoqing repertoires are imagined and created by the Huanxian community, representing their needs and expectations, reflecting their understanding of life and ways of living.

When Daoqing is performed on religious occasions, the performances on the stage and rituals in front of the altar are closely combined, penetrating and mingling with each other. The real and the illusionary overlap, the altar and the stage seeming to transport one to another realm; the ultimate aim is to accomplish communication with the gods through the Daoqing performance. The Huanxian community believes that rituals carried out with the help of a Daoqing performance can change the fortune of those who participate in the rituals. In other words, Daoqing and Daoqing-related rituals can rebuild life. This is a process in which religious rituals are seen as playing a transformative function in real life. For scholars, Daoqing provides an example of the neglected religious function of shadow theatre.

CHAPTER 4

DAOQING SHADOW THEATRE AS FEUDAL RUBBISH, INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE AS A POLITICAL TOOL

The processes of change and the measures for safeguarding Daoqing in China cannot be studied without acknowledging China's political and economic transformation as a premise. In 1949, the new China was founded under the leadership of Mao Zedong and the Communist Party, after periods of western colonization, Chinese warlords, the Japanese invasion and the civil war between the Communist Party and the Kuomintang (*guo min dang* 國民黨). Between 1949 and the late 1990s, China experienced the Cultural Revolution and the initial stage of the Reform and Opening Up policy (*gai ge kai fang* 改革開放); China transited from an agricultural society to an industrial one, from a closed society to an open one, and from a traditional society to a modern one (Fairbank, 1986; Soled, 1995; Tang, 2010). Such political and economic transformation has had a profound effect on Chinese culture and the traditional way of life. Although the concept of cultural heritage was introduced into China quite recently and the term "intangible cultural heritage" didn't exist until the late 1990s, Daoqing, just like the traditional Chinese opera and other folk arts and crafts, has been deeply affected by the political and economic transformation.

Now 60 years have passed since China's communist regime was established. Yu Wujing (1997) pointed out in a study of Chinese culture that "reviewing the history of the People's Republic of China, one finds that the first thirty years and the following years represent respectively two cultural modes with different qualities" (p. 13). "The first 30 years" refers to the years between 1949 and 1976, or the Mao era, an era where the relation between culture and politics was a complex and sensitive topic, as culture was officially linked to politics.

Mao Zedong, as a leader who enjoyed absolute leadership, believed that all culture, literature and art belonged to a certain class and a certain political line. Art that was only for art's sake, that was beyond class, that could be considered independent

from politics, did not exist. Culture and art were subordinate to politics and in turn shaped politics, according to a speech by Mao at the Literature Forum in Yan'an in 1942 (*zai Yan'an wen yi zuo tan hui shang de jiang hua* 在延安文藝座談會上的講話). For those 30 years, his proposition of “culture and art subordinate to politics” (Mcdougall, 1980, p34) led to many cultural traditions and folk art forms divesting themselves of their social or cultural functions and becoming a tool for political propaganda.

The beginning of the Cultural Revolution in 1966 took that ideology to extremes. The whole country was involved in an unprecedented chaos of class-oriented movements and struggles. Huanxian, though far away from the political center, was not spared. During the ten years between 1966 and 1976, the economy and society stagnated, traditions and culture were subverted, artists were persecuted by the political movement, and Daoqing became a tool for class conflict (*jie ji dou zheng* 階級鬥爭).

The Cultural Revolution ended after the death of Mao Zedong and in 1978 China entered a new period of Reform and Opening up under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping (Vogel, 2011).¹² During this period, China shifted its focus from class struggle to economic development. Economic development became the undisputable focal point for all aspects of society, and political movements would henceforth be secondary to economic development, all thanks to the policies in the Deng Xiaoping period¹³. Deng Xiaoping (1979) said in 1979 at the Fourth National Meeting of Cultural and Art Workers (*di si ci quan guo wen yi gong zuo zhe dai biao da hui* 第四次全國文藝工作者代表大會) that:

“The party’s leadership over cultural and art work does not equal giving orders. It will not require culture and arts to be subordinated to any temporary, specific or direct political tasks. The characteristics and developmental rules of literature and the arts must not be interfered with”.

12 The Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party was held in 1978 in Beijing, marking the beginning of the Reform and Opening Up policy under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping. The meeting has been considered a milestone for its profound impact on contemporary China (Ash, R. & Kueh, Y, 2013).

13 The Deng Xiaoping period refers in this book to the period between 1978 and 1997, the year when he died.

This speech deregulated literature and arts and was gradually expanded to all areas of culture in China. It demonstrated that there was a major adjustment in the government's cultural policies.

Accordingly, in 1978, Huanxian Daoqing began to recuperate from its ten-year suppression. The prohibition on Daoqing was gradually lifted. On the one hand, with politics releasing its grip on the cultural and artistic fields, it became possible for Daoqing to develop in its own way; on the other hand, Daoqing, which had been directly subordinated to and had served politics, began to be affected by the economic developments -- after it got out of the whirlpool of political movements. As economic factors spread quickly to the field of culture in the Reform and Opening Up period, Daoqing was increasingly subject to economic and market factors, while becoming liberated from political tasks.

What cannot be ignored is that the social character and role of Daoqing was never recognized by the government in a positive way during the Deng Xiaoping era. Instead, it was still considered a remnant of feudalism. The fundamental reason was that the government, or state power, never withdrew its function in the revolution and in the development of culture. Such state power did not end when the Cultural Revolution ended; it still played a leading role in the development of culture and arts. Even in the Deng Xiaoping era, when culture and politics began to separate, the state power did not stop controlling culture, and its role in the cultural transformation cannot be ignored.

Daoqing's transition from the Mao Zedong period to the Deng Xiaoping period was a result of the withdrawal of politics and the nation's active involvement in the transformation of the state. This paradox was the very driving force for the transition of Daoqing between 1949 and the late 1990s. So the union between culture and politics, and their divorce, are a starting point for the discussion in this chapter.

This chapter is based on analyzing official archives and conducting interviews with Daoqing artists. In the first part, it will demonstrate and analyze how Daoqing was penetrated by political forces, used as a propaganda tool and eventually forbidden in the Cultural Revolution. In the second part, it will analyze how Daoqing recovered from a

period of silence, separated itself from politics and made preparations to become an intangible cultural heritage and national treasure, and how became integrated into the economy, paving the way for its later being commercialized.

4.1 Prohibition of Daoqing in the Mao Era

What Daoqing experienced in the Cultural Revolution was not recorded in detail in the written history of culture, theatre, folklore or art in China. Even the modern history of shadow theatre skips the chapter on the Cultural Revolution, as if nothing happened. It is fair to say that although it was in China that the Cultural Revolution broke out, it is only abroad that the Cultural Revolution has been studied. Foreign scholars have shown great interest in studying the treatment of traditions in the Cultural Revolution, yet unfortunately, China's own research is still a blank. Any study of the transformation and safeguarding of Daoqing cannot skip the Cultural Revolution or overlook the issue of political participation at that time. The Cultural Revolution itself is not the focus of this research, but it can be seen as an important starting point for studying the transformation and safeguarding of Daoqing.

Mao Zedong's understanding of the relationship between culture and politics determined the guidelines and standards for the Communist Party to develop cultural policies for a long time. All cultural traditions were transformed in an organized, disciplined, even militarized collective way. The outbreak of the Cultural Revolution brought the whole process to a peak. Even in a small county like Huanxian, which was far away from the political center, Daoqing, a part of people's lives, was heavily and tragically hit. This was the period when Daoqing slowly became a political propaganda tool and there was no awareness of the need to safeguard it or concept for doing so.

This section will mainly discuss how Daoqing was transformed and prohibited and how the Daoqing artists were persecuted and forced to break completely with their traditions in the Mao era. The tragedy of Daoqing did not happen overnight; rather, it was a historical climax of the Communist Party's cultural policies. What Daoqing suffered was not only a consequence of the Cultural Revolution, but also of the historical process from the time when the new China was founded. Daoqing was first

used as a revolutionary tool before the new China was founded, then forced to abandon its own functions in the early days after the new China was founded, and then transformed and forbidden in the Cultural Revolution.

4.1.1 Revolutionary Daoqing in the Early Years of New China

Daoqing has been used for political propaganda since 1936 when Huanxian became an important revolutionary base for the Communist Party in the Northwest. Before 1936, when the Communist Party liberated Huanxian, Daoqing was not influenced by politics. The Chinese National Revolution (*guo min da ge ming* 國民大革命) and the Worker-Peasant Movement (*gong nong yun dong* 工農運動) advocated in the First Agricultural Revolution (*di yi ci tu di ge ming* 第一次土地革命) did not bring any impact to Huanxian County, not to mention the Revolution of 1911 (*xin hai ge ming* 辛亥革命), when the “democracy” proposed by the May Fourth Movement (*wu si yun dong* 五四運動) spread in the county.¹⁴

From the late Qing Dynasty to the period of the Republic of China, the people of Huanxian County had lived in a relatively peaceful environment and in a traditional way, even during the years of war. Daoqing’s original ceremony and its ritual and entertainment functions remained. However, with the arrival of the Communist Party and the founding of the Soviet government in Huanxian County in 1936, things changed. Daoqing was used and transformed by the Communist Party as a political tool.

In the period of war-torn China, spreading Marxism and Leninism by means of

14 The Chinese National Revolution refers to the Chinese Communist Party and the Kuomintang jointly fighting against imperialism and feudalism from 1924 to 1927. The First Agricultural Revolution (1927-1937) was a revolution carried out by the Chinese Communist Party in the revolutionary bases by overthrowing local tyrants, dividing the land, abolishing feudal exploitation and peasants’ debts so as to meet the farmers’ requirement for land. The 1911 Chinese Revolution refers to the bourgeois democratic revolution in 1911 whose purpose was to overthrow the authoritarian rule of the Qing Dynasty, to save the nation from peril and to fight for national independence and democracy. The revolution ended the two-thousand-year-long autocratic monarchy in China. The May Fourth Movement was a student movement that took place on May 4, 1919 in Beijing. To be specific, the young students, masses, citizens, business people and other people of the lower and middle class organized demonstrations, petitions, strikes and violent struggles against the government. It was a complete anti-imperialism, anti-feudalism and patriotic movement and an epoch-making event in the history of the Chinese revolution, promoting the spreading of Marxism in China.

folk culture was a major mode of propaganda for the Communist Party. “China’s prosperity comes after revolution, and revolution must rely on propaganda. The two propaganda approaches are newspapers and transformed operas and plays” (J.Wu, 2005, p. 45). Daoqing, as a form of traditional performance, was used by the Communist Party as a tool to organize the masses to fight against the enemy. As the American anthropologist Marvin Harris (1968) states in his analysis, in communist countries, arts become a state-funded and useful means to convince citizens. Folklorist D. Chun (2012) echoed such an opinion in his study on traditional Chinese New Year paintings, noting that “in times of historic change, traditional folk art forms are most likely to arouse people’s historical awareness. Thus it is natural and appropriate for a new country to use them to publicize new national consciousness and make the new consciousness close to and acceptable for the people” (p.39).

In his *Notes of Light-Shadow Play*, Chinese ethnologist Cen Jiawu (1941) wrote that he once proposed in the Kuomintang-controlled areas of Yunnan Province to make good use of the form of light-shadow play and endow it with a new content of fighting against the Japanese invaders, so as to make it an effective propaganda method in wartime. His appeal was not implemented in the Kuomintang-ruled areas of Yunnan Province; rather it was carried out and developed in Huanxian, Gansu Province, a Communist base. After the Red Army arrived in the county, its literary departments started to collect Daoqing scripts, learn Daoqing music and create many plays to educate and inspire the soldiers and the masses to fight against the enemy.

In 1937, a Qinghuan Rural Drama Club (*qing huan nong cun ju she* 慶環農村劇社) was founded to carry out political propaganda among the Huanxian community on a large scale. It remained one of the most important revolutionary drama clubs in Huanxian for the following 10 years. The leader of Qinghuan Rural Drama Club talked about why and how the club was established:

There were very few cultural and artistic activities in this region at that time, with only one or two untransformed Qin Opera troupes and two or three shadow-theatre troupes performing repertoires about feudal superstition and old moral values. Fighting against the Japanese, and how the Communist

Party's guidelines and policies would meet people's needs for a healthy and good cultural life, were never mentioned in those repertoires. So the local Party leaders decided to set up a literary group to capture the propaganda front and create favorable conditions for the cultural life needed by the revolutionary masses. The local government organized the scattered artists and a few old troupes and made them into the Qinghuan Rural Drama Club. Every year the club would take 80% of our time to perform among people in the mountains, in the countryside or in small towns, like the then Longdong area and some important small towns. At festivals and fairs like the mule-trading fair or even temple fairs, the club would go out to perform and publicize the Marxist ideas. We found that the new forms of play could hardly attract people's attention or interest; to make them understand the themes and contents of the plays was even more difficult. So we made some changes. We mainly sang in the Longdong way of singing and in Longdong dialect so that the audience could get what we sang. Meanwhile the government employed and transformed some folk artists. (China Communist Qinghuan District Government [CCQDG], 1937)

These words go to show that Daoqing was used and transformed by the government as early as in the anti-Japanese and civil war periods and that it was considered an ideal tool for propaganda. Not all traditional folk art forms can be used as propaganda tools -- paper cutting (*jian zhi* 剪紙), embroidery (*ci xiu* 刺繡), New Year paintings (*nian hua* 年畫), prints and other ancient traditional Chinese arts had less advantages than Daoqing for conveying messages to the audience directly; Peking Opera (*jing ju* 京劇), Kunqu Opera (*kun qu* 崑曲) and Long Opera (*long ju* 隴劇) needed far more human and financial resources and had less mobility and popularity than shadow puppetry. As the Communist Party was facing very poor material conditions and had an unstable regime at that time, shadow puppetry was considered the most suitable propaganda tool which could be used, even under the most intense wartime conditions.

When the 1937 Sino-Japanese War broke out, the Communist forces in Huanxian gradually became entrenched and the government's control over the

population reached an unprecedented level. In 1942, Mao Zedong proposed in his famous *Speech on Yan'an Literature Forum* that culture and the arts should serve politics, a dictum that became China's cultural paradigm for the next 30 years. Mao believed that the art forms of the past should not be rejected; rather, they could be transformed and, with additional new content, be made into something revolutionary that could serve the people. Under such guidelines, all the traditional operas and plays including Daoqing were called Old Operas (*jiu ju* 舊劇), or Old Plays (*lao xi* 老戲).

Following this speech, the Huanxian County Government mobilized the local Daoqing troupes to join the Qinghuan Rural Opera Club and collected and compiled a lot of new plays. Dong Ting (1944) proposed in his *On the Use and Transformation of Shadow Play* (*guan yu pi ying xi de li yong* 關於皮影戲的利用), which was published in *Liberation Daily* (*jie fang ri bao* 解放日報), that shadow theatre should be taken advantage of for popularizing communist culture. After that, the ancient tradition of Daoqing was transformed and renewed during the years of war; tremendous attention was paid to it as an important tool to propagate anti-Japanese sentiments.

In short, a small number of shadow theatre troupes were transformed by the government or Party even before the founding of new China. The new content of revolution mingled with the folk shadow plays, changing the old plays and people's life in the county. However, the government did not transform the shadow plays completely, that is, the old plays were not banned. They were simply given some new content. Thus, Daoqing at that time was still closely bound to the traditional culture of the rural community.

4.1.2 Breakaway from Traditions with the Advent of the Cultural Revolution

When the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949 and the Communist Party gained principal control as a regime on the mainland, Daoqing was completely controlled by political forces and reinvented according to the will of the minority. With the penetration and intervention of political forces, Daoqing gradually broke away from traditions. In the period between 1949 and 1965, the old Daoqing repertoire was first allowed to be performed and then it was completely banned – soon only the new Daoqing repertoire or revolutionary Daoqing repertoire was “legitimate”

for performance.

In the early days of the new China, the Central Government adopted a culture and arts policy of “Let a hundred flowers blossom, let a hundred schools of thought contend” (*bai hua qi fang, bai jia zheng ming* 百花齊放, 百家爭鳴). Traditional operas were the first to be vigorously transformed. Fu Jicai (2004) in his *Introduction to Chinese Operas of the Twentieth Century* wrote that “the one hundred flowers flourishing policy was implemented most completely in traditional operas, traditional operas only” (p. 225). The policy, seemingly allowing more space for the development of traditional operas, was in fact implemented within the framework of arts serving politics. Fu Jicai (2002) put it correctly, “if we look back at the development of opera in the 1950s we can find that ‘hundred flowers flourishing’ never existed in a real sense” (p. 12).

On May 5, 1951, the Chinese Government Administration Council (*zhong guo guo wu yuan* 中國國務院) released a document named *Directions for Opera Reform* (*guan yu xi qu gai ge gong zuo de zhi shi* 關於戲曲革命工作的指示), also known as the “Three Transformations” (*san gai* 三改), i.e., “transforming people, transforming operas and transforming relevant system” (*gairen, gaixi, gaizhi* 改人, 改戲, 改制). The directions in this document served as the guiding principles for the government’s activities for opera reform in the following years, before the Cultural Revolution. It stated very clearly that:

Operas are a great tool for spreading democracy and patriotism. China has a rich heritage of all kinds of opera ... But many of these operas had been used by the feudal rulers to narcotize people. What is good about them must be saved and what is bad about them must be abandoned and replaced with new content. Only in that way can operas meet the interest of the nation and the people. Operas must play their role in inspiring people to love their country, be brave to fight for their country and work hard in productive labor. Operas that express fighting against the Japanese, loving China, pursuing freedom, justice and goodness should be greatly supported and promoted; and those that advocate feudal slavery, moral stigma and that insult the masses must be abandoned. The current priority is to examine the

most popular old plays and modify the undesirable content and modes of performance if necessary. (Chinese Government Administration Council [CGAC], 1951)

This statement shows that the Central Government's "One hundred flowers flourishing" policy was implemented selectively. The government would remove content and forms that were contrary to its will and ideology before it developed and promoted any opera.

In 1952, the Huanxian County Government followed this policy and initiated a big wave of transformation of four aspects of Daoqing, namely, repertoires, shadow puppets, artists and troupes. The original Qinqiang Troupe (*qin qiang ju tuan* 秦腔劇團) was renamed the Huanxian Daoqing Troupe (*huan xian pi ying ju tuan* 環縣皮影劇團), under the leadership of which the traditional, or old repertoires were rewritten. Among the more than ten reformed operas in the repertoire were *The Golden Bowl and The Hairpin* (*jin wan chai* 金碗釵), *High Mountain and Flowing Water* (*gao shan liu shui* 高山流水), *Sanli Bay* (*san li wan* 三里灣), *Choosing a Son-in-law* (*tiao nv xu* 挑女婿) and so on, which portrayed either heroes in wartime or the happy lives of people since the founding of the new China.

The shadow puppets were transformed as well. The shadow puppets' faces, clothes and decorations reflected the themes of the repertoires and were recognizable to the audience, who could get a rough idea in this way about an opera, even if they were not familiar with it. There was a saying in Huanxian that went: "Red and white faces means good people were harmed by bad people (red faces were good people and white faces were bad); a black face sitting in the front of the stage means Bao Zheng¹⁵; no red, white or black face means the play is about a girl falls in love with a boy".¹⁶ The shadow puppets themselves provide a window for the audience to understand the repertoires.

15 Bao Zheng (包拯), official of the Song Dynasty, admired for his fairness and integrity in redressing wrongdoings and upholding justice. Legend has it that he had a very dark face, so a black face is usually used in operas to represent him.

16 The saying in Chinese is "若有紅白臉，便知奸臣害忠良，若有黑臉前台坐，便知包公來申冤，紅臉白臉沒有來，便知小姐愛公子".

The Huanxian County Government placed great emphasis on reforming the Daoqing shadow puppets. On the one hand, it asked the Daoqing folk puppet-makers to carve a great number of modern shadow puppets; on the other hand, it sent experts to conduct field research in rural areas and to help the communes and production teams to compose new repertoires and make new shadow puppets. Daoqing puppet makers were asked to abandon their traditional ways of making shadow puppets and to exchange the shadow puppets' hairstyles, costumes and decorations, and large props like traditional furniture and houses for modern ones.

The Huanxian Cultural Center was situated in the Mubo Commune (*mu bo gong she* 木钵公社) for a long time, to guide the whole county's shadow puppet reform. According to the *Annal of the Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre*, the county had made -- even prior to the Cultural Revolution -- 214 new shadow puppets and created and performed 67 modern plays (CCAHDST, 2006). The Wulitun (五裏屯) Production Team of the Huancheng Commune renewed or created 54 new shadow puppets and made some new instruments within just one year, and they composed some modern revolutionary plays like *The Party's Children* (*dang de er nv* 當的兒女), which was performed 74 times in front of a total of 6,780 audiences.

As the historical materials, repertoires and performing skills were fully represented and sustained by the artists --who were the living history, living cultural heritage and living shadow puppetry -- the authorities did not overlook the need for their transformation as part of the reforms. In 1951 the Chinese Government Administration Council also pointed out in *Directions for Opera Reform* that "Artists shoulder great responsibility to entertain and educate people. They must improve themselves through learning politics, culture and their own skills. Cultural and educational institutions everywhere must pay great attention to artists' education and cultivate some cadres from among them to lead the opera reform" (CGAC, 1951).

Thus the Huanxian County Government held seminars and training classes in which a batch of folk artists were trained with shadow puppetry skills and techniques, and with political consciousness, which was even more important. Qualified trainees

were dispatched to Pingliang (平涼), Zhangye (張掖), Zhenyuan (鎮原), the Art School of Gansu (*gan su yi shu xue xiao* 甘肅藝術學校) and the Opera and Art Institute (*xi qu yi shu yan jiu suo* 戲曲藝術研究所) to teach local performers to sing and to help experts to collect and recreate Daoqing scripts. The county government also recruited students and trained them as professional Daoqing performers. For example, in 1960, it recruited 20 people.

What is worth mentioning is that female Daoqing artists have arisen since then. In the past, females were not allowed to perform Daoqing -- they were not even allowed to get close to the backstage area or to touch the prop trunks. The troupe established by the government abandoned this discrimination and allowed females to perform. Unlike male performers, who had to strain their vocal cords to imitate a girl's voice, female Daoqing performers could now easily sing the girl's notes in a tender voice, "just like" a girl.

The way in which troupes were formed and managed also underwent change. As stated in the *Directions for Opera Reform*, "some old irrational system like 'the old apprentice system' seriously violated the artists' human rights and their welfare. Such a system must be transformed step by step"; "Local cultural and educational authorities must lead and regulate the troupes' operation"; "All provinces and cities should turn to the existing troupes and theatres that are in good conditions, and establish exemplary public, semi-private and public-aided troupes and theatres, create new plays regularly, improve the management of theatres and make them a stronghold for the promotion of opera reforms" (CGAC, 1951).

In this context, local governments began to transform the old troupes into professional or semi-professional troupes. The professional troupes could be divided into two categories: state-run troupes (*guo ying* 國營) and collective-owned troupes (*quan min* 全民). One example of a state-run troupe was the Leting County Shadow Theatre Troupe (*let ting pi ying ju tuan* 樂亭皮影劇團), a professional cultural troupe approved by the Cultural Department of the Hebei Province (*he bei sheng wen hua ting* 河北省文化廳); it was a merger of the Xinyi Troupe (*xin yi ju tuan* 新意劇團) and Dazhong Troupe (*da zhong ju tuan* 大眾劇團) of Leting County, Hebei Province in

1955.

Shadow theatre artists in this troupe received a salary from the government. Another example is the Tangshan Experimental Shadow Theatre Club (*Tang shan shi yan zhuan qu pi yin ju tuan* 唐山專區實驗皮影劇團) in Luandong (變東), a merger of the Dazhong Shadow Theatre Club (*da zhong pi ying ju tuan* 大眾皮影劇團) and the New Great Wall Shadow Theatre Club (*xin chan gcheng piying ju tuan* 新長城皮影劇團), also founded in 1955. Shadow theatre artists in the club received a fixed wage, or the basic wage, and bonus or subsidies.

Secondly, troupes owned by a collective. For example, the Hebei Yutian Shadow Theatre Club (*he bei yu tian pi ying ju tuan* 河北玉田皮影劇團), transformed from a traditional troupe in 1955, belonged to the Cultural and Educational Department of the Yutian County (*he bei yu tian xian wen jiao ju* 河北玉田縣文教局). Troupes like this would make profit for themselves and bear any losses themselves.

Huanxian's transformation of troupes came rather late -- it was not until the 1960s that the Huanxian County Government began, under the direction of the Gansu provincial government, to reform the operations of its Daoqing troupes. In 1964, the county government held a seven-day meeting in Mubo Commune, which was "attended by a total of 53 people, including 40 artists" (CCAHDST, 2006, p.288-289). The meeting decided that shadow theatre should serve industrial production, serve agricultural production and serve socialist development.

It also divided the whole county's troupes into two categories: state-run and collective-owned troupes. Firstly, the artists in state-run troupes, such as the Huanxian Daoqing Troupe led by the county government, would be granted a city *hukou* (戶口 household registration) and get a salary from the government. Secondly, the artists in collective-owned troupes, or troupes owned by all communes and production teams, which were managed by Huanxian County Cultural Department (*huan xian wen hua ju* 環縣文化局), would get paid by their own communes and production teams.

To strengthen the party's leadership over the opera reform and cultural

activities, the Huanxian County Government required heads of production teams to chair the leadership of these troupes and make direct arrangements for Daoqing performances. “Among the 48 Daoqing troupes in Huanxian County, 29 have been transformed and 19 were being transformed by February 1966” (CCAHDST, 2006, p. 288).

The government’s transformation of the Daoqing troupes and their operation and performing modes actually affected the way these troupes lived and passed down the art of Daoqing. These troupes were mostly composed of farmers who only had the time to set up a stage, give a performance and make some money when they were free from farming, which occupied most of their time. Traditionally, the head of a troupe controlled the prop trunk which contained the troupe members’ shadow puppets, musical instruments and other objects needed in a performance, so that members of the troupe could not leave the troupe easily.

The other approach was the traditional “Daoqing performers being shareholders” (*ya xiang zhi du* 壓箱制度). In this way, Daoqing performers could withdraw their shares and join any other troupe which could pay them more or which was more suitable for them -- this was because the cooperation among performers is very important, that is, if A cooperated with B better than with C, A and B could give a better performance than A and C could. In other words, the two traditional ways in which a troupe was formed were the result of the natural adjustment of the rural market. However, the government’s ways of organizing and operating the troupes were not based on the market. No “market” existed in the planned economy at that time. Performers were forced or appointed randomly to form troupes to fulfill the task of spreading the ideas of the proletarian revolution.

The troupes of all the commune and production teams were assembled to perform modern Daoqing plays or revolutionary Daoqing plays to demonstrate local characteristics and reform achievements. For example, they were assembled by the Huanxian County Government to take part in the National Shadow Play (*quan guo pi ying mu ou xi yan chu da hui* 全國皮影木偶戲演出大會) organized by the Ministry of Culture in 1955, 1960, 1975 and 1981 in Beijing. From December 31, 1965 to

January 8, 1966, on the eve of the Cultural Revolution, the Huanxian County Government organized an amateur Daoqing performance, in which 17 communes like Bazhu (八珠), Hudong (虎洞), Chedao (車道), Mubo (木鉢), Gengwan (耿灣), Fanjiachuan (樊家川) all sent their representative teams to participate. Performances and exhibitions not only spread modern Daoqing as an art, but also spread the political ideals of the Communist Party among people, as the ideals were injected into the stories of the shadow plays. So Daoqing was transformed by the government into a tool of political propaganda to alter the traditional minds of the Huanxian community.

Daoqing was forced to get further and further away from its traditional functions, yet it did enjoy some facility to develop and expand rapidly. According to the statistics of the Department of Cultural Affairs, in the first half of 1962, there were only a little over 40 Daoqing artists and just over 20 performances, but in the year 1965, there were 151 Daoqing artists in 47 troupes and more than 300 performances for over 100,000 audiences -- indeed a rapid increase in the numbers of artists, troupes, their performances and the audience. The government also took action toward the safeguarding of Daoqing. For example, in the seminars for Master Shi Xuejie (史學傑), Jing Yanxi (敬廷璽), Xu Yuanzhang (許元章), Liu De (劉德) and Ma Zhanchuan (馬占川), 62 traditional repertoires were copied and collated; 20 pieces of traditional singing were recorded, amounting to 3,100 meters worth of recording tape; the *Daoqing Performers' Transmission Lineage Chart* (*dao qing pi ying yi ren chuan cheng pu xi biao* 道情皮影藝人傳承譜系表) was constructed. These materials would prove very helpful for the understanding, study and interpretation of Daoqing in later years.

What is worth noting is that traditional Daoqing repertoires and artists were not totally banned before the Cultural Revolution, so there was a time when artists and repertoires old and new coexisted. The Central Government did ban some old repertoires as feudalistic; yet in Huanxian, the performance of traditional Daoqing repertoires was allowed.

The Huanxian County Government even recorded some traditional repertoires and charted the performers' genealogy. But by 1963 the policy on folk

opera had changed. The Central Committee of the Communist Party (*zhong gong zhong yang* 中共中央) approved the *Report on Stopping Performances about Ghosts* (*guan yu ting yan gui xi de qing shi bao gao* 關於停演鬼戲的請示報告) put forth by the Ministry of Culture. The document stated that “whether in urban or rural areas, plays about ghosts are forbidden” (J. Fu, 2004, p. 264). The United Front Work Department of Qingyang Municipality stated in its *Brief introduction on the class struggle in qingyang and the preliminary analysis on ideological class struggle* (*qing yang di qu jie ji dou zheng jian kuang ji si xiang zhan xian shang de jie ji dou zheng de chu bu fen xi* 慶陽地區階級鬥爭簡況及思想戰線上的階級鬥爭的初步分析) in 1963 that:

Qingyang localities should actively transform folk culture. What is supposed to be banned should be banned and what is supposed to be transformed should be transformed. The management on folk culture must be strengthened to serve socialist revolution and construction (United Front Work Department of Qingyang Municipality [UFWDQM], 1963).

Accordingly, the Huanxian County Government took the following initiatives: First, reinvestigating and re-registering the traditional Daoqing repertoires, artists and troupes; second, training rural Daoqing performers in the new policies, emphasizing that modern Daoqing plays must abandon content relating to feudal superstition, and promote patriotism or revolutionary ideas. In June 1966, when the Cultural Revolution broke out, Daoqing was listed as one of the “Four Olds” (*si jiu* 四舊) which were supposed to be eliminated.

4.1.3 “Model Plays” and Apotheosis Movement during the Cultural Revolution

The outbreak of the Cultural Revolution was unexpected. During the ten years from 1966 onwards, the Huanxian community was involved in an unprecedented and muddled class struggle, whereby the economy and other aspects of society stagnated, and traditional cultural order was destabilized. Daoqing was no exception -- it just had to travel a particularly bumpy road.

a. Daoqing was one of the Four Olds

The concept of the Four Olds was first put forward in the editorial *Overthrowing All Monsters and Demons* (*heng sao yi qie niu gui she shen* 橫掃一切牛鬼蛇神) in the People's Daily (*ren min ri bao* 人民日報)¹⁷.

The Proletarian Cultural Revolution aimed to completely get rid of all the “old ideas, old culture, old customs and old habits” (*jiu si xiang, jiu wen hua, jiu feng su, jiu xi guan* 舊思想, 舊文化, 舊風俗, 舊習慣) that were thought to be created by the exploiting classes and to have poisoned the masses for thousands of years as part of exploitation. New “proletarian” ideas, culture, customs and habits were to be created instead. This was unprecedented, the most drastic attempt at changing customs and traditions in human history. All the heritage, customs and habits of the feudal and bourgeois classes must be criticized thoroughly from a proletarian standpoint.

The problem was there was no clear definition of “what is new” and “what is old”, so the Red Guards (*hong wei bing* 紅衛兵) overacted by destroying cultural relics, burning books, beating up people and confiscating people's property. In the case of Daoqing, the Red Guards insisted that “no relics could get rid of the stigma of feudalism, capitalism and even revisionism. Such stigmas had nothing in common with proletarian thoughts and feelings. There was no necessity to protect them” (J. Fu, 2006). The various traditional thoughts, ideas, social mores and behaviors were re-measured in accordance with the Red Guards' criteria. Those that were not qualified to survive were broken, abandoned and destroyed mercilessly.

To keep up with the political demands of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, on August 11, 1966, the Huanxian County Committee released the *Arrangements for the Proletarian Cultural Revolution in Huanxian County* (*guan xi quan xian wen hua da ge ming de an pai yi jian* 關於全縣無產階級文化大革命的安排意見) in which they announced that:

17 The People's Daily is the official newspaper of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. It is the largest, most authoritative and most influential national newspaper. Its editorials are considered to be directly conveying the views and opinions of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council.

The masses in Huanxian have not gotten rid of the influence of feudalism. Old ideas, culture, customs and habits still shackle people's minds ... Daoqing is a kind of performance about gods and demons and is used for spreading the thoughts and virtues of sages and emperors. In a word, Daoqing is a typical representative of feudal superstition, or feudal rubbish, which we must resolutely get rid of. (Huanxian County Committee, 1966)

Thus, under the aggressive intervention of the government, Daoqing with its supernatural content became a key object to be transformed. The troupes were forced to disband and their props were confiscated or destroyed.

To people who experienced that extraordinary period, like Master Jing, the memories of those days remain very painful:

At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution when the county government issued a notice saying Daoqing was not allowed to be performed any more, we did not take it to heart and still gave performances, until the Red Guards came to confiscate people's puppets and instruments and criticize people publicly and violently. It was really scary. They told us to burn our props suitcases and told us not to perform any more, or they would lock us up ... whenever they fight you, let you confess your lack of faith to the Communist Party. They said that shadow is superstition and they ordered me to burn the screen and the boxes of props. Whoever still dared to perform would be locked up in the "cowshed", a place that was used to imprison bad guys. I was very scared. I had my prop trunk hidden for I couldn't bear to burn it -- it was passed down from my grandfather to my father and then to me. It had been a treasure box for me all this time. So I hid it properly. When men from the Revolutionary Committee, the Public Security Bureau, the County and the Town Government took turns to search for shadow puppets from house to house, they would burn any puppets they found. People like me who had hidden their shadow puppets, once found out, would be criticized as counterrevolutionary. I dared not say no to the Communist Party or to socialism, so I gave the searchers some shadow puppets to make them believe that I was a good and cooperative man. People could not sing any more

Daoqing either. So I could only sing a little bit in a very low voice when there was nobody around. (Personal interview, April 5, 2012)

Master Wang, who was a renowned Daoqing puppet producer and who was forced to stop carving, also had some painful memories:

The history of Daoqing came to a standstill in the Cultural Revolution. The government paralyzed everything, factories were shut down and farming was stopped. What we did every day was “criticizing somebody publicly”. I was never criticized, but I could not watch any plays or make any shadow puppets. Some troupes that were brave enough to give performances at midnight were caught, those who made shadow puppets secretly were caught, even those who hid their shadow puppets were caught! Anybody who dared to fight against the policy would be criticized in a violent way -- The Red Guards would make you kneel on the floor, grab you by the neck and ask, “How dare you sing this anti-revolutionary and feudal Daoqing!” It was too violent to forget. I still remember a man who was criticized in the daytime and committed suicide at home at night. Even after he was dead they did not stop criticizing him. Big slogans of criticisms were stuck on his coffin and his family members were then criticized. (Personal interview, April 8, 2012)

It was clearly much easier to accept a time when Daoqing was used as a tool to spread revolutionary ideas, in the early days of new China, than when it was banned as one of the Four Olds, during the Cultural Revolution; this was much less subtle and was accompanied by psychological and physical violence. In the latter period, both Daoqing performances and the shadow puppets were heavily criticized as “old ideas, old culture, old customs, old habits”. Daoqing plays were prohibited; shadow puppets that had been passed down from the Qing Dynasty were destroyed; and some highly respected local artists were denounced.

b. Revolutionary Model Plays and Daoqing

As Huanxian is a remote and backward county, Daoqing was an important form of entertainment for the people, apart from being used for worship of the gods or

in other ritual ceremonies. When Daoqing was banned, people had nothing for their recreation and lived a very depressing life under great political pressure. To meet the community's strong demand for cultural and recreational activities and to meet the trend of revolutionary thinking, a new sort of repertoire, called the "revolutionary model plays" (*yang ban xi* 樣板戲), replaced the traditional ones. These sample plays were the eight plays¹⁸ recognized by the state as reflecting the political stance of China's Communist Party in the years between 1966 and 1976. No opera or dance drama other than these eight was allowed to be performed during the Cultural Revolution.

Revolutionary model plays were a special product of the doctrine of "culture serving politics" and represented mainstream consciousness at that time. They not only reflected the main ideas of the Cultural Revolution, but were also a political tool for propaganda that penetrated into all aspects of life in China in different ways, resulting in the strange phenomenon of "800 million people watching only 8 plays".¹⁹ Shadow puppetry artists had only one way out: using their artistic talents to showcase class struggle in their shadow plays.

In 1968, the Huanxian County Government restored the Daoqing Troupe and ordered local Daoqing artists to perform shadow theatre in strict accordance with the revolutionary model plays. So the eight model plays were transformed into eight shadow plays; the troupe was not allowed to perform any other plays, as stated in the decision of the Huanxian County Committee of the Communist Party and the County Government; all communes and production teams had to watch the eight model plays in performance so as to "spread the thoughts of proletarian revolution and improve people's ideological and political consciousness" (J. Wu, 2005, p. 85). The model plays were performed a large number of times. For example, the shadow theatre troupe of the Yinjiaqiao (殷家橋) Production Team of the Mubo Commune gave at least one

18 The eight model plays were Peking Opera repertoires: *Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy*; *The Red Lantern*; *Shajiabang*; *Surprise Attack on the White Tiger Regiment*; *Harbour*; a ballet: *Red Detachment of Women*; *The White-Haired Girl* and the symphonic music of *Shajiabang*.

19 In the Cultural Revolution, the model plays were performed across China in the form of operas, ballets, color films, television documentaries, radio programs, records, textbooks of primary and secondary schools. Their play scripts and music scores, as well as paintings, calendars, postcards and copybooks were all issued. The intellectual horizon of the 800 million people of China was totally dominated by them.

performance every night for the six sub-production teams.

According to the archives of the Propaganda Department of Huanxian County (*huan xian zheng fu xuan chuan bu* 環縣政府宣傳部), the model plays in the Cultural Revolution could be divided into five categories. The first of these was “class struggle”. Plays in this category were about how the oppressed “Five Red Categories of People” (*hong wu lei* 紅五類) (workers, poor peasants, soldiers, cadres and their offspring) fight against and criticize “Five Black Categories of People” (*hei wu lei* 黑五類) (landlords, rich peasants, anti-revolutionaries, bad people and rightists) and achieve complete victory in the end. *The White-Haired Girl* (*bai mao nv* 白毛女)²⁰ was a typical play in this category. The second category was “eulogizing revolutionary heroes”. The plays in this category, derived from the first one, praised in an exaggerated way the revolutionary heroes who sacrificed their lives to win the revolution. One example was *The Red Lantern* (*hong deng ji* 紅燈記)²¹. The third was “breaking with tradition”. These plays were generally about women who had been oppressed in feudal society but who now, after being liberated, could participate in political and military activities. *Red Detachment of Women* (*nvse niangzijun* 紅色娘子軍)²² was an example. The fourth category, “anti-imperialism”, included plays like *The Red Lantern* (*hong deng ji* 紅燈記) and *The White-Haired Girl*, which were about how the Japanese army persecuted China’s Communist revolutionaries; and *Surprise Attack on the White Lion Regiment* (*qi xi bai hu tuan* 奇襲白虎團), which depicted the Korean War in the 1950s. The fifth was “eulogizing Chairman Mao Zedong”. There were many scenes in the model plays about how people worshipped and eulogized the great leader Mao Zedong: they would even exclaim, “Long Live Chairman Mao!” In the shadow plays, every time when the puppet of Chairman Mao appeared behind the

20 *The White-Haired Girl* is about the poor peasants, Yang Bailao and his daughter Xi'er, in the Sino-Japanese War. To keep on living, Yang borrowed money from the landlord Huang Shiren at very high interest. When he was unable to pay back the money, Huang forced him to sell his daughter to him. Yang committed suicide and Xi'er was raped by Huang. Xi'er fled into the mountains. Her hair turned white because of sadness and worry. Later the Communist Party rescued Xi'er and destroyed Huang Shiren.

21 *The Red Lantern* tells a story about the Sino-Japanese War. The communist, Li Yu, and his mother sacrificed their lives in transmitting some intelligence. In the end their daughter, Li Tiemei, managed to pass the information to the Communist Party, continuing the unfinished cause of Li Yu and his mother.

22 *The Red Detachment of Women* tells the story of a poor peasant's daughter, Wu Qinghua, who joined the Red Detachment of Women, returned to her hometown and eradicated the despotic landlord, Nan Batian. The story praised the changes in women's lives and their contributions in the new era.

curtain, the music would bring the audience's emotions to a climax. In some production teams, people were even asked to stand up (to show respect) when the puppet of Chairman Mao appeared.

The Daoqing plays, rewritten on the basis of the model plays, were limited in terms of repertoire and performance techniques. The reason why the model plays had such decisive influence was that dissidents who resisted the coercion were persecuted. The content, dissemination and performances of the model plays were considered major political events; those who dared to propose amendments or different ideas were often persecuted and even sentenced to death, accused of being counter-revolutionaries who wanted to sabotage the revolutionary model plays. Such cruel persecution was extended to all the activities relating to performances. Daoqing performers who said a single wrong word, forgot a move, mistook a shadow puppet or made one tiny mistake in a costume or in the music would be regarded as counterrevolutionary and persecuted. Daoqing performers had to be very careful. Actually nobody wanted to perform; when they were forced to perform, they had to concentrate very hard in order not to make any mistakes.

Master Jing said in the interview:

I did not like to perform those model plays. They were not interesting at all, and I had to be very careful so that I would not make a mistake. When those plays were first performed, people felt curious; but when they found those plays were all the plays they could appreciate all year round, they lost their interest very soon. Our commune required Daoqing performance to follow the political campaign. So only the revolutionary plays were allowed to be performed. Daoqing performance or shadow puppets must not emphasize the characteristics of Daoqing as that was counterrevolutionary. I just couldn't understand. Could Daoqing without its particular characteristics still be Daoqing? Besides you couldn't refuse to perform because they would call you 'counterrevolutionary'; yet you were also 'counterrevolutionary' if you made mistakes in the performance. We were just so nervous whenever we had to perform. (Personal interview, April 5, 2012)

By 1976, Daoqing had been totally reformed and the Qingyang Municipal Government asked Huanxian County to perform Daoqing shadow plays. The *Notice on Shadow Puppet Performing around the Qingyang Area* (*guan yu qing yang di qu pi ying tiao yan de tong zhi* 關於舉行慶陽地區皮影調演的通知) issued by the Qingyang Municipal Bureau of Culture and Education announced that:

Under the guidance of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line and with the drive of the revolutionary model plays, achievements in the reform of Daoqing have been made. The traditional art form has been reborn. In order to safeguard the fruits of the great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, to further reform Daoqing and to demonstrate fully how Daoqing has adopted the ideological and cultural position in both urban and rural areas, a great Daoqing performance will be held on April 25. The experience of all the communes in reforming Daoqing will be exchanged, so that shadow puppetry can better serve proletarian politics. Shadow puppetry must learn from the revolutionary model plays. (Qingyang Municipal Bureau of Culture and Education [QMBCE], 1976)

After this Daoqing performance, the Qingyang Municipal Bureau of Culture and Education wrote a report under the title, *Report on the Great Shadow Puppet Performance of Qingyang* (*guan yu qing yang pi ying tiao yan qing kuang de bao gao* 關於慶陽皮影調演情況的報告), in which they stated that:

*Currently there are 59 Daoqing shadow puppet troupes in Qingyang. The initial stage of the reform of shadow puppetry went very well. The great performance lasted a week, with 77 amateur Daoqing artists from seven counties. Their performances proved that huge progress has been made in learning from the model plays. The performances included *The Red Lantern*, *Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy* and *the Cuckoo Mountain*. Our horizon was widened. The worries that 'shadow puppets had only one eye and half of the face' were gone, because we witnessed that the model plays could be performed very well. (QMBCE, 1976a)*

In this context, Daoqing performances were under absolute control by China's

Communist Party and the government. The revolutionary ideas were spread repeatedly; no freedom in performance or artistic creation saw the light of day in the Cultural Revolution. The limited standardized repertoires were all about revolutionary ideas. Daoqing, just like all the other traditional operas, was entirely focused on class struggle. It was not even considered or judged as a form of art, let alone in terms of the protection of this traditional culture.

c. Apotheosis: From Religious Worship to the Worship of Chairman Mao

New content determined that traditional Daoqing shadow puppets were no longer applicable. From 1966 to 1976, a large number of the old shadow puppets that had been handed down from the Qing Dynasty were totally destroyed and new shadow puppets were mass-produced for performance of the revolutionary model plays. The new shadow puppets were mainly divided into two categories, namely positive characters (heroes and the labor workforce) and villains (counterrevolutionaries, rightists and US or Japanese imperialists). In addition, as the Huanxian community worshipped Chairman Mao Zedong the same way as people in other parts of China did, Daoqing was involved in a form of God-making movement, or apotheosis.

After the Cultural Revolution Team (*wen ge xiao zu* 文革小組) controlled the Propaganda Department of Huanxian County, the economy and people's livelihood could no longer be seen in any newspaper in the county.²³ Almost all the content of the newspapers consisted of the Chinese people and people around the world praising and worshipping Chairman Mao. Mao's quotations (*Mao Zedong Yulu* 毛澤東語錄) had to be printed in very large and bold fonts.²⁴ There were slogans such as: "Chairman Mao is like the red sun that never sets"; "Revolutionary people take the revolutionary road and read Chairman Mao's books their whole lifetime"; "One can shed his blood and lay down his life, but he can never forget Mao Zedong Thoughts" and "Do not believe in Heaven or Earth; have faith in Chairman Mao only".

23 The Central Cultural Revolution Team was originally founded by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in 1966 with the dedicated goal of leading the Cultural Revolution. In promoting the Cultural Revolution, it soon became an institution with extremely wide powers.

24 The *Quotations from Chairman Mao*, selected writings of Mao's statements, published between 1964 and 1976 in large numbers. Widely known as Little Red Book, it contained quotations considered as the communist leader's classic rhetoric.

There were articles full of praise for Chairman Mao and expressions of loyalty: “Being loyal to Chairman Mao forever, being loyal to Mao Zedong Thoughts forever, being loyal to Chairman Mao’s proletarian revolutionary line forever and utterly devoting ourselves and the loyalty of our offspring to Chairman Mao”; “Chairman Mao must be thought of any time anywhere; his rules must be obeyed; his thoughts must be followed; and he is the one we do everything for”; “Great attention must be paid to revolution and promoting production. A new climax of revolution and production must be achieved and factories should be turned into schools for learning the great thoughts of Chairman Mao”; “Chairman Mao’s words are the wisest, most prestigious and most powerful. Every single word of his is the truth and one sentence of his is equal to ten thousand sentences of others. Anyone who has learned Chairman Mao’s works will have endless material force and bring earth-shattering changes”; “I feel wholeheartedly that nothing is as good as the Communist Party and even our parents are not so close to us as Chairman Mao. Our love for Chairman Mao and the Party is infinite. Our admiration of Chairman Mao and faith in him is infinite. Anyone who goes against Mao Zedong Thoughts is destroying our lifeblood and we will fight against him to the end of our lives... ” People went into a craze of worshipping Mao Zedong. Special reports like “Hold high the red flag of Mao Zedong thoughts” and articles like “Pigs can be raised well only if we rely on Mao Zedong thoughts” were published in Huanxian Daily.

Daoqing puppets with the shape and appearance of Mao Zedong and other heroes were made in unprecedented numbers. In particular, since people were taught to believe in Mao Zedong as if he were some god or Buddha, Daoqing puppets in his shape replaced the Daoqing puppets of gods and Buddha. Words and articles in newspapers did not seem enough to show people’s worship of Mao; Daoqing puppets and plays could show their respect and love better. The county government actually systematically guided artists to make puppets of Mao Zedong and give performances with these Daoqing puppets.

Daoqing thus became “religious”, under unified political and ideological guidance. As Clive Bell commented, arts and religion are two ways for people to escape from the realm of reality and achieve a kind of ecstasy, and the combination of aesthetic ecstasy and religious fanaticism is a means to reach a similar type of mental

state (1958). When Daoqing, a folk art, was given a religious spirit, it became the accomplice of an apotheosis, in which a mortal, Mao Zedong, was portrayed as the religious leader; such a “religion” inculcated a religious state of mind in people.

Traditionally, making Daoqing puppets was a kind of craft. The craftsmen interpreted the Daoqing stories and puppet figures through their design and understanding. In the Cultural Revolution, however, craftsmen could not make a shadow puppet of Mao or any other leader until the review by the county’s revolutionary committee was complete and a directive had been issued. The Daoqing puppets of Mao were in the form of a standing Mao, a sitting-down Mao, or Mao in the middle of a group of workers, farmers, soldiers and masses. Unlike traditional shadow puppets, in which the face and body were hollowed out and the head, arms and legs were connected with tiny strips of wire so that the body parts could move freely, the shadow puppets of Mao were just carved as a whole, so that Mao’s face and body movements were more like his real-life face and body movements.

According to the *Report on the great shadow puppet performance of Qingyang*:

Huanxian County changed the [shadow puppets’] hollowed-out faces into filled-in ones, which is conducive for representing heroes; Zhenyuan County made very large side profiles of the face, with two eyes instead of just one eye like in the past, giving a three-dimensional feel. These are worthy of being learned elsewhere. Shadow puppets like these are very different from the traditional ones; they are now standardized and stylized, without any of the artists’ own artistic thoughts. (QMBCE, 1976a)

The reason lies in national regulations. In April 1965, the Central Propaganda Department issued the *Notice on Drawing and Printing the Portrait of Chairman Mao* (*guan yu hui zhi he yin xing ling xiu xiang de tong zhi* 關於繪制和印行領袖像等問題的通知), which determined that:

Artworks with the image of Mao Zedong must be made in line with the standard

portraits issued by Xinhua News Agency and be reviewed by local propaganda departments before they are publicized. Any drawing or printing deviating from the standard image or poorly drawn or printed must be withheld. (Central Propaganda Department, 1965)

The notice also ordered the Ministry of Culture, the Arts Association and other relevant organizations to create high-quality pictures and statues of Chairman Mao, so that they could be easily reprinted and spread. With such harsh regulations, any negligence in carving and coloring could be a fatal blow to the Daoqing artists. If they created a frail image of Chairman Mao or could not project his body proportions or facial features well in their puppetry, they would be criticized and punished harshly for ignoring revolution and class struggle or tainting the great image of Chairman Mao with bourgeois features.

In short, Daoqing puppets, just like Daoqing performances, became a tool for a campaign of apotheosis and for political propaganda, which was the only reason for their existence. Shadow puppet-making was no longer based on the Daoqing makers' aesthetic values or the practical needs of life, but on the needs of revolutionary propaganda. As the Huanxian County Government's reform on Daoqing was conducted in the larger context of the national reform of the arts, Daoqing was reinvented solely as an official tool. And that was a major form of trauma and frustration for Daoqing artistes, as the form, content and original functions of their art had all undergone profound changes.

4.1.4 The Community's Struggle under Political Pressure and Prohibition

While Daoqing was being transformed in a drastic way, it did not mean that traditional Daoqing was completely negated and forgotten or was no longer needed by the Huanxian community. Actually the Huanxian community did not treat Daoqing, which had been inextricably linked with their life, entirely in a negative sense. The "cultural habit" of Daoqing did play its role and the community did try to save Daoqing. This section will discuss how the Huanxian community continued their tradition, how they found their old emotional outlets and how they survived this dark

episode in history.

a. Public Prohibition and a Custom in Hiding

With high political pressure on one hand and the deep love towards Daoqing on the other, the Huanxian community found ways of dealing with the situation. Master Jing recalls his experience at that time:

In the first two years of the Cultural Revolution no one dared to perform traditional Daoqing plays. But as time went by, we missed Daoqing more and more. So we began to sing Daoqing secretly. Once, when the government was using explosives to break rocks in order to build a dam, we hid in a cave in the mountain and sang Daoqing happily. We sang for three days, not worrying that we might be found because the explosions were so loud. We had very good coordination with one another, even though we were not from the same troupe. I was the one who controlled the shadow puppets and I was happy to find myself still very good at controlling them! I was very excited. The first night only a few people watched; but the following two days there were so many people that we couldn't seat them all in the cave. The audience was very excited, too. That was the first time we secretly performed Daoqing. Other times we would perform the old plays after the leaders had left, when it got dark, after watching the revolutionary plays organized by the commune. People in the village all liked the old plays, so no one would report our secret singing to the government. At that time, the old play scripts were very precious. I put my old scripts into plastic bags and buried them in the hole I had dug in the ground, or in the firewood stack. I believed that the Cultural Revolution would be over one day and I would be able to take them out when that day came. (Personal interview, April 5, 2012)

Even though the audience did not give it away, the secret performing was not safe, as some people were unfortunately caught by the government inspection team. The government could not stand such secret behavior, so they began to intervene directly by appointing informers among the villagers. Among the 1976 archives of the Propaganda Department of Huanxian County there were statements of repentance by

five performers for secretly performing traditional Daoqing plays. One of them wrote:

I am Gu Sanfu, 29 years old. I come from a poor peasant's family. I will now state the mistake I have made: We have been going to the Benbu Commune to perform Daoqing since May 9, 1976. Because of our poor ideological consciousness, we did not perform according to the commune's agenda; instead, we sang some old plays after we had sung the modern plays, as the audience told us to do. Altogether we performed the revolutionary modern plays ten times and the old plays eleven times. The old plays we performed were The White-Skeleton Demon, Replacing the Prince with a Civet Cat and Jiuhua Mountain. I have realized what I did was absolutely wrong. Our performing of old plays had a very bad influence. I decide to take any criticism and education seriously, correct my mistake and study hard at Chairman Mao's writings, so as to change my outlook on the world. I strongly and urgently ask the government to punish me for the mistake I made. (Propaganda Department of the Huanxian County Party Committee [PDHCPC], 1976)

A lot of statements like this can be found in the government archives. They show that the Huanxian community could not forget Daoqing and were willing to fight for Daoqing despite high political pressure. Master Shi said:

The reason why I am good at performing Daoqing is that I didn't give up in the Cultural Revolution. I was very little at that time and I loved Daoqing a lot. Sometimes my father would take me with him secretly when he went to perform and I could learn from him secretly. I learned many plays then. (Personal interview, March 29, 2012)

b. The Surviving Shadow Puppets

The government not only appointed informers, but also tried to eliminate Daoqing right at its roots -- by destroying the shadow puppets on a large scale. Master Ma recalls:

I had hundreds of Daoqing shadow puppets of the Qing Dynasty or the Republic

of China, which were passed down from my grandfather. When they were burned, I felt so sad; I'm still sad about that. I had thought of different ways of hiding them -- in the well or the vegetable cellar, but eventually they were dug up and burned by the Red Guards. I remember very clearly that one early morning, when it was still dark, our village was surrounded by a bunch of police. They drove this ten-wheel truck and searched for shadow puppets from house to house. Almost every household had some shadow puppets. The police put all the shadow puppets they found on the truck and burned them in a factory in the county. Nobody knew the police would come as they didn't let us know. Even the head of the Party Committee of our village didn't know. They just came and took our shadow puppets away. (Personal interview, March 27, 2012)

Yet the community would not surrender so easily. Some people would take a few unimportant shadow puppets out to make the search team believe they had no more; others would inform each another when the search team came. As Master Wang said:

Every time when the government came, every household would lock their door (to slow down their searching). When they were searching in one household, the household would inform other households to hide their shadow puppets. We hid them everywhere -- underground, in the middle of the door planks or in the water tank. (Personal interview, April 8, 2012)

But while able to deceive outsiders, they could not fool the village cadres, who knew very well about the villagers' ways of living. Yet not all the village cadres would stand on the other side against the villagers'; instead, some cadres took advantage of being a policy implementer to protect the villagers' behavior. Master Ma recalled:

I was chosen as the head of our production team as I had gone to school for a few years. In our small village, people all knew one another. I knew a few households made Daoqing shadow puppets at home and some people performed old plays at night, but I would not admit it or report them to the government. I myself learned to carve Daoqing shadow puppets from my father when I was

little and I loved it so much. I thought that the culture had existed for hundreds of years and it could not be made to disappear just like that. One night a group of people from the government came to forbid us to perform the old plays and to search for shadow puppets. They came to my office first. As I was talking with them, the staff in my office went back home to inform the villagers to hide the shadow puppets and musical instruments. I don't regret it at all when I recall those memories -- Actually I'm happy about what I did. (Personal interview, March 27, 2012)

Nothing can be eliminated by external forces within one day. Likewise, Daoqing survived through careful protection by the Huanxian community, instead of being eliminated. Just as James Scott (1976) pointed out, the careful defensive daily behaviors of the affected group go beyond the visual range of the government's political activity. The Daoqing artists and the Huanxian community found a way to save Daoqing in a blind spot of the government's powers. These people were waiting for a time when Daoqing could see the light again from their underground hiding places, the firewood stacks, and their mind. They planted a seed of hope for the continuation and rebirth of Daoqing.

To sum up, Daoqing was dominated by the government in the Cultural Revolution; the community did try to fight against the political pressure, but what they could do was very little and weak. The political landscape did not provide any positive protection for Daoqing; instead, it dealt it a fatal blow.

4.2 The Recovery of Daoqing in the Deng Xiaoping Era

The Cultural Revolution ended in 1976 when Mao Zedong died. The Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (*shiyi jie san zhong quan hui* 中共十一屆三中全會), held in 1978, marked China's entry into the period of the Reform and Opening Up policy under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping. During this period, China's focus was changed from class struggle to economic development and the central government also shifted its cultural strategy. In this context, the supervision of traditional folk culture and the arts was relaxed and

people in many places returned to their traditional lifestyles. As traditional festivals and ceremonies began to recover in Huanxian, from the late 1970s to the early 1980s, the once banned Daoqing performances were seen again at such festivals and ceremonies. The Cultural Revolution, aiming at destroying the old order and establishing the new one, did not eradicate Daoqing from the minds of the Huanxian people. As soon as it was over, people in Huanxian revitalized Daoqing.

Daoqing was in a relatively stable state in the early days of the period of Reform and Opening Up. In the following years of economic reform, as economic values became dominant in social development, Daoqing underwent some new changes. This period can be described as a recovery period for Daoqing, which paved the way for it to be integrated with the economy after 2000. This section mainly concerns how much space Daoqing had for development between 1978 and the late 1990s, how it changed and how it was safeguarded.

4.2.1 Recovery from Silence

In the Fourth National People's Congress (*di si ci quan guo dai biao da hui* 第四次全國代表大會), held by the Cultural Foundation of China (*zhong guo wen lian* 中國文聯) in 1979, the first cultural meeting after the Cultural Revolution was over, Deng Xiaoping gave a speech that explained what should be done with culture, the arts and politics. The party's leadership over culture and the arts is not equivalent to giving orders, or requiring culture and the arts to be subordinated to political tasks. The characteristics and rules of development for culture, literature and the arts must be followed and not be interfered with. In terms of the arts, different forms and styles should be developed freely; in terms of theories of art, different opinions and schools should coexist.

The speech showed that the central government had adjusted its previous policy of "culture serving politics" to a policy whereby culture and the arts were liberated from the shackles of political propaganda. The shift in national will immediately spread all over China and Daoqing slowly recovered and began to flourish. The Huanxian County Department of Cultural Affairs stated in its 1978

Report on Performing Traditional Shadow Play (guan yu li yong pi ying xi pai yan li shi ju de wen ti qing shi bao gao 關於利用皮影戲排演歷史劇的一些問題的請示報告) that Daoqing was the traditional culture of Huanxian County, that it was forbidden in the Cultural Revolution and that the Huanxian County Government decided to perform the traditional repertoires again, after they had been reviewed by the Department of Cultural Affairs (Huanxian County Department of Cultural Affairs [HCDCA], 1978).

This document demonstrated that the Huanxian County Government paid great attention to the artistry of Daoqing and was making its performance more diverse. Daoqing, after suffering for 10 years, now regained some space and more favorable conditions to develop. The Huanxian County Government took some steps to restore the performance of Daoqing:

Firstly, they organized Daoqing performances. In 1977, an amateur Daoqing performance was held in the county, the first government-organized large-scale performance after the Cultural Revolution. A total of 143 Daoqing artists divided into 11 troupes participated in this performance. In 1981, the Chinese Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education, the National Women's Federation (*quan guo fu lian* 全國婦聯) and the Chinese Dramatists Association (*zhong guo xi qu jia xie hui lian he* 中國戲劇家協會聯合) jointly organized the National Puppetry and Shadow Puppetry Performance Week for Children, to celebrate International Children's Day (June 1). Having received a letter of invitation from the Gansu Provincial Bureau of Cultural Affairs, the Huanxian County Government rehearsed some shadow plays for children and performed them in Beijing for one week in 1981 at the Chinese Dramatists Association.

In 1982, the Qingyang Municipal Department of Cultural Affairs organized a five-day event for observing and learning shadow plays, to which Huanxian County sent one team to perform. On this occasion, the Qingyang government explained explicitly that “modern plays, new versions of traditional plays and traditional plays can all be performed” (Qingyang Municipal Bureau of Cultural Affairs [QMBCA], 1982).

In 1985, a Youth Daoqing Performing Competition was held, to find a group of young performers with performing potential. In 1989, the Huanxian County Department of Cultural Affairs sent a Daoqing troupe to Beijing, to participate in the celebration of China's 40th anniversary. Their performance (as part of the Gansu folk art exhibitions) was watched by the staff of the Swiss embassy, who contacted the Huanxian County Government and invited the troupe to perform in Switzerland. Then, after 1990, all villages were ordered to organize Daoqing performances ahead of traditional festivals like Chinese New Year and the Lantern Festival (PDHCPC, 1990; HCDCA, 1996a).

After the end of the Cultural Revolution, Daoqing troupes were also invited to perform in European countries. In 1987, the Huanxian County Government, invited by the Italy-China Friendship Association (*yi zhong you hao xie hui* 意中友好協會), selected a troupe to perform Daoqing in Italy. The event was sponsored by the China Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, the Gansu Provincial Department of Cultural Affairs and the Italy-China Friendship Association. Master Shi Chenglin took his five-man troupe to perform in Rome, Milan, Florence, Bologna and seven other cities, for 24 shows. In Florence, a seminar was held after the performance and the Italian audience had a chance to learn from the performers some of the moves for controlling the shadow puppets.

The second step to restore the performance of Daoqing was to hold Daoqing artists' forums. The Cultural Center of Huanxian County held a seminar in 1978, to discuss how to restore and develop Daoqing after the Cultural Revolution. In the seminar, senior artists were asked to share their ideas on how to save and revive Daoqing, and their conversations and performances were recorded and videotaped. Another seminar was held in 1995, to trace and clarify the origin of Daoqing. Senior artists, as well as experts and scholars, were invited to participate in the discussion, hoping to be able to determine eventually the origin and historical development of Daoqing.

After the seminar, the government work report summarized the current status

and problems of Daoqing in Huanxian County at the time: “Currently, there are more than 40 Daoqing troupes and over 300 artists. As senior artists pass away one after another, Daoqing is in danger of not being able to be passed down.” (Cultural Center of Huanxian County, 1995) The government also held a meeting to discuss solutions and methods for safeguarding Daoqing. These seminars helped to enable the new identity of Daoqing find recognition in the new social and cultural spaces.

The third step was to compensate Daoqing artists who were persecuted in the Cultural Revolution. For example, Daoqing master Jing Dengzhi’s prop trunk of shadow puppets was confiscated in 1964 and burned in 1966 as the Cultural Revolution was starting. After the Cultural Revolution was over, he asked the government for compensation. In 1987, the county government released a document, the *Decision on Confiscation and Destruction of Jing Dengzhi’s Daoqing Puppets* (*guan yi jing deng zhi pi ying xi xiang bei hui de chu li jue ding* 关于敬登枝皮影戏箱被毁的处理决定), declaring that “the confiscation and destruction of Jing Dengzhi’s Daoqing puppets was ultra-leftist” and that, “according to the principle of ‘correcting mistakes’, the government decides to compensate Jing Dengzhi with 300 yuan” (HCDCA, 1996).

The fourth measure was reforming the Daoqing props. The Daoqing props, scenery and lighting had followed the traditions for almost a hundred years without any reform or innovation. For example, the oil lamp used in a Daoqing performance consisted of a bowl of sesame oil and a five-finger-thick wick which, once lighted, would create smoke that enveloped the entire venue, and the faces of the artists and the audience were likely to turn black with soot. After the founding of new China, the old oil lamp was still used in most cases (although one or two villages used electrical light) and sometimes sesame oil had to be replaced by kerosene or diesel oil, which produced even more smoke. Thus, in 1987, the Cultural Center of Huanxian County started a pilot project in Gengwan Town, in which the staff of the center and senior artists experimented for half a year to make changes in the lighting and to develop a new kind of smoke-free lighting and scenery effects. This not only solved the problem of the black smoke, but also made the light three times brighter. In addition, the Cultural Centers also coordinated some improvements by senior artists in the singing,

the music and the musical instruments.

The developments described above signaled that the political shackles were being removed from Daoqing after the Cultural Revolution and showed that Daoqing was regaining the chance to continue developing. The activities organized by the Huanxian County Government could be seen as protective measures, which laid the foundation, not only for Daoqing becoming a national treasure and an intangible cultural heritage, but also for its creating social and cultural benefits.

4.2.2 People's Feelings of Reservation

Now that it was again permitted to perform traditional Daoqing repertoires, once considered as feudal superstition, the Huanxian community showed their strong desire to watch the traditional performances. As recorded, in 1976 when the Cultural Revolution ended, Daoqing were restored and performed up to 60 times a month. Repertoires such as *The White Skeleton Demon* (*san da bai gu jing* 三打白骨精) and *Stealing the Magic Herb* (*dao xian cao* 盜仙草) were performed for three consecutive days and nights with waves of audiences, some of whom watched the performances for three days in a row. But the artists still had some reservations, as the fears that they suffered during the Cultural Revolution had not yet been dispelled by the new more tolerant policy.

Master Jing recalls:

Everyone missed Daoqing a lot during the Cultural Revolution. So when, in 1976, rumor had it that the Cultural Revolution was ending, some people in the neighboring village already began to perform the old repertoire. A few days later we heard that they were arrested. Anyway, the rumors kept changing and I still didn't dare to perform. It was only in 1978, when a troupe of Benbu village performed for half a year and nothing happened to them, that I started to organize my men to perform. We took out the musical instruments and shadow puppets that we had hidden during the Cultural Revolution or made new ones if the old ones were already burnt. We were scared at the beginning, so we

performed on and off for a year and our mind finally eased when we found the government no longer arrested people for that. But we didn't feel totally safe. As soon as we heard the government was releasing new documents on anti-feudalism, we'd stop. Some performers in neighboring villages were braver. I just didn't dare. (Personal interview, April 5, 2012)

Master Shi expresses similar feelings:

In 1978, we heard that the policy was relaxing and people in other villages had already performed for a few times. I called up my men, seven people altogether, and regrouped our troupe very quickly. Everybody was happy. I asked someone to buy me a prop trunk full of all kinds of shadow puppets from Xingping County in Shanxi Province. I loved them so much! The day when I received the prop trunk, we set up a stage in the village that very night and gave a few performances. A lot of people came to watch us. We were so happy. So Daoqing became popular again and I was invited to perform in neighboring villages for more than two months at a time in spring and autumn. I'd be lying if I said I was not afraid. Usually I'd perform one or two revolutionary model plays and then the old plays, in case I was arrested, so that the government would forgive me as I did not do everything wrong. Anyway it's normal that we were afraid, because the policies changed so quickly. You never knew what the policy would be the next day! (Personal interview, March 29, 2012)

These words show that the Daoqing performers were not completely at ease. Under the extreme distress during the Cultural Revolution, they suppressed their feelings for Daoqing, which temporarily disappeared and were just waiting for the right time to be restored. This was due to the nightmarish memories, which so wrecked the nerves of the artists that they were still not relieved after the Cultural Revolution when the policy was relaxed. Master Wang, a master Daoqing puppet maker, said:

I still had nightmares, even more than 20 years after the Cultural Revolution. Once, in the early 1990s, a troupe ordered some shadow puppets in the shape of little demons from me. The night I finished making these shadow puppets I

saw on TV that the government was going to tackle superstitions again. I was so scared that I burnt those shadow puppets! A few days later some men from the government brought a few guys from the provincial TV station to interview me. I asked them if they were going to tackle superstitions again. They said no. They told me that I didn't need to worry because the shadow puppets I had made were not products of superstition but products of folk culture. It was only then that my mind was eased. The Cultural Revolution really scared the hell out of me. (Personal interview, April 8, 2012)

Although the Huanxian community was frustrated, scared and hesitant, they did not give up Daoqing. When asked why they could not forget Daoqing, even after ten years of estrangement, and why they were still so interested in Daoqing, the Masters gave the same simple answer: “We have our feelings for Daoqing”. (Personal interview, April 5; personal interview, April 8, 2012)

4.2.3 Disconnecting from Politics and Tying Up with the Economy

In the last days of the Cultural Revolution, the Huanxian County Government set up an official Daoqing troupe that belonged to the Cultural Center and its artists were forced to perform revolutionary model plays; other amateur farmer troupes could only perform with the permission of the government. When the Cultural Revolution was over and the policy was relaxed, the Daoqing troupes remained under the same management system as that during the revolution. The government troupe was subsidized by the national budget and the artists' income did not rely on their performance, which is to say their income was fixed, and whether they performed or how often they performed was not taken into consideration. In short, the government troupe did not care about the costs or profits; it did not have any mechanism for assessment or dismissal of performers, either. The farmer troupes were under the direct leadership of the government and could only perform when the government permitted them to do so. Performances for profit were forbidden. As time went by, the popular farmer troupes were not able to perform freely, while the government troupe was less and less good at performing because of complacency.

The Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in 1978 clarified the direction for the reform of the economic system and the cultural system. In 1984, Zhu Muzhi (朱穆之), the Minister for Culture, raised a question during a seminar on the reform of the performing arts troupe system. That question was, “Does the cause of performing groups have to rely completely on the government?” The question had many implications for some of the key issues regarding the cultural and management systems.

In October the same year, the Communist Party of China Central Committee proposed to develop the socialist commodity economy (*she hui zhu yi shi chang jing ji* 社會主義商品經濟), upon which various interests in the cultural system reacted immediately. They began exploring the possibility of introducing economic methods into cultural fields.

In 1987, the Ministry of Culture issued the *Notice on the Issuance of the Interim Measures on Cultural Institutions Carrying out Paid Services and Business Operations* (*guan yu ban fa wen hua shi ye dan wei kai zhan you chang fu wu he jing ying huo dong de zan xing ban fa* 關於頒發文化事業單位開展有償服務和經營活動的暫行辦法) and since then cultural achievements were used to promote the development of the cultural industry, in the hope of alleviating the economic hardship in the cultural units and reducing their financial burden.

The *Opinions on Accelerating and Deepening the Reform of Art Performing Troupe System* (*guan yu jia kuai he shen hua yi shu tuan ti gai ge de yi jian* 關於加快和深化藝術表演團體體制改革的意見) issued by the Ministry of Culture in 1988 stated that:

All performing troupes were independent operating entities that conducted socialist arts production. Different forms of ownership and operational methods should be allowed, so that the troupes can operate their business independently. Performances are to be the major source of income for performers, and a reasonable amount of movement from group to group will be allowed for performers as well. (MC, 1998)

Against the backdrop of the economic reform, with its influence on the cultural system, Daoqing gradually broke away from politics and embarked on a road of self-development, which eventually provided the conditions for it to become a national intangible cultural heritage and to be commercialized. The Huanxian County Government reformed the Daoqing troupes according to the reform policies; the government-owned troupe became self-financing rather than being funded by the government. The problem was that the full-time performers in the government troupe no longer had a fixed salary to cover their living costs and rehearsals.

Hence the Huanxian County Government, as ordered by the Qingyang Municipal Government, proposed in 1980 to establish a “shadow theatre farm” (*pi ying nong chang* 皮影農場), in which the performers would do farming as well as performing, so as to make enough money to live on. To put it more specifically, the performers did easy farming work and received pay when they were not performing, but gathered to perform whenever needed. The policy then made provision that artists in the shadow theatre farm had to take part in performance tours in rural areas five times every year, to publicize national policies, such as the One Child Policy, or other laws and regulations. Such performance tours were usually free; sometimes if an entrance fee was charged, the money was given to the “farm” and then distributed to the individual performers. Apart from the performance tours, the artists were also engaged to perform before or after governmental meetings.

In 1988, the contractual responsibility system²⁵ (*cheng bao ze ren zhi* 承包責任制) was implemented for the Daoqing troupes. But the troupes could not freely choose what and when to perform. The *Notice on Implementing the Ministry of Culture’s Report on Forbidding Performances for Profit Without Permission* (*guan yu jin zhi si zi zu zhi yan yuan jin xing ying ye xing yan chu de tong zhi* 關於嚴禁私自

25 The contractual responsibility system was a major step in the reform launched in the rural areas of China in the early 1980s. For farmers, it involves a system whereby the farmers sign a contract with the nation as the country’s land contract farmers, such that the state gives contract provisions for them to own the right to use the land. A certain amount of their production has to be turned over to the state and the rest is at their free disposal, including being sold at the market by the farmers. The system involving the Daoqing troupes implies that troupes can perform on their own. Part of their earnings has to be turned over to the government as the management fee and the rest is at the disposal of the artists themselves.

組織演員進行營業性演出的報告的通知), issued by the Gansu Provincial Bureau of Cultural Affairs, and the *Notice on Interim Measures on the Gansu Rural Amateur Troupes* (*guan yu yin fa gan su nong cun ye yu ju tuan de zan xing guan li ban fa de tong zhi* 關於印發甘肅省農村業余劇團的暫行管理辦法的通知) permitted troupes to engage in individual performances or perform in places other than Gansu Province, on condition that they were permitted to do so by the Cultural Department and would hand in three per cent of their reward as the management fee. Those troupes that performed without permission would face a fine or other sanctions (Gansu Provincial Bureau of Cultural Affairs, 1983a).

Master Ma recalls:

After the Cultural Revolution, the Qingyang Municipal Government ordered the communes to subsidize their own troupes. But the communes had no money, so they asked the troupes to go back to their own villages, which had no way to settle them either. Later, the Cultural Stations of the towns set up this cultural farm on which the troupes could do farming and perform and keep their earnings without handing them in. The head of the Cultural Stations usually worked as the head of the farm and the head of its party committee. He was the one who managed the salaries. I was such a head myself. Usually I led my men to plant potatoes or day lilies and went to perform in different villages whenever we were engaged. When we got back a few days later, we'd continue planting. To give a good performance we needed rehearsals, but we had no time for them as we were busy with farm work. So we had to practice on weekends or whenever we were free. The young men in our troupes needed more time to learn and practice. Those who were talented or really interested would come to us experienced performers to learn. We had great passion for it. The farms adopted the contractual responsibility system around 1985. Since then the farms have been separated from art because contracting meant making as much money as possible. Later, the performing teams of the farms adopted the system, too. That is to say, whenever they got a contract, they could perform anytime anywhere, free from the government's management. A small part of their reward would be handed to the government and the rest would be divided

among themselves. Some troupes even quit planting and engaged in performing all year round. Rumor had it that they earned more from performing than doing farming. But in the 1990s, when TV and movie theaters emerged, the Daoqing performances were no longer so popular as before and the full-time troupes came back to their villages to engage in farming again. (Personal interview, March 27, 2012)

Mater Ma recalls how the Huanxian Daoqing troupes developed. In the late 1970s, when the economic reform first began, new policies on folk art troupes were implemented. Daoqing troupes no longer belonged to any government body, as they did in the early days, when the new China was founded or during the Cultural Revolution. The cultural and art farms emerged accordingly. Such farms lasted for about five years and played an active role in the inheritance and safeguarding of Daoqing. For one thing, the troupes survived and kept performing in towns and villages; for another, the troupes had new young members who were able to learn from the senior performers. As the economic reform deepened, the contractual responsibility system was adopted. Such a system secured the status of troupes as independent entities that could perform independently and earn enough income from their performances. But no matter how well they survived and developed, they were not able to withstand the competition from TV and movies which dominated the market in the late 1990s.

To sum up, Daoqing was slowly restored after 1978 from a period of silence, and embarked on a road parallel with economic development. The local governments protected Daoqing by organizing performances and seminars and provided it with some free space for development. These activities laid the foundation for the future protection of folk cultural heritage and intangible cultural heritage. Anyway, it was the economic rather than the political aspect that was emphasized. Daoqing started diversifying with the Reform and Opening Up policy. Folk artists began to go out of their own villages to perform and make money from the performances. Daoqing became a product that could create profit, rather than a folk tradition only used in ceremonies and festivals and for transmitting old stories. However, ultimately, it was still above all the government that dominated.

CHAPTER 5

DAOQING SHADOW THEATRE AS NATIONAL TREASURE, INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE AS ECONOMIC CAPITAL

After experiencing the eras of Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping, China in the early 21st century saw a new generation of government with Hu Jintao at its power center. In 2004, at the 16th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (*zhong guo gong chan dang di shi liu jie zhong yang wei yuan hui* 中國共產黨第十六屆中央委員會), Hu formally identified the development of a harmonious socialist society as the strategic goal for China's social development. A harmonious socialist society refers to a state of society with harmony, cohesion and cooperation among the different strata.

This idea can be traced back to China's cultural tradition of Confucian ethics, as the philosophical basis for ruling Chinese society. The proposal for a harmonious socialist society was an oblique way of saying that traditional culture, which had been suppressed for half a century, was formally returning to Chinese society. Hence, Daoqing is now seeing yet another major transformation period, after the Cultural Revolution of the Mao era and the early period of the Economic Reform and Opening Up policy.

The introduction in early 2000 of the term "intangible heritage", or *feiyi* (非遺) in short in Chinese, has seen rapid acceptance and widespread use in Chinese society. Upon China's ratification of the Intangible Heritage Convention in 2003, local governments in various parts of China began nominating examples of intangible heritage in great fervor. Daoqing was listed as China's national-level intangible cultural heritage that same year, and in 2011, it became part of the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*.

In the space of a few years, the Chinese government has gone from being

ambivalent about the social status of Daoqing to giving positive recognition to it and actively promoting it. Daoqing, which used to carry the negative image of being a remnant of feudalism and to occupy a marginal position in culture and tradition, has suddenly been elevated to being a national asset. During this time, Daoqing has not only experienced a sea change in its social image, it has also seen a development that was unexpected, as it was uncoupled from politics and became tied to economics instead.

A research study of Daoqing in China of this period is not complete without paying attention to China's economic development, particularly the relationship between culture and economics. In the past, Chinese culture and the development of its various arts arguably relied very much on the political structure, with a very weak relationship to economics, such that there was a lack of independence. This feature was especially obvious under the system of planned economy during the founding years and the Cultural Revolution in modern China. China had adopted the system of the Soviet Union for its cultural management, such that in all domains of society, cultural resources were distributed using a mode of public administration that is pre-planned, whereby the nation directly decides on the creation and production of culture and the arts.

Following the economic reforms, with a new formation that had the public economy at its core but incorporated other forms of economic development, society saw increasing stratification and restructuring, whereby personal interests became diversified and the power of the community emerged. Subsequently, cultural resources changed from being a national monopoly to being shared by society. A monist form of cultural formation was superseded by a pluralistic formation, with different kinds of development. Culture and various art forms increasingly moved away from the political realm into the commercial realm of commodity production.

By the early 21st century, under the leadership of the new government, economic development in China has been given an undeniable central place. All innovations in society have to serve economic development. With industrialization and the development of a market economy, China has seen a new trend in the commercialization of culture, whereby culture increasingly becomes a kind of product.

Under the conditions of a market economy, cultural production is always tied to capital. Daoqing, as a form of folk culture accumulated over hundreds of years in Huanxian, has become a new kind of economic capital. After losing its role of serving political propaganda, it did not return to its original functions -- rituals, expressions of feeling and transmission of stories -- but became tied to the economic market, such that it gradually became a standardized commercial product through market mechanisms and automated production. This is not only a result of choice based on the free market, but also a move encouraged by national policies.

In 2005, China's State Council published its *Opinions on Strengthening the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* (*guan yu jia qiang wo guo fei yi bao hu gong zuo de yi jian* 關於加強我國非物質文化遺產保護工作的意見), whereby it emphasized that local governments are to include the task of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in their program of important tasks, to be incorporated into the overall plan for the national economy and social development. This is as good as an announcement from the national government that the combination of intangible heritage with economic development will be an effective way of safeguarding intangible heritage.

What seems ironic is that while the ten years of the Cultural Revolution,

despite the suppression of Daoqing and the persecution of its artists, were unable to erase the art from the lives of the Huanxian community, the unprecedented forces of economic development have now somehow managed to weaken the local people's relationship with Daoqing. As China enters its new economic era, the traditional culture of Huanxian has been constrained and overwhelmed by economic factors. During the economic reforms in the Deng Xiaoping era, politics in China took second place to economics, and economic values replaced cultural values to become the principal motivation for developments in society. Daoqing shadow puppetry, which is a tradition born out of the Huanxian social and moral structure, is once again facing the test of a new transition, just like the crises it had to face before and during the Cultural Revolution, when it was reduced to an instrument for political propaganda.

This chapter serves to explore how Daoqing, as part of the harmonious society propagated by the new government of China, became part of mankind's intangible cultural heritage: what kinds of action the government and the people of the Huanxian community have undertaken to safeguard it; how it has become a form of commodity under cultural production as propagated in China and where this could lead; how the state and the people of the Huanxian community may understand Daoqing differently as part of this process, and how these different forces interact with each other.

5.1 Daoqing Nomination with Chinese Characteristics

From signing the World Heritage Convention to signing the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, China has shown great enthusiasm for the nomination of examples of both tangible and intangible heritage. The main reason for this is to be found in the tremendous political and economic benefits – or high added value – that a World Heritage branding can bring: domestic or foreign investment can be attracted

through enhanced popularity; property values increase at the locations surrounding heritage sites; the environment, local traffic and residents' living conditions may improve; the local economy grows faster as a result of the promotion of tourism and related industries; employment opportunities and local government revenue improve.

An application for inscription in the World Heritage list does put pressure on the local government, yet it brings even more output, efficiency and returns. It is no wonder that the Chinese government is paying so much attention to it and spending huge sums of money in vying for nominations. Since China signed the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, a new round of the nomination craze has started among local governments, in typical Chinese style.

Ostensibly, local governments are doing this in order to safeguard the local intangible cultural heritage, but in fact they are doing it to enhance their political performance and for economic returns. A successful nomination not only helps a local government to earn performance points, but also helps to lay the basis on which cultural industries can be developed. Two characteristics of such nominations manifest them as Chinese-style nominations: firstly, nomination projects are packaged and promoted with little regard for cost; secondly, due to excessive resource development after nomination, an intangible cultural heritage tends to deteriorate or be ruined.

In any case, local governments only pay attention to being nominated, without proper management or safeguarding. As Feng Jicai (2011), the executive chairman for the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles, points out, "Many cultural heritages, such as shadow theatre and paper cutting, once found, are turned into money-making machines, which cause damage to cultural heritage. In a word, nomination does harm to cultural heritage". Huanxian's nomination as an example of

intangible heritage is also unfortunately in this typical Chinese style.

By analyzing the process of nominating Daoqing as a heritage, this section explores how intangible cultural heritage is tied to economic interests. The first section explains China's intangible cultural heritage policies. The second part introduces how Daoqing was listed in the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*, and which driving forces are behind this. The third part discusses the cooperation between economic interests and socio-political power in the Daoqing nomination process.

5.1.1 China's Policies and Implementation with Intangible Cultural Heritage

The term in Chinese for “intangible cultural heritage”, *fei wu zhi wen hua yi chan* (非物質文化遺產), which is widely used in China today, was not in use when the country was just established. Instead, together with tangible cultural heritage, it was referred to as “folk cultural heritage” (*min jian wen hua yi chan* 民間文化遺產). In August 2004, when the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention came into force, the Eleventh Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Tenth National People's Congress of China approved China's ratification of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, which made China officially one of the signatory states. Since then, the Chinese translation of “intangible cultural heritage” has been determined as *fei wu zhi wen hua yi chan* (非物質文化遺產) and this has been gradually recognized in China; meanwhile, the range of safeguarding activities has gradually expanded.

The concept and vocabulary of intangible heritage may be weighted toward of western perspective, yet the policies and regulations²⁶ which the Chinese

26 According to the Article 13 of the Convention, in order to ensure that intangible cultural heritage on its territory is well protected, promoted and displayed, each signatory state should endeavor to “develop a general policy to make the intangible cultural heritage play its role in the society, and take such protection into plannings”.

government established immediately after signing the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, to fulfill the responsibilities and obligations of a member state, bear strong Chinese socialist characteristics. As China is a government-led socialist country, national policies are always formulated and implemented by the government, without or with little public participation. Policies on intangible heritage are no exception. The following section will analyze China's intangible cultural heritage policies and consider who implements the policies, how and for whom the policies are implemented, and what Chinese characteristics these policies display.

a. China's Policies and Local Regulations on Intangible Cultural Heritage

China signed the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention very early, but it was not until eight years later that the country laid down its own intangible cultural heritage legislation. In March 2005, the State Council issued the *Opinions on Strengthening the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage*, in which it formally proposed to establish national, provincial, municipal and county-level Intangible Cultural Heritage List systems and stressed that a safeguarding system with Chinese characteristics should be gradually formalized based on the following principles: "safeguarding is fundamental; salvaging is top priority; uses should be rational; transmission goes along with development" (General Office of the State Council [GOSC], 2005).

In October 2006, the Ministry of Culture examined, approved and promulgated the *Interim Measures on the Safeguarding and Management of Intangible Cultural Heritage* (*guo jia ji fei yi bao hu yu guan li zan xing ban fa* 國家級非物質文化遺產保護與管理暫行辦法). In 2011, China's first intangible heritage protection law -- the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Law of the People's Republic of China* (*zhong guo fei wu zhi wen hua yi chan fa* 中華人民共和國非物質文化遺產法) (hereafter, the Intangible Cultural Heritage Law) -- was formally put forward and

implemented. This basically formalized the objectives, principles, mechanisms and systems of China's intangible cultural heritage protection.

One of the interesting aspects here is that local regulations were formulated before national laws. Following China's accession to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, eight provinces with rich intangible heritage assets developed regulations for local protection²⁷. In Gansu province, where Daoqing is found, the *Gansu Provincial Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Ordinance* (*gan su sheng fei wu zhi wen hua yi chan bao hu tiao li* 甘肅省非物質文化遺產保護條例) was formulated as early as 2006.

The introduction of this ordinance has played an important role in protecting Gansu's intangible cultural heritage and has provided a reference for legislation at national level and in other provinces. It clarifies the definition of intangible cultural heritage, its scope, identification and inheritance, safeguarding measures, rewards and punishments, liability and responsibility of governments at all levels, and so on. It also requires the cities and counties in Gansu Province to establish regulations that suit their local conditions.

According to the *Gansu Provincial Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Ordinance*, the government of Huanxian County formulated, with the approval of its Standing Committee in 2005, the *Interim Provisions and Implementing Rules for the Safeguarding of Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre* (*huan xian daoqing pi ying bao hu chuan cheng gui ding* 環縣道情皮影保護傳承暫行規定), clarifying the government's functions, relevant departments' responsibilities, the recognition of heritage and measures for use and exploitation. In 2008, the Huanxian County Government further established the *Management Approaches on Huanxian Daoqing*

27 The eight provinces are Gansu (甘肅), Yunan (雲南), Guizhou (貴州), Guangxi (廣西), Fujian (福建), Xinjiang (新疆), Jiangsu (江蘇), and Zhejiang (浙江).

Inheritors (huan xian pi ying chuan cheng ren guan li ban fa 環縣道情皮影藝術傳承人管理辦法) and the *Management Approaches on Huanxian Daoqing Theatrical Troupes (huan xian daoqing pi ying xi ban guan li ban fa* 環縣道情皮影戲班管理辦法).

b. The Structure of Policy Implementers and the Implementation Objects

Article 13 of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention lays down that state signatories will strive to “designate or establish one or more institution(s) to protect the intangible cultural heritage on their territory” (UNESCO, 2003), which means that signatories should establish agencies to enforce the policies they make. Such enforcement should include establishing executive agencies (or organizations), mobilizing resources under the provisions of the policy documents, disseminating and clarifying policies, producing publicity, doing pilot projects, implementation and monitoring (ibid.).

Krugman (2000) has pointed out that for achieving policy objectives, setting up a program accounts for only 10% of the process, while the remaining 90% depends on effective implementation. Policy implementation is a process by which the planning and content of a policy are put into operation; this directly determines the actual results. Again, as China is a government-led country, national will and policies are dependent on government action, which is inseparable from the behavior of all levels of government and officials.

Therefore, those who implement intangible heritage policies in China are governmental departments and officials at all levels, including the following four main types:

1. The governing body — China’s Ministry of Culture. At the level of central

government, intangible heritage policy is led by the Ministry of Culture and implemented by other relevant departments. The Ministry of Culture is responsible for the establishment of specialized intangible heritage agencies. In 2006, the Intangible Cultural Heritage Department was set up under the Bureau of Social and Cultural Affairs of the Ministry of Culture. In 2008, according to the State Council's *Notice on Printing the Requirements on the Internal Structure and Staffing of the Ministry of Culture* (*guan yu yin fa wen hua bu zhu yao zhi ze nei she he ren yuan bian zhi gui ding de tong zhi* 關於印發文化部主要職責內設機構和人員編制規定的通知), the Ministry of Culture decided to set up a separate Intangible Cultural Heritage Bureau, which is responsible for work in national intangible heritage protection. Since then, local cultural departments have also set up relevant functional departments as well as protection centers.

2. The leading institution -- the Interministerial Meeting on China's Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection. In accordance with the State Council's *Opinions on Strengthening the Safeguarding of China's Intangible Cultural Heritage*, an Interministerial Meeting System (*fei yi bao hu gong zuo bu ji lian xi hui yi zhi du* 非物質文化遺產保護工作部際聯席會議制度) has been established, composed of the Ministry of Culture, the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Education, the State Ethnic Affairs Commission, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Construction, the National Tourism Administration, the State Bureau of Religious Affairs and the National Heritage Bureau. Its main functions are: developing safeguarding policies; examining safeguarding plans; coordinating actions on major issues; examining the *National Intangible Cultural Heritage List* (*guo jia fei wu zhi wen hua yi chan ming lu* 國家級非物質文化遺產名錄), as well as other work entrusted to it by the State Council. The General Office of the Interministerial Meeting is located in the Ministry of Culture, where it is responsible for daily operations. The Minister of Culture convenes meetings

with the assistance of officials of the ministries mentioned above.

3. Implementing Agency -- China Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Center. This is a national professional institution for intangible cultural heritage protection. Its main functions are: policy consultation, organizing nationwide inventories, providing guidance for the implementation of safeguarding plans, conducting theoretical research, organizing academic and public service activities and exhibitions, promoting and publicizing the results and experience of protection, publishing research results and giving personnel training.
4. The policy advisory body — the National Expert Committee on Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection. According to Article 13 of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, in order to ensure that the intangible cultural heritage within each relevant territory is protected, promoted and displayed, signatory states should strive to “encourage scientific, technical, artistic and method studies that can effectively protect intangible cultural heritage, those are endangered in particular” (UNESCO, 2003). For the purpose of collaboration with experts and research institutions, the National Expert Committee on Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection was set up in 2006 in Beijing, with the main tasks of formulating plans on safeguarding and inventories, examining and managing the *National Intangible Cultural Heritage List* and identifying custodians.

In a word, the implementation of China’s intangible heritage policies depends on a “top-down” model, which means that all implementation is centered on government policy decisions -- decisions on how the policy objectives are to be achieved and when and how the achievement of objectives is to be evaluated. It is a vertical system. In the case of Huanxian, the vertical system may be thus represented: the Chinese government sets up at the national level the Intangible Cultural Heritage

Bureau and Protection Center; the Gansu Provincial Government sets up the Intangible Cultural Heritage Department in its Cultural Bureau; Qingyang City sets up an Intangible Cultural Heritage Office; and Huanxian County sets up a Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre Protection Center, which is the principal implementation agency for safeguarding Huanxian Daoqing shadow theatre.²⁸

Hence policies are issued by the State Council and delivered to China's Ministry of Culture, the Gansu Provincial Bureau of Culture and the Qingyang Municipal Department of Cultural Affairs, and they are then implemented by the Huanxian Shadow Theatre Protection Center. The problems that the Center encounters in the process of nomination and implementation are then reported in a reverse or "down-top" way. Such is the vertical system from central government to local counties. This confirms the "government-led" approach in China's intangible heritage protection.

The implementation objects of public policies are the entities or targets for which the policies are carried out. This includes the social issues to be dealt with by public policies and the members of society (or targeted groups) that the public policies take effect on. In this research paper, the implementation objects refer to groups that are closely related to intangible heritage safeguarding, such as minorities, the general public, heritage research scholars and developers. In China, there is no clear boundary between the implementation objects and the implementers, as most of the implementation objects are established under the leadership of governments, and their staff is composed of government officials.

28 The Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre Protection Center was established in May 2005. As a working agency for the safeguarding of Daoqing and other examples of intangible cultural heritage, the Center is mainly responsible for developing and implementing the plans to salvage and safeguard Daoqing. It consists of four professional studios for Daoqing music, shadow puppetry art, Daoqing repertoires and archives. Eleven people work at the Center, ten regular staff and one temporary employee.

The Huanxian Daoqing Research Association (zhong guo huan xian daoqing pi ying yan jiu hui 中國環縣道情皮影研究會) established in 2002 is a typical example. This association appears to be an independent non-profit organization responsible for research activities, but in fact its establishment was led by the Huanxian County Government, its chairman is also a leading official in the Party Committee of Huanxian County and it is affiliated to the Department of Cultural Affairs. This is an implementation object with typical Chinese characteristics.

c. Implementation Mechanisms and Measures

The main implementation mechanisms of intangible heritage policy in China consist of: the social participation mechanism, the communication and coordination mechanism, and the supervision and inspection mechanism.

Firstly, the social participation mechanism. This means that the public take an active part in social development activities, based on their concern for their own interests and their conscious identification with public interests and affairs. In order to improve public awareness of the need to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage, the General Office of the State Council stated in 2005, in the *Opinions on Strengthening the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage*, that “academic and research institutions, universities, enterprises, social organizations and other bodies should all be mobilized to protect the intangible cultural heritage” (GOSC, 2005).

Secondly, the communication and coordination mechanism. Public policies involve economic, political and cultural factors. No individual institution would find it easy to implement policies and achieve policy objectives. Thus communication and coordination among departments and agencies are necessary. Safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage is the responsibility not only of cultural departments, but also of the departments of religion, education, finance, taxation, etc. Since day one of

implementing intangible heritage safeguarding policies, China has attempted to establish and improve the communication and coordination mechanism. In 2005, the General Office of the State Council stated in the *Opinions on Strengthening the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* that:

The government should play a leading role in establishing a coordinated and effective leading mechanism on the work of safeguarding. To put it more specifically, the Ministry of Culture should take the lead in establishing an interministerial conference system to coordinate the work on safeguarding. The cultural administrative departments and relevant departments should actively cooperate with one another. (GOSC, 2005)

So far the Interministerial Meeting System has been composed of the Ministry of Culture, the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Education, the State Ethnic Affairs Commission, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Construction, the Tourism Bureau, the Bureau of Religious Affairs and the Cultural Relics Bureau. With effective communication and coordination among all the agencies, the nomination and safeguarding of China's intangible heritage are being promoted. Such communication and coordination mechanisms are also reflected in international exchange and cooperation. However, such communication and coordination mechanisms only operate between governmental bodies; China's non-governmental organizations and other civil organizations are excluded.

As early as 2005, the "Mongolian Long Song" (*meng gu chang diao* 蒙古長調), jointly nominated by China and Mongolia, was inscribed in the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*. From 2008 to 2009, joint field research was launched in the territories of Mongolia and China respectively. In 2010, the Cultural Ministers of China and Mongolia signed the *MOU between the Ministry*

of Culture of the People's Republic of China and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science of Mongolia for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage; later, they established a vice-ministerial managing and working group to jointly safeguard the intangible cultural heritage.

Thirdly, the supervision and inspection mechanism. A sound policy must also include a strict supervision and inspection mechanism -- a system for supervising and inspecting how the laws, regulations, documentation and specific administrative duties are being implemented, and how well this is being done. Such mechanisms help to detect problems in policy implementation in a timely way, upon which implementation plans can be corrected and perfected through adjustments in policy objectives and modes of implementation. It is fair to say that the supervision and inspection mechanism is an important institutional guarantee for orderly and effective policy implementation.

In order to better promote intangible cultural heritage protection and to strictly implement the responsibilities and obligations to the United Nations' Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, China has established a supervision and inspection mechanism. In its *Opinions on Strengthening the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* of 2005, the State Council also stated that "the Office of the Interministerial Conference should organize experts to evaluate, inspect and supervise the projects that are included in the National Intangible Cultural Heritage List and warn, even delist those that cannot fulfill their promise (GOSC, 2005).

With regards to the phenomenon that "attention is paid only to the nomination and no attention is paid to safeguarding", the Ministry of Culture introduced the "exit mechanism" (*tui chu ji zhi* 退出機制) in 2012, to inspect all aspects of nominated projects. According to the requirements of the *Intangible*

Cultural Heritage Law:

The protection and fund use of the enlisted projects will be inspected. Those that cannot play their role well will be notified and urged to rectify this; if they cannot be corrected or improved within a certain time limit, they may lose their eligibility to be on the list. (Standing Committee of the National People's Congress [SCNPC], 2011)

Inspections of intangible heritage protection are conducted by Beijing and local experts and institutions, organized by the Ministry of Culture, which again carries strong Chinese socialist characteristics. It is a supervisory team set up by the government, rather than an agency outside the government, which evaluates the government's work.

Since signing the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, China has mainly taken the following steps to implement the intangible heritage policies. Firstly, a safeguarding system was established according to the *National Intangible Cultural Heritage List*. With reference to the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*, China developed a Chinese-style grading system of protection, namely *National-level, Provincial-level, City-level and County-level Intangible Cultural Heritage Representative Lists*. The Ministry of Culture stated in the *Interim measures for the nomination and assessment of national intangible cultural heritage* that the intangible cultural heritage list at national level must be approved and promulgated by the State Council, while the provincial, municipal and county-level intangible cultural heritage list is to be approved and promulgated by the government at the respective level and reported to the government at a higher level (MC, 2003). Since 2003, China's State Council has listed three batches of intangible cultural heritage.

Secondly, a custodian system (*chuan cheng ren zhi du* 傳承人制度) was set up. To effectively safeguard the national intangible cultural heritage, a system of representative custodians is being encouraged and supported. In 2007, the Ministry of Culture named the first batch of custodians of a total of 226 national intangible cultural heritage items. In February 2008, the Ministry of Culture announced the second batch of 551 custodians and in 2009, there was a third batch of 711 custodians. These custodians fall into ten categories, namely folk literature, traditional sports, entertainment and acrobatics, traditional arts, handicraft, medicine, music, dance, drama and folk art. This is the initial custodian system.

Thirdly, financial investment was increased. The central and local governments have provided great financial support. In 2006, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Culture jointly issued a notice named *Interim Measures for the Management of the Special Fund of National Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection* (*guo jia fei yi bao hu zhuan xiang zi jin guan li ban fa* 國家非物質文化遺產保護專項資金管理暫行辦法), which stated that a special fund would be established by the central government. The special fund enjoys preferential policies and provides a strong guarantee for heritage protection (Ministry of Finance [MF] & MC, 2006). According to the statistics in the Chinese Culture Yearbook (2009), 100 million yuan of special funds were transferred by the central government to local governments in 2008 and altogether 386 million yuan were provided. From 2005 to 2008, local governments provided 259 million yuan.

Fourthly, there is more education on heritage protection. In its 2005 statement of *Opinions on Strengthening the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage*, the State Council wrote that:

Intangible cultural heritage should be given an important place in teaching teenagers and children traditional culture and patriotic spirit. Public cultural institutions, such as libraries, cultural centers, museums and science museums should actively publicize and exhibit aspects of intangible cultural heritage. The Ministry of Education and schools should gradually incorporate those excellent aspects of intangible cultural heritage that reflect the national spirit and characteristics into teaching materials and activities. The media, like journalism, television and the internet, should be encouraged to publicize intangible cultural heritage and its protection, and supported in doing so, in order to raise the public's awareness and create a good social atmosphere for protection. (GOSC, 2005)

In China, educational activities on intangible heritage are usually associated with patriotic nationalist education and the news media usually provide support for the educational agencies in these activities.

Fifthly, in recent years, a productive and integral protection plan has been implemented. Productive protection refers to the transfer of an intangible heritage and its resources into productive forces and products for production, distribution and marketing, such that intangible heritage can be protected while creating social wealth. Integral protection means that all the contents and forms of heritage, including the custodians and the ecological environment, are to be protected. The most important approach in integral protection is to establish intangible heritage protection eco-zones to conduct overall and focused protection.

5.1.2 Daoqing-style Nomination in Huanxian

At the Sixth UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee Conference in 2011 on

the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, Chinese shadow puppetry as nominated by China was inscribed in the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*. The item submitted as “Chinese Shadow Puppetry” consisted of 27 state-level units of shadow theatre, representing regional styles in China’s different provinces. So Huanxian Daoqing was cited as one of 27 forms of shadow theatre, rather than as standing on its own. In fact, it was nominated as an item on its own to the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* in 2009 and to the *Register of Best Safeguarding Practices* in 2011, and was officially registered (with registration number 00626). Unfortunately, these two applications were not successful.

In China, all folk arts must be listed as national intangible cultural heritage before an application can be made for them to the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*. Yet before they can be listed as national intangible cultural heritage, they must be listed as provincial intangible cultural heritage; and before that they must be listed as city-level intangible cultural heritage. This is the so-called graded protection system (*fen ji bao hu zhi du* 分級保護制度). *The National Intangible Cultural Heritage List* is approved and promulgated by the State Council, while *Provincial-level, City-level and County-level Intangible Cultural Heritage Lists* are approved and promulgated by governments at the respective levels. The whole nomination process involves four stages:

Stage One. Citizens, enterprises, institutions or social organizations may apply to the cultural administrative department in the administrative region to which they belong, and then the nomination is delivered to the department at a higher level, as suggested in Article 20 of the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Law*:

Citizens, legal persons or other organizations that have items of intangible

cultural heritage with significant historical, literary, artistic or scientific value have the right to apply for nomination of the heritage to the National Intangible Cultural Heritage List. (SCNPC, 2011)

Stage Two. Provincial cultural administrative departments consolidate and select representative examples of heritage, and after they have been approved by the relevant government body, apply to the Office of the Interministerial Joint Meeting.

Stage Three. The National Cultural Administrative Bureau and experts in related fields assess the nominated examples of heritage, provide professional advice and make a recommendation list. The evaluation criteria are as follows: the ability to demonstrate China's outstanding cultural creativity; being rooted in community cultural traditions, passed down from generation to generation and with distinctive local characteristics; the ability to promote Chinese cultural identity, national unity, social cohesion and stability; the ability to illustrate excellent traditional crafts and skills; carrying the unique value of having witnessed living Chinese culture; playing an important role in preserving heritage that may be endangered due to social change or a lack of protective measures. Nomination projects or items must meet these criteria, and a practical ten-year protection plan must be proposed as well.

Stage Four. The nomination list is reported to the State Council for approval and promulgation after being notified to the public for a certain period of time.

What can be seen in this approval process is that, in China, the item that is to be nominated to the UNESCO is definitely from the *National Intangible Cultural Heritage Representative List*. The application process follows the same pattern as the graded protection system: central government accepts the nomination from the provincial government; the provincial government accepts this from the city-level

government; and city-level accepts it from county-level.

Though it is a very poor county, Huanxian County started the nomination of Daoqing as early as in 2003, when Daoqing was approved by the Ministry of Culture to be listed in the first batch of Chinese folk culture protection projects (*zhongguo minjian wenhua baohu gongcheng* 中國民族民間文化保護工程)²⁹. In August 2003, the Huanxian County Government issued the *Pilot Protection Plan for Huanxian Daoqing* (*zhong guo min zu min jian wen hua bao hu gong cheng huanxian daoqing pi ying bao hu shi dian fang an* 中國民族民間文化保護工程環縣道情皮影保護試點方案), which listed the specific steps for the protection of Daoqing under a pilot program in three phases from 2004 to 2020:

Phase I (2004-2008): Pilot protection and saving the heritage from being endangered. Specific protection activities include: making a protection plan based on a comprehensive investigation of Daoqing; establishing a database of and a research institute for Daoqing; organizing various activities related to shadow puppetry; establishing Daoqing Art School; identifying a batch of Daoqing artists; and applying to be included in the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*.

Phase II (2009-2013): Comprehensive protection with major aspects of

29 In June 2003, China's Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Finance launched the "Chinese Folk Culture Protection Project" together with the State Ethnic Affairs Commission and the China Literary Federation, to prepare for developing the national list on intangible cultural heritage. The two documents -- the *Notice on the Implementation of Chinese Folk Culture Protection Project* (*guanyu shishi zhongguo minjian wenhua baohu gongcheng de tongzhi* 關於實施中國民族民間文化保護工程的通知) and the *Implementation Plan for Chinese Folk Culture Protection Project* (*zhongguo minzu minjian wenhua baohu gongcheng shishi fangan* 中國民族民間文化保護工程實施方案) -- stated that the main target of the protection project was to take ethnic and folk culture which is of great historical, cultural and scientific value, and which is endangered, into effective protection by 2020, to establish an initial and relatively complete Chinese folk culture protection system and mechanisms, to raise people's awareness of the safeguarding of folk arts and to make such protection scientific, standardized, accessible via the internet and in conformity with the law. In addition, the protection project also identified the objects of protection, ways of protection and the processes of implementation.

protection targeted. Main activities include establishing the Daoqing Protection Fund and incentive fund, standardizing shadow puppet performance troupes, developing personnel in shadow-puppet carving and establishing the Daoqing protection mechanism.

Phase III (2014-2020): This is the final phase, in which the mechanism is to be completed and improved on. Safeguarding measures are to be further improved and tourism, performance, product development and other industries are to be extensively developed. Daoqing is to be established on an industrialized basis, so that it can be developed efficiently.

This protection project contributed to preparing the nomination of Daoqing to the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*. Extensive inventories, the implementation of protective measures and the identification of “inheritors” or custodians were all completed in the first phase. Although the application in 2008 did not succeed as expected, it provided experience for the application thereafter. Thus the protection project was an important link in the nomination of Daoqing.

The State Council’s *Notice on Releasing the First Batch of National Intangible Cultural Heritage* in May, 2006, identified Huanxian Daoqing as one of the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage. This was one step forward in nominating Daoqing for the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*.

As soon as Daoqing had been identified as a national intangible heritage, the Huanxian County Government immediately launched an application for Daoqing to be included in the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*.

In 2009, with the recommendation of China's Ministry of Culture and China Shadow Puppet Art Society (*zhongguo muou piying yishu xuehui* 中國木偶皮影藝術學會), Huanxian County Government nominated Daoqing to the UNESCO, but this failed. In 2011, the Huanxian County Government once again sent the nomination documents and film to China's Ministry of Culture, China Shadow Puppet Art Society and the Outreach Bureau (*wai lian ju* 外聯局). This time Daoqing was inscribed, along with 26 other kinds of shadow puppetry, to the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*; it has also separately applied to the *UNESCO Best Practices List*.

Cecil Duvelle, Chief of the Intangible Heritage Section of the UNESCO, replied to Mr Shijun Liang, Director of the Department of Culture of Gansu Social Culture Division, as follows:

I am pleased to acknowledge receipt of the proposal submitted by China to be selected and promoted as best reflecting the principles and objectives of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Your proposal entitled 'Integrative safeguarding project of Huanxian Daoqing puppet shadow drama' has been registered under the number 00626. Please refer to this registration number in any future correspondence concerning this request.

In accordance with Paragraph 54 of the Operational Directives adopted by the General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention at its third session (Paris, France, 22 to 24 June 2010), the Secretariat will contact you as soon as possible and in any case before 30 June 2011, in the event of missing information.

Complete files will be transmitted for examination to the Consultative Body established by the Intergovernmental Committee for this purpose. Its recommendations will be transmitted to the Committee, which will decide whether or not to select the proposal for the Register of Best Practice during its seventh session to be held in autumn 2012. (C. Duvelle, letter, April 7, 2011)
(Appendix C)

In 2011, the sixth Intergovernmental Committee meeting approved the nomination of shadow puppetry, which included Huanxian Daoqing shadow puppet drama, to the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*. However, the proposal for the Register of Best Practice was not approved.

a. Costly Safeguarding Measures for Daoqing

Whether a nomination is submitted to China's national lists or to the UNESCO lists, it must be accompanied by safeguarding measures, which is the key to a successful proposal. In the fourth chapter of Huanxian Government's proposal to China's *National Intangible Cultural Heritage List*, a detailed description of safeguarding measures is given, including the following two components: safeguarding measures that have been taken and the safeguarding plan for the future.³⁰

The following 16 protective measures had already been taken:

1. In 1977, the Huanxian County Cultural Center made 20 tape recordings of Daoqing.

³⁰ The analysis of the safeguarding measures in this section is based on the application files for the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* in 2006, which requires that information on the following three aspects must be clarified. The first is basic information on the application item, including its name, history, current status, value and how endangered it is; detailed argument on the safeguarding plans, including the objectives, measures, steps, management mechanisms; experts' argumentation and the examination and approval of provincial department for cultural affairs. Secondly, a letter of authority and certificate of authority from the local government must be attached. Thirdly, other materials supporting the application, including the policies and regulations of the Huanxian County Government on the safeguarding of Daoqing shadow theatre, and some pictures of Daoqing, should be provided.

From 1980 to 1982, it collected over 60 theatrical pieces, edited and produced a total of ten albums, containing 200 scripts, and published one book entitled *Daoqing Music*.

2. In 1986, the Huanxian Museum collected over 2000 pieces of local shadow puppets from the Qing Dynasty, some of which were exhibited in the museum.

3. In 2002, Huanxian County held the first China Huanxian Shadow Puppet Art Festival and participated in the first National Intangible Heritage Education Symposium for Colleges and Universities.

4. In 2002, the Daoqing Artists Association, with 150 members, was established.

5. In October 2003, Daoqing was identified by the Ministry of Culture as one of the ten pilot projects for the safeguarding of national folk culture.

6. In 2003, the management team for the protection of the Daoqing heritage was established. In March 2005, a Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre Protection Center was established, to transmit Daoqing as a heritage as well as to protect and study Daoqing.

7. In September 2004, Daoqing was selected as the first Gansu provincial pilot project for the safeguarding of national folk culture.

8. In 2004, an inventory of Daoqing was initiated. 19 towns, 42 villages, 76 villager groups and more than 410 farmers were included. 47 performance troupes, 285 artists, ten insiders with extensive knowledge of Daoqing and 40 shadow-puppet producing artists were interviewed. The results may be described as delightful: altogether there were 16,120 completed forms and reports, 16,726 pictures, 9,460-minute video records, 2,267 registered screenplays, 115 copied scripts, 3,950 minutes in total of interviews in audio recordings and 9,604 minutes in total of music recorded on mini discs (MD).

9. The texts for books such as the *Distribution Map of Troupes*, a *List of Troupe Performers*, *An Album of Daoqing Music* and *An Album of Daoqing Shadow Puppets* were completed. Ten drama scripts were compiled. A digital management system was

established to facilitate searching for information on Daoqing.

10. On July 1, 2005, the Huanxian County Government issued the *Interim Provisions for the Safeguarding and Inheritance of Huanxian Daoqing Theatre*.

11. Senior artists who had made outstanding contributions to the heritage of Daoqing and spent their lifetimes performing Daoqing or producing shadow puppets were subsidized, rewarded and named.

12. In July 2005, local teaching materials such as *The Appreciation of Daoqing Music* and *The Appreciation of the Handicraft of Shadow Puppetry* were compiled and sent to primary and middle school classes.

13. From 1977 to 2002, Daoqing troupes were organized to perform five times.

14. On July 24, 2005, the Northwest Ethnic and Folk Intangible Heritage Protection Symposium was held. On the same day, the Huanxian Daoqing Research Base was established in the Folklore School of the Northwest University for Nationalities.

15. Daoqing took part four times in China's Qingyang Xiangbao Folk Culture Festival, where exhibitions and exchange activities on Daoqing were organized.

16. A training course in shadow puppet-producing was organized by the Department of Cultural Affairs and 50 craftsmen were trained as the first batch.

The protection plan for the future is the most important part of the nomination file, as it determines whether the nomination will be successful or not. A detailed, scientific and rigorous safeguarding plan is of the utmost importance for both the safeguarding and the development of shadow theatre. In Huanxian County Government's ten-year protection plan, there are eight important aspects.

1. Inventories on Daoqing (2004 - June 2005). An Inventories Office has been established, a Field Inventories Handbook compiled and equipment purchased. After one and a half years, the inventories have been completed, and a digital database has been established to facilitate searching for information on Daoqing.

2. Development protection policies. The *Interim Provisions for the Safeguarding and Inheritance of Huanxian Daoqing* and its *Implementation Rules* have been issued and are being implemented steadily.
3. Personnel protection. Daoqing custodians who are over 60 years old are provided with a living allowance.
4. Cultivation of custodians. Custodians or “inheritors” are being cultivated through professional training in vocational schools and teaching in primary and middle school classes, as well as the traditional methods of passing down through apprenticeship.
5. Research work. A Daoqing Research Institution has been founded to organize regular seminars, to release publications, and to compile and publish information-based works like the *Annal of the Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre*.
6. Exhibitions and activities. The China Huanxian Shadow Puppet Art Festival will continue to be held regularly; a Daoqing Shadow Theatre Museum has been founded to exhibit Daoqing shadow puppets; performances around Huanxian are being organized every two years; a Daoqing troupe has been established to perform outside Gansu province and overseas.
7. Cultivation of professional custodians and researchers with the help of universities.
8. Development of Daoqing-related cultural industries to promote the protection and use of the heritage.

In addition to these eight points of implementation, the Huanxian County Government specified in the nomination files the annual work schedule and expected outcomes from 2006 to 2010. During these five years, the most important tasks would include: a comprehensive survey of inventories on Daoqing; identifying inheritors or custodians; applying to the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*; and setting up a Shadow Theatre Development Company to promote the development of related cultural industries.

These plans for safeguarding would be implemented by heritage protection agencies. As the Huanxian County Government explained, this included: firstly, establishing and improving the leadership at all levels of government departments; secondly, establishing and improving legal protection, namely, the *Interim Provisions for the Safeguarding and Inheritance of Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Puppetry and the Implementation Rules*; thirdly, establishing a mechanism for the artists to pass down the heritage, and the cultivation of “inheritors” by universities and the whole society; fourthly, paying equal attention to the protection and use of Daoqing, so that these two aspects are complementary. These four measures are consistent with China’s principles on intangible heritage, i.e., “government-led, community-involved and combining forces while each has clear responsibilities” (COSC, 2005) Of course, the Chinese government plays the leading role in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.

In the last part of the nomination file, Huanxian’s Department of Cultural Affairs furnishes a budget for the implementation of these plans. The budget covers the equipment for field surveys, subsidies for the Daoqing artists, the establishment of a website on Daoqing shadow puppetry, the collection of old Daoqing shadow puppets from the Ming and Qing Dynasties, publishing the *Annal of the Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre*, the establishment of a digital database, the living allowance of custodians, the costs of the building where the Daoqing Shadow Theatre Museum is to be located, the operation of 30 local Daoqing performance troupes, and academic publications. A total of 9,327,000 yuan was required for the five-year plan.

The above is a summary of the protection plans already implemented, as well as future protection plans. From 2003 to 2010, two themes kept recurring in the nomination files, “the nomination to the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*” and “the development of Huanxian Daoqing cultural

industries”. These two seemingly different themes are in fact interconnected in a profound way.

5.1.3 Relationship between Economic Interests and Authority in the Nomination

What lies behind Daoqing’s nomination is an alliance between cultural, economic and political power. In order to make a successful nomination, the Huanxian County Government needed to invest a huge sum -- ten million yuan to be precise, equal to one tenth of the total annual revenue of the Huanxian County Government in 2010 (Compilation Committee of Yearbook of Qingyang, 2011). That was an enormous figure for the Huanxian Government, one of the poorest counties in China. Nevertheless, the Huanxian County Government spared no effort, hoping that Daoqing could be inscribed in China’s *National Intangible Cultural Heritage*, and eventually in the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*.

So how was the ten-million-yuan budget allocated? A study of the nomination files yields the following details: 60,000 yuan was given to 60 Daoqing heritors as a living allowance, 1,000 yuan per person per year; 500,000 yuan was invested in 2002 to hold the first China Huanxian Shadow Theatre Art Festival; 800,000 yuan was allocated for the purchase of equipment, photography, video recording, compiling librettos, and publications like *The Appreciation of Daoqing Music* and *The Appreciation of the Handicraft of Shadow Puppetry*; 80,000 yuan was set aside for the Northwest Ethnic and Folk Intangible Heritage Protection Symposium on July 24, 2005; 12 million yuan was spent on building the Daoqing Shadow Theatre Museum in 2005.

One can see that the smallest amount of money was invested in subsidizing senior practitioners and cultivating young practitioners who are custodians of the art,

while the largest portion of the funding was reserved for the purchase of equipment, the establishment of the museum and the organization of cultural festivals, the latter about 200 times more than the former. So why were the funds allocated in this way? Why was there such a big difference between the allowances for shadow puppetry heritors and financial support for setting up facilities?

Let us take the Daoqing Shadow Theatre Museum as an example. The museum was completed in September 2006, with 12 million yuan having been invested in it.³¹ This writer visited the museum during fieldwork research in 2009 and 2012. The museum shares a five-story building with the Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre Protection Center, the Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Center, rather than being located in its own building. The museum occupies the third and fourth floors and is guarded by government security at the building entrance. There is no information for visitors such as opening hours, ticket prices, or any brochures in the building. The museum is not opened regularly. The writer entered the museum after being introduced to the staff by the Huanxian County Government, and the staff had to unlock the museum. During these three visits, this author did not see a single local person visiting the museum, except some high officials and soldiers from the Lanzhou Military Base who had been invited to visit the museum by the Huanxian County Government.

One question comes to mind. Why does a museum which has involved such a huge investment come to have such poor accessibility and publicity? The answer is

31 In the museum there are exhibition rooms and storage rooms. The two exhibition rooms, for shadow puppets of the Ming and Qing Dynasties and for other aspects of heritage, cover an area of 710m², while the storage rooms cover 136m². More than 500 shadow puppets collected from different parts of China are exhibited here, most of them representative of the shadow puppets of the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Apart from the exhibition on shadow puppets, the visitor can appreciate materials and pictures about Daoqing music, the folklore surrounding shadow puppetry, the repertoire, daily routines in the art form and the process of making a shadow puppet. The museum is affiliated to the Department of Cultural Affairs of Huanxian County. Seven employees are working in the museum at present -- one curator, one deputy curator, two workers and three cadres.

simple: building museums and organizing cultural festivals serve as performance indicators for the local government and help to increase its revenue, while subsidizing and cultivating the practitioners of Daoqing as its inheritors cannot. To a poor county that receives annual fiscal revenue of only 180 million yuan, a 12-million-yuan project is a mega project, which could increase local employment, promote the construction industry temporarily and increase Huanxian County's GDP during the three years when the museum was being constructed.

This not only boosted the performance of the Huanxian Government, but also enabled the Huanxian County Government to ask for more budget funds from the Qingyang City in the year that followed. So it was easy for the Huanxian County Government to apply for a large sum of money from the Gansu Provincial Development and Reform Commission and to borrow a large sum from the provincial bank.

In other words, Daoqing's nomination has become a political and economic symbol – it serves to bring greater political and economic benefits to the Huanxian Government. In the *Work Report of the Huanxian County Department of Cultural Affairs of 2009*, the head of the Huanxian County Department of Cultural Affairs wrote that:

The nomination [of Daoqing to the World Intangible Heritage List] is not only conducive to the safeguarding of traditional culture, but also helpful in developing the county's economy and tourism. The purpose of the nomination should not be limited to safeguarding culture, because another important objective is to drive economic development (HCDCA, 2009a).

These words show how eager the government is to promote local economic

development. On the one hand, the Huanxian County Government hopes to make Daoqing the cultural symbol and branding of Huanxian County, so as to attract investments; on the other hand, it hopes that Daoqing itself can be developed as a cultural industry to drive the county's economy. In his opening speech to the 2006 Experience Exchange Symposium for Pilot Projects in the Protection of National Intangible Cultural Heritage, the former County Party Secretary, Zhang Zhiqian, stated that:

*Daoqing shadow theatre was accepted as one of the first batch of National Intangible Cultural Heritage projects. Daoqing is a shining business card and an investment platform. Our goal is to promote Huanxian County's economic development with our special characteristics -- which are Daoqing and the culture related to Daoqing.*³²

The Huanxian County Government is not alone. Typically, China's local governments all consider their own nomination to the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* as a political and economic task – as a trademark, a military order or a guarantee of development. A successful nomination is cultural capital that can be turned into economic capital and a source of greater power. Provincial governments like to receive as many nominations as possible from lower-level governments, because only with their agreement and support can a “cultural capital” be lifted to the national level.

In other words, the more project applications are presented to the provincial governments, the more projects can enter the national heritage list. China's provinces are in competition for power or authority. The cultural sector has a similar social

32 Zhang Zhiqian, male, Han Ethnicity, born in September 1960 in Gansu Province, Bachelor Degree of the Chinese Major at Northwest Normal University; began to work in January 1977 and held the Directorship of the Party Committee of Huanxian County.

hierarchical structure to other areas, so culture has never been isolated from issues of social dominance and power. In China, the nomination of tangible and intangible heritage is always linked to such issues. Daoqing is no exception.

5.2 Safeguarding Daoqing for the Goal of Economic Development

During the Cultural Revolution, due to the reforms and the repression of Daoqing by political force, there were no measures for safeguarding Daoqing. In the early period of Economic Reform, the official attitude towards the social status of Daoqing was still tentative, such that it was still left on the margins, along with other aspects of the traditional cultural heritage and feudal residues of the “Four Olds”, so measures for safeguarding it were still limited. In the 21st century, as the waves of fervor in nominating intangible heritage swept across China, the government came up with many relevant policies urging the protection of local intangible heritage by local government.

Whether by its subjective will, or under the pressure of policies from higher levels, the Huanxian County Government has come up with some policies for safeguarding measures and has also implemented them. This section will discuss the actions of the government, the reactions of the Huanxian community, and the complex relationship between such safeguarding policies and economic benefits, as part of the process of implementation of these safeguarding policies. The section is divided into three parts, which serve to discuss and analyze the survey on Daoqing, its performance and its transmission.

5.2.1 Making an Inventory of Daoqing and Absence of Community Participation

Inventories are the basis for safeguarding intangible heritage. The question of whether an inventory is generally scientific and accurate can have a direct impact on

the safeguarding work that follows. The Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention considers inventories as integral to the safeguarding of intangible heritage. One of the first and clearest obligations of the states that ratified the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention is to develop and implement inventories.

According to Article 11 of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, “each State Party is required to take the necessary measures to ensure the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage present in its territory and to include communities, groups and relevant NGOs in the identification and definition of elements of that intangible cultural heritage”. According to Article 11 of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, “to ensure identification with a view to safeguarding, each State Party shall draw up, in a manner geared to its own situation, one or more inventories of the intangible cultural heritage present in its territory. These inventories shall be regularly updated.” (UNESCO, 2003)

The inventories include the categories of heritage, their numbers and distribution, their custodianship and the environment in which the tangible heritage or intangible heritage is situated. Whether it be a specific examination of a certain category of cultural heritage in a certain area, or a nationwide inventory, files must be kept in the form of literary, audio and video records, and some important information and objects must be collected or acquired. This requires strong financial and personnel support. The Government has the unique advantage of being able to organize relevant institutions and organizations and to mobilize the community, and the power of certain individuals with the support of public finance, to carry out the work of drawing up these inventories. Although research organizations, small groups or individuals may be capable of conducting inventories, they do not have the government’s advantages of funds and executive power.

However, the government's inventories must be supplemented with folk organizations' and individuals' efforts, so that they are extensive in scale and multi-faceted in perspective. Inventories cannot be made without the support of "inheritors", "inheriting groups" and other social groups as stakeholders.

Since 1949, when the People's Republic of China was founded, nationwide inventory exercises on the cultural heritage have been conducted three times. The first time was in early 1956, the second from 1981 to 1985, and the third from 2007 to 2011. But the first two inventories were mainly on ancient buildings or ancient architectural relics, which are tangible heritage. It was after 2003, when China signed the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, that China -- to fulfill its duties and obligations as a States Party -- began to conduct nationwide inventories on intangible cultural heritage. In its *Opinions on Strengthening the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage*, the State Council wrote that:

Inventories on intangible cultural heritage must be seriously carried out as a basic task under unified deployment. Literary, audio and video records as well as digital media should all be utilized to record intangible heritage in an authentic, systematic and comprehensive way. Subsequently, categorized files and a database should be established. (GOSC, 2005)

According to the archives, official inventories involving Daoqing were conducted twice. The first was an exclusive inventory on Daoqing in 2003. The other was from January to June 2009, when the Huanxian County Government conducted an overall inventory on the whole county's intangible heritage, which included Daoqing. And since shadow puppet performance and production had already been surveyed in the 2003 nationwide inventory, the Huanxian Government's inventory in 2009 did not include field research. These two inventories were conducted according

to the *Notice on Conducting Nationwide Inventories on Intangible Heritage* (*guan yu zai quan guo kai zhan fei yip u cha gong zuo* 關於在全國開展非物質文化遺產普查工作) which was issued in June 2005 by the Ministry of Culture.

In this section of the thesis, the first inventory will be reviewed through a study of the file documents, as well as interviews with shadow puppet troupes. The analysis will revolve around how the government and the local people collaborated with each other and how the inventory impacted on subsequent nomination and safeguarding measures.

The main contents of the first inventory recorded in the file documents, by the Huanxian County Department of Cultural Affairs, the Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre Protection Center and the Daoqing Shadow Theatre Museum, will be summarized in the following segments.

General Information:

The inventory of Daoqing, begun in January 2004 and completed in December 2005, was conducted by the Huanxian County Department of Cultural Affairs with the collaboration of the Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre Protection Center, the Daoqing Shadow Theatre Museum, Daoqing Shadow Theatre Association, Daoqing troupes and artists. It was divided into three phases: the preparation phase, the implementation phase and the summary phase:

Phase I: Preparation (November to December 2003)

An inventory team was set up to organize and coordinate all the inventory-related departments and personnel, to develop an inventory plan and apply for the necessary equipment and funds. The Huanxian County Government, despite its poor financial resources, allocated 100,000 yuan in 2004 for the purchase of

equipment, training personnel and field surveys, and 150,000 yuan annually in the following years, to ensure the smooth operation of the inventories.

The work done by the inventory team included: listening to the opinions of the experts from the research institutes; working out *the Daoqing Inventory Plan* (*daoqing pi ying tian ye pu cha fang an* 道情皮影田野普查方案) and the *Inventory Handbook* (*pu cha shou ce* 普查手冊) which include plans, outlines and a variety of statistics and files; sorting out the existing materials of Huanxian's Department of Cultural Affairs, the Protection Center and the Museum; issuing notices to towns and villages for more support and participation from the cultural centers, performance troupes and artists. Before each inventory exercise, the Huanxian County Government put in a lot of effort publicizing their aims, through meetings, television, lectures, newspapers and slogan boards on the roadside or above the road.

It also called for meetings to be attended by inventory personnel, the official leaders in each town, public servants in cultural departments and artists, in order to mobilize them and clarify their tasks, so that work on the inventories could be carried out smoothly.

Phase II: Implementation (January to December 2004)

This phase, in which the actual work of consolidating the inventory was carried out, consisted of two sub-phases, the training phase and the implementation phase. Training was first conducted among the inventory staff. The archives show that great attention was given to training personnel before the inventory in 2004: a professor from Northwest Normal University and professionals from the television station were hired to give training sessions about Daoqing and about operating the equipment; four trial inventories were conducted among the selected Daoqing troupes, to explore the best procedures and methods for the actual inventory to follow. The

trial inventories brought to light some problems and difficulties that had not been anticipated, like transport, accommodation, working hours, the division of personnel and compensation to the artists for their time.

In the training phase, working personnel also learned from the experience of Xiangshan County (象山縣) in Zhejiang Province and Yang County (洋縣) in Shaanxi Province (陝西省). Furthermore, they exchanged ideas and opinions every week to improve their operational capability. Training sessions were conducted in the cultural centers at town level, so that the implementation of the inventory could be guaranteed.

The training took two months, so the actual inventory began in March 2003, in 23 towns. The inventory team was divided into three sub-groups: the music group, the folk customs group and the repertoire group.

The music group was responsible for:

- Filling in the registration forms of the performance troupes for overall information on their composition, activities and heritage;
- Interviewing individuals in the troupes on their lives and their masters, or *shifu* in Chinese, who had taught them the art;
- Recording performances via video and audio and photo-taking; listing the instruments of the performance troupes, as attached information for their registration;

The folk customs group was responsible for:

- Registering the Daoqing shadow puppet makers, the performance troupes and the material and shadow puppets belonging to collectors;
- Making video and picture recordings of the Daoqing shadow puppets; identifying their date of origin, quality, name and function;

- Video-recording the whole process of making Daoqing shadow puppets -- from choosing the raw materials down to the final touches on the shadow puppets;
- Investigating folk activities and recording them in the form of videos, audio recordings and photographs.

The repertoire group was responsible for:

- Filling in forms on the script writers and custodians, as well as on the scripts themselves;
- Cataloguing all the scripts, making copies and taking photographs of them;
- Collecting valuable handwritten copies of scripts;
- Assisting the other two groups in recording and taking photographs;
- Writing diaries on the inventory work.

The efforts of these three groups were all in accordance with the Implementation Plan on the Pilot Projects of Daoqing Shadow Puppetry, the Field Survey Plan on Daoqing and the Inventory Handbook.

Phase III: Summary (January to December 2005)

In this phase of final consolidation, the materials collected by the inventory team were categorized, filed and published. Based on the materials, an information database was established, and a distribution map of over 48 troupes, the *Daoqing Performers' Transmission Lineage Chart* and the *Album of Drawings of the Daoqing Shadow Puppets* were completed. Books about Daoqing such as the *Repertoire of Huanxian Knife Blade Shadow Puppet*, the *Annal of the Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre*, the *History of Huanxian Daoqing*, the *Musical Art of Huanxian Daoqing* and the *Carving Art of Huanxian Daoqing* were printed and published. Among these, the most important achievement is the *Annal of the Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre*,

the *History of Huanxian Daoqing*, in which the statement is made that Daoqing originated from the Chinese Song and Yuan Dynasties.

a. Official Files vs. Community's Reactions

According to the files archived in the Daoqing Shadow Theatre Museum, the “fieldwork survey of Daoqing” in 2004 is summarized as follows:

A week before each inventory exercise, the inventory team would request the Daoqing troupes to gather at the home of their troupe leader. (Those troupe members who could not attend would be interviewed at some other time.) The scheduled inventory work a week later included the following nine steps:

Step 1: The head of the inventory team would introduce his or her team members to the artists and explain the objectives, contents and procedures of the inventory. Then the interviews, the cave dwellings (*yaodong* 窯洞) where the troupe leader resided, the courtyard and its surrounding environment were video recorded and photographed.

Step 2: The troupe leader would present the performance scripts and troupe members, and fill in forms provided by the inventory team. Later on, the troupe members themselves would be registered by the Music Group of the inventory team according to the inventory outline.

Step 3: A representative repertoire (or an act or excerpt of a play, called *zhe zi xi* 折子戲 in Chinese), as decided by the Music Group of the inventory team and the performance troupe, would be performed and recorded by the cameraman and photographer. The performance of individual artists on stage, their preparation backstage, the practice segments backstage, as well as the stage performance and

ceremonies on special occasions would all be recorded.

Step 4: The Music Group would investigate the music used by troupes, such as *qupai* (曲牌)³³, *banlu* (板路)³⁴ and percussion. Simultaneously they conducted an investigation of *qupai* and *banlu* for string tunes, on *qupai* for *suona* (唢呐)³⁵ and percussion. This step also included how the performers get on and off the stage, their speaking, their poetry recital, their actions and movements, and the sets. Part of such an investigation involved making audio and video recordings.

Step 5: The troupe leader would provide all their Daoqing shadow puppets for sequential photographing and cataloguing, in accordance with the inventory outline and other requirements.

Step 6: The troupe leader would provide all the instruments for sequential photographing and cataloguing.

Step 7: A seminar would be held after the performance, attended by the inventory team and the troupe, to gather information on the troupe, the head of the troupe, the performers, repertoire and related folk customs.

Step 8: The head of the inventory team would examine whether the inventory team had completed all the tasks set and ask the team members to fix any problems or improve the investigation if they had not done so. After that, photos would be taken of the individual performers and the whole troupe.

Step 9: When all the steps above had been completed, the head of the inventory team

33 Qupai refers to fixed melodies for performers to sing with changeable lyrics.

34 Banlu is a way of singing in Chinese opera.

35 Suona is a woodwind instrument.

would fill in the Inventory Log and each team member would fill in the Work Log. The personnel responsible for accommodation would settle the expenses of the inventory team and pay the subsidies to performers for their time and support.

The inventory procedures could be adjusted by the head of the inventory team according to specific circumstances.

For the purpose of the thesis, this researcher interviewed a senior Daoqing performer, Master Shi, who has been a famous performer in Huanxian and who was a major interviewee in the inventory, regarding the inventory procedures as described in the Daoqing Shadow Theatre Museum archives.

Among all the interviewees, Master Shi had the highest education -- middle school education. Master Shi lives in Beizhuangzu, Gouyuan Village, Bazhu Town, more than 50 km from downtown Huanxian County. His troupe, called Bazhu Hongjin Troupe, consists of five members including him. Master Shi had the habit of writing a diary, so he took out his diary, found the part on the inventory day, and duly shared his memories with the researcher:

On July 21, 2004, Deng Tingbin, the curator of the museum, Dao Jinping, Zhang Yong, Li Feng and Xue Liang came to my home. Huanxian is a small place. People know one another. They know about me. As two of my men were not free on that day, the inventory was postponed to the next day.

On the morning of July 22, they and my men gathered in my house. First of all, Xue Liang told us what they had come for. We did not understand what intangible heritage was; all we could do was to answer their questions. They asked about everything. They asked about every person in my troupe, what

roles they act, what instruments they are good at, when and why and from whom they learned shadow play, and when we performed. I told them we perform at temple fairs, at ceremonies and when people were not busy with farm work. As we talked, someone was recording, and someone was taking notes. The whole day they kept asking and we kept answering. In the evening we performed Li Yan's Conquest of the North Tower (li yan zheng bei ta 李彦征北塔) and they recorded the whole play, even how we set up the stage. They didn't go back to their hotel until past midnight.

The next day, July 23, they came at 8 o'clock again and asked me to take out all the instruments, shadow puppets and the script that I had in my house, for them to take photos. Then they asked me about the names of the shadow puppets, how we use them, when they were made and where I got them from. The script was passed down by my ancestors. They borrowed it for copying and returned it to me on the last day. In the afternoon they again kept asking us questions, like where we got the scripts from, what the stories were and when we performed them. Finally they took photos for my troupe and went back at about 11 pm.

The last day, or July 24, they came in the morning again, as I had a lot of shadow puppets. They continued taking pictures of the shadow puppets. Then they asked me about how to make the musical instruments. They left at about 4 pm after giving us some money for our time and dining in my home.

I know these five people actually. Deng Tingbin is a little younger than me, approaching 60 years old as well. He loved shadow play. He could sing a little and play the suona, but he could not perform. I felt it might be a little tough for him as the inventory would take one year. Li Feng is a young man. I know his parents. He learned a bit of shadow play from me, too.

The inventory lasted three days. They had lunch and dinner in my home but went back to their hotel at night. We were told to tell them whatever we knew and didn't need to mind anything. Since we are familiar with one another, we had a good conversation. I did tell them everything that I knew without being afraid of anything. I could've forgotten many things if they hadn't asked me that time. Some things, I really didn't know. For example, I knew my grandpa taught me, but I didn't know who taught him.

The first day when they asked me to take out my shadow puppets, I hesitated. Later I did take out some puppets that were already familiar to people. I was scared. Some of my shadow puppets originate from the Qing Dynasty. They are precious. Once during the Cultural Revolution the soldiers searched my house for shadow puppets and burned them in the yard; I saved some and hid them when they left. Now it's not a political matter any longer and I don't need to be worried about my life, but such old shadow puppets are worth a lot of money now. Many people bid for them at high prices. For example, one man from Shanxi was willing to pay 5,000 yuan for a single tiger shadow puppet of the Qing Dynasty; I didn't accept. I didn't take them out at first because I was worried that if they (the inventory team) said it belonged to the government and took it away, I couldn't stop them at all. But they kept explaining that it was for applying to the intangible heritage list, that if the nomination was successful I would feel proud, and that since I was a senior performer with very good skills I could apply for the national-level inheritor, which means a possible subsidy, and that even if the government wanted the shadow puppets, they would buy them from me and couldn't take them from me if I was unwilling. So on the third day, I took out all my shadow puppets for them to take pictures, which would be exhibited in the museum. Anyway we were willing to cooperate as long as

they'd pay us and not interrupt our farm work. (Personal interview, March 29, 2012)

At the end, Master Shi added:

What I find a pity is that I don't know the inventory results. I heard that they visited all the troupes of the county. Actually we'd love to know about other troupes and learn from one another's experience. But we have received no feedback from the government. All the pictures they took, we never got a chance to take a look. But anyway, it's the government's work and all we had to do was cooperate. We cannot ask too much. (Personal interview, March 29, 2012)

What Master Shi said basically matched what the files in the museum say. Master Shi gave a positive evaluation of the government's inventory and at the same time felt it a pity that there was no feedback. But since he considered the inventory simply as a government initiative and he was just doing his part to cooperate, he did not show any resentment.

b. Nomination Oriented Inventory and the Absence of the Community of Daoqing

The one year long inventory exercise was conducted among 19 townships, 42 villages, 76 village groups and more than 410 farmers. The information on the Daoqing troupes, performers, shadow puppet makers, music and shadow puppets, relating to more than 50 troupes and 350 performers and insiders, was collated in 16,120 inventory forms and reports. Altogether 15,570 pictures were taken, 147 MD discs and tapes were recorded, 47 plays and excerpts of plays were filmed, and over 120 scripts were collected or copied. Information on missing aspects and new performers was later supplemented after the main inventory exercise.

The inventory exercise was not only carried out because the Chinese government was eager to fulfill its responsibilities and obligations as a State Party of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention which it had just signed in 2004, but also specifically for the government's nomination of Daoqing for the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*. The inventory was initiated by the government and involved the participation of certain sectors of society. This is reflected in various ways: firstly, the inventory team members were from the Department of Cultural Affairs, the Daoqing Shadow Theatre Museum and the Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre Protection Center; secondly, the *Inventory Handbook* was a result of collaboration among the experts from the government and research institutions, or the Daoqing Shadow Play Society; thirdly, the inventory team that visited the village troupes and performers were positive and patient during interaction. Their way of communicating with the performers, their way of asking questions, taking notes and making recordings, and their compensation to the performers were all praised by the Daoqing troupes. In a word, the inventory from 2003 to 2004 was the most successful one.

But there were problems as well. Firstly, no adequate research was conducted and no inventory methodology was formulated before the inventory, due to time limitations. Composed mainly of governmental staff rather than real experts, such as historians, anthropologists and sociologists, the inventory team did the best they could, simply by following the *Inventory Handbook*. Secondly, the inventory team adopted a perspective of propagating government policy, rather than explaining in detail the concept of intangible culture heritage and the measures to safeguard it. The Daoqing performers and puppet makers were not treated as if they played any leading role and public awareness on the protection of Daoqing was not raised. Thirdly, the huge amount of data in the inventory was simply put into a database, rather than being used for any academic research. In the publications following the inventory, the inventory

results were not categorized and no scientific conclusion was drawn on the factors that are endangering Daoqing and how Daoqing may be further transmitted to the next generation. The inventory team could have done that; they had the closest contact with all the performers, who really had opinions and ideas regarding Daoqing. Fourthly, the publications were kept as internal government material rather than being open to access by academic institutions, non-governmental organizations or the public.

In other words, the inventory results were not publicized after the inventory exercise as one might have expected. Many locals know of the inventory, but do not know how it ended and what the results are. They took part in the inventory but they were not informed of the results.

In short, the 2003-2004 inventory exercise was in essence a political mandate from higher-level government, as part of the preparation for applying to be included in the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*. The safeguarding of Daoqing has been tied to the discourse of the government, who conducted an inventory and “reinterpreted” the origin of Daoqing. The real practitioners -- the performers -- were left out, and it is not evident how this art is embedded in the community life of the performers.

5.2.2 Homogenization of Daoqing Performances

Compared with the period of the Cultural Revolution and the early days of the Reform and Opening-Up policy, the 10 years between 2003 and 2013 were a period when Daoqing performances were active in an unprecedented way. Where intangible cultural heritage of the performing arts category is concerned, regular performance is arguably an effective method of safeguarding the heritage, because it

provides opportunities for artists to perform the art form and it inspires and encourages more people to learn and take over the tradition. Daoqing is an integrated art form that includes performances, craft production and folk rituals, and performing is the most direct mode of demonstrating and sustaining it. In short, the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in the domain of performing arts in China is inseparable from it being constantly practiced.

In a series of documents since 2003, the Ministry of Culture has requested that local governments consider performance as a means of heritage protection and actively promote intangible heritage performances. According to Article 19 of the *Interim Measures for the Safeguarding and Management of National Intangible Cultural Heritage*, “the administrative departments at or above county level should encourage and support the publicity and popularization of intangible heritage knowledge and promote its tradition and propagation by means of festivals, exhibitions, training, education and mass media” (MC, 2006).

The Huanxian County Government has reinterpreted the social significance and value of Daoqing to bring it in line with its current economic and social development. The performances of Daoqing find enormous support, for a variety of cultural and economic reasons. On the one hand, the government hopes to attract investment by making Daoqing a cultural symbol and city trademark; on the other hand, it hopes that by taking advantage of being intangible heritage, Daoqing will be able to enter the market as a cultural industry and become a new cultural resource. In a market economy, it is believed that only when a cultural expression enters the market can its vitality be fully activated and its potential value realized.

The question is: Is that the case? Has Daoqing been integrated into the cultural market as the government envisaged? How is it used as a city trademark? In

the fieldwork of 2012, this researcher studied some reports about official and community Daoqing performances in the files of the Department of Cultural Affairs of Qingyang City, Huanxian County, the Cultural Center and the Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre Protection Center, and interviewed some senior Daoqing Masters who had participated in community performances. This made it possible to analyze the delicate relationship between Daoqing and economic development, and how such performances affected the safeguarding and transmission of Daoqing as a heritage, in both positive and negative ways.³⁶

a. Government Performances vs. Commercial Performances

From a study of the annual reports from 2003 to 2013 submitted by the Culture Center of Huanxian County to the Department of Cultural Affairs of Qingyang City, this researcher classified the Daoqing performances, based on where they were performed, into three categories of occasion: government publicity activities, community celebrations and folk ceremonies.

Government publicity activities include county and city level government meetings held in Huanxian County and Qingyang City; cultural festivals, city festivals, folk festivals and art festivals organized by the Qingyang and Huanxian governments; special performances for government departments and township enterprises; advocacy activities for national policies; and government-led overseas visits³⁷. Community celebrations include Chinese traditional festivals, temple fairs and ritual ceremonies.

36 Only official activities are recorded in the government files.

37 The Huanxian County Government has organized performances in China so many times that they cannot all be listed here. The performances overseas include: in Italy in 1987 on the 15th anniversary of China and Italy's establishment of diplomatic relationships; at the International Fair in Caen, France in 2007; at the 29th Puppet and Shadow Puppetry Arts Festival in Austria and the Amsterdam Music Foundation Show in 2007; at the 24th International Music Festival of Holland in 2008; at the international symposium, World Heritage and Cultural Diversity - Challenges for University Education, in Germany in 2008; at the Europalia International Arts Festival in Belgium in 2009; in Switzerland for the 60th anniversary of China and Switzerland's diplomatic relationship; in Cairo at the International Book Fair .

Folk ceremonies include weddings, funerals, childbirths and other such occasions.

According to the nature of their organization, Daoqing performances can also be divided simply into two types: official and communal. Official performances are those organized and monitored by government departments, where the performers, or the artists, are paid directly by the government. The first category mentioned above may be regarded as official performances, since they are engaged in government activities. Communal performances are private or community performances that are for the general public and are not related to the government. The second and third categories mentioned above are communal performances.

The activities organized by the Huanxian County Government have afforded Daoqing troupes many performance opportunities. Their performances can be seen at all kinds of official meetings, cultural festivals, city festivals, folk festivals, art festivals, concerts, for governmental departments and township enterprises, advocacy activities for national policies and government-led overseas exchange occasions. The purpose is very clear -- to promote the image of Huanxian County, to attract investment, or both.

Under such conditions, the repertoire, the way that troupes perform and the length of the performances have been compelled to change. Since the Reform and Opening Up policy in 1978, the performance of some old repertoires, involving kungfu acts or stories about ghosts, have been allowed again; yet some stories associated with feudalism and superstition, such as *Stealing the Immortal Herb* (*dao xian cao* 盜仙草), *The Flooding of Jinshan Temple* (*shui man jin shan* 水漫金山) and *The Tour in Hell* (*you di yu* 遊地獄), were still banned. Since around 2000, with the relaxation of political monitoring over shadow puppetry, the ban on these stories has been lifted, whereas the revolutionary dramas created during the Cultural

Revolution have never been performed again. The repertoires that troupes in Huanxian County have been performing in recent years are mostly kungfu acts and operas about ghosts.

Whereas local folks would select whichever drama they wanted to watch at a temple festival or other communal activity, the government would always choose from a very short list, which is usually restricted to a repertoire of *Luotong's Expedition to the North* (*luo tong sao bei* 羅通掃北), *Monkey King* (*da nao tian kong* 大鬧天空), *The Flooding of Jinshan Temple* (*shui man jin shan* 水漫金山), *Tour in Hell* (*you di yu* 遊地獄), *The Butterfly Lovers* (*liang shan boy u zhu ying tai* 梁山伯和祝英臺) and *The Henpecked Wang Qi*. (*wang qi pa lao po* 王琦怕老婆) These stories are repeatedly performed, no matter which troupe it is.

The performances are also tending to get shorter and shorter. Traditionally, a complete shadow play comprises four or five acts, each of which may also be performed as a piece on its own; this is called *zhe zi xi* (折子戲 excerpt of play). Depending on the length of the story, such an act may be as short as 20 minutes or as long as an hour, so that a complete play lasts two to three hours. But in any government-organized activity or occasion, Daoqing is just the “icing on the cake” for the event. The performance is usually condensed and performed for just 20 minutes or at most an hour. This is not only because some of the stories have to be reconfigured according to proper history which is familiar to the average Chinese, but also because shadow play is not the major part of such government-led activities. For such government events, troupes would skip the overall narrative and only perform the highlights. This is especially so with kungfu plays, where they would be asked to perform only the most lively and attractive kungfu scenes.

In an interview with Master Shi, who is the only *National Intangible*

Heritage Representative Inheritor and who has participated in government-led activities many times and therefore has some authority on the matter,³⁸ he told the researcher:

The good old days are gone! In the old days Daoqing performers were much freer. We could add whatever we wanted as long as we were in the mood because our music ensemble was always able to follow us. We could make the audience laugh, make them cry. But now we can't. Well, we are not allowed to. Every performance is a political task which is entirely determined by the government leaders. We do whatever they tell us to do. If some high-ranking official comes to visit the county or to appreciate our show at some cultural festival, we must rehearse and rehearse till we are sure that our performance is exactly how the government leaders wanted it to be. The length is determined by the government as well. A one-hour play must be performed within a quarter of an hour. Isn't that a joke? So we have to cut the beginning and the end and choose the most exciting part. But sometimes what we think is the best is not what the government leaders consider the best, and these leaders have the final say. Once we went to Belgium. Our task was to perform four plays within one hour. The four plays were Luotong's Expedition to the North, The Flooding of Jianchan Temple, Tour in Hell and The Monkey King. If we were in China, we might have been able to do that -- performing only one section of each play. But our audience were foreigners who did not know the background of our stories!

38 Shi Chenglin has participated in government-organized performances many times: In September 1987, he performed 24 times in Rome, Milan, Venice, Florence and other cities of Italy to celebrate China's and Italy's diplomatic relations. In August 1994, Shi went to Lanzhou city to perform for the Fourth Art Festival of China. In 1995, he took part in the Tourism Art Performance in Guangdong Province and was awarded a prize for "publicizing Chinese culture and promoting the development of tourism". In October 1998, Shi had his singing recorded on audio tape with the help of the Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Center. In 2000, Shi's Troupe was filmed in a documentary on Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre by the International Department of Gansu Provincial Television. In 2002, Shi was awarded the title of "Gansu Shadow Theatre Artist" by the Folk Culture and Art Society of Gansu Province and performed at the closing ceremony of the Huanxian Shadow Puppetry Festival. In 2004, as a representative of folk performers, he took part in an exhibition in Macau on the customs and peoples of mainland China.

How could we make them understand within 15 minutes?! And the government leaders told us that foreigners could not understand shadow play, so we could just show them the exciting parts, and that was it. Young performers nowadays have very few chances to learn other good plays except the few which are repeatedly performed. The officials think that it takes too much time to rehearse other plays and that it's good enough to perform the few familiar ones. We should thank them anyway, because without the chances provided by them, we can barely get a chance to perform. We ourselves are not able to perform abroad -- We can't speak foreign languages for start. So without the government's organizing, we can't make it. At home, young people love TV shows and movies a lot more than shadow plays; when they get married, they would rather have a western wedding ceremony at a big hotel than hire a troupe to perform in their courtyard; we used to have performances in temples as part of the prayers for rain, but these performances have been prohibited since 1949 as they are superstition. So we have very very few performing opportunities. (Personal interview, March 29, 2012)

Master Shi's remarks are a true-to-life description of the performances organized by the government over the past ten years. As with any other traditional opera, some repertoires are phased out and some new ones created in the process of development of the opera, which is the normal and natural phenomenon of the new replacing the old. Just like prior to the establishment of new China in 1949, people in the Huanxian and the Daoqing troupes had to determine which repertoires were to be carried on so as to meet their real-life needs.

However, since Daoqing was selected as an intangible cultural heritage, its performance at the various government-organized activities has been limited to a few plays; which plays and how long they are to be performed is completely decided by

the government, rather than determined by what would meet the performers' and audience's needs. Even the government itself concedes that this is a problem. In the *Report on Huanxian Daoqing's performances overseas*, it is stated:

The incomplete repertoires make it difficult for the audience to place themselves in the play and feel what the performers feel. These repertoires appeal to the European temperament, yet frankly the selected excerpts of plays were just segments without head or tail, not an integrated performance at all.
(HCG, 1999)

Consequently, Daoqing is limited to a certain model, a static model. What is precious about intangible heritage should in fact lie in the versatility and spontaneity of variable performances that reflect the performers' skills and the environment of the sites, not in static performances.

To sum up its views, the government considers the performance of Daoqing as a political task, a chance to enhance its political function, rather than to protect Daoqing as an art form. Thus the performances are quantified, tailored and standardized.

Where communal performances are concerned, Master Jing said:

Our opportunities to perform are getting less and less. In the past we would stage a few plays at festivals, weddings and funerals. Whenever the temple fair came, we would perform for eight to ten days, to a large audience. That was so much fun! But now, people are either busy with work on the farm or with work in the cities, we have no more audience. And performing at temple fairs brings us less money than working in big cities. Wedding ceremonies leave out shadow

play as well because they are now western-style. Some troupes perform only for money, which is an insult to Daoqing. Last year, a troupe was invited to perform at a tourist attraction in other provinces. When they knew they would be paid 400 yuan, they sent just one person with some recorded tapes. This person got there, put the tapes into the recorder and played all by himself. He earned the 400 yuan like that. I'm so ashamed of him. How can such a precious thing passed down by our ancestors be insulted in this way! So shameful! We can't do that! But actually many performers are doing that, because the limited money a troupe makes is even less when it's divided among several performers. Some troupes are even cutting down on performers. We do have commercial performances at tourist attractions and on shopping streets, but that's rare. The biggest problem is that we cannot make enough money from it. If the venue is near, we are paid less; if the venue is far, we may be paid more, but we have to pay for the transportation and accommodation fees. Normally a play needs six performers, but now we have four at most. Four performers can make it, but in poor quality. A young audience don't mind that because they do not understand the essence of Daoqing, but the senior audience do. We'd better not perform in front of them with just four people -- we'll be criticized. (Personal interview, April 5, 2012)

Troupes who perform abroad are often composed of eight or nine performers; Master Jing's explanation of this was unexpected:

Actually they don't need eight people, let alone nine. The extra people have some ties with the government. They want to take the opportunity to go abroad, so the government makes it happen. I have never heard that a play needed that many people. Six is enough. So the three extra people would just hold a musical instrument and pretend to be playing. It is a good thing to go to foreign

countries -- the government covers all the expenses and the performers can enjoy a trip overseas besides giving performances. The very good performers are not necessarily selected, and those who are selected must have some guanxi (關係 or connection) to the government. Nine is simply too many for a performance. God knows how they perform. (Personal interview, April 5, 2012)

b. Performers' Meager Income

Huanxian is short of means of production. Some farm labor is performed with the help of livestock; some work cannot be done by a single family, so collaboration within a village or hired labor is needed. Against such a background, the Daoqing troupes had no support from the government or social welfare. Their performance was all supported by fundraising. In recent years, the income of performers has come from farming at home and working in big cities. Performing Daoqing has hardly ever brought performers enough reward. They just cannot make a living by performing, be it officially or commercially.

The interviewee Master Jing said that:

What the government gives us is very little. We perform because we really love playing Daoqing, we'd like to support the government's work and we are proud that our Daoqing is an intangible heritage. The government gives us 40 or 50 yuan per person for one show. Our farmers put farm work and making money first. If Daoqing was not something inherited from our ancestors, we really would not want to perform for the government -- we lose our time for farming and we don't get enough compensation. Our troupe, altogether six people, went with the government to perform in Switzerland. We got 500 yuan per person for 12 days' performance. We didn't want to go for so little money because we had so much farming to do at that time. But we had to cooperate. We were led by

the Cultural Center. The uniform they gave us, which was just a thin piece of fabric, not very good in appearance, cost more than 2,000 yuan from what we heard. That's too expensive! They are worth no more than 300 yuan in my view. In 2010 one troupe went to Germany with the government to perform Daoqing and the government didn't pay them anything. When they asked the government for money, the government criticized them. I heard that the money for the performers was included in the budget, but the government didn't pay them, which gave us a clear hint that the government retained the money from the higher level body for themselves. (Personal interview, April 5, 2012)

Following the information on their visit to Switzerland given by Master Jing, the author found the government report under the title of *Application for the Fund Needed for the Visit of Huanxian Daoqing Troupe to Switzerland* (*guan yu qing qiu wo xian daoqing pi ying fang wen rui shi suo xu jing fei bao gao* 關於請求解決我縣道情皮影藝術團訪問瑞士所需經費的報告), which explicitly listed the various funds needed abroad. The first part was the payment to performers for rehearsals, travel and performances in Switzerland, which was a total of 1,960 yuan per person instead of the 500 yuan mentioned by Master Jing. The second part was six costumes for the six performers, which was 2,700 yuan. Another part was the purchase of equipment, which was more than 10,000 yuan. The last part, or “other expenses”, included 2,800 yuan for the purchase of tea (HCDCA, 2009). The application report validated Master Jing's words -- the budget that the government spent on costumes and tea was much higher than the reward to the performers.

Master Shi of Shi's Troupe was interviewed on the income from commercial performances within and outside Huanxian. According to him, in the 1980s and 1990s, Shi's Troupe used to perform over 200 times every year, but in recent years, the number of performances has dropped to around 80. The rewards are very low -- about

80 yuan per occasion in the county and 120 yuan outside the county. The entire income of Shi's Troupe is around 6,000 to 7,000 yuan per year. After deducting expenditure by the troupe, the remaining income is shared among the performers according to certain criteria. For example, the leader of the troupe can take 1.3 shares, the puppeteers, the drummer, the four-string instrument (*si xian* 四弦) player and the suona player all take 1.2 shares each, while the erhu player takes 1 share. Doing simple math, one can tell that Master Shi, the leader of Shi's Troupe, has an income of 1,500 to 2,000 yuan per year and other performers have only 1,000 yuan per year. The performers cannot live on such a low income.

The low income and the pressure of life mean the performers can hardly continue performing Daoqing, let alone research this art and make some innovations. Master Shi said:

We are invited to perform outside the county, but the money we are paid is not enough when divided into five parts. People who are good at making shadow puppets make more than we do, because their shadow puppets can be sold as handicrafts. We do not expect to make a living by performing, instead we consider it a pastime and a supplementary income. (Personal interview, March 29, 2012)

c. Daoqing Performance as a City Trademark

The number of Daoqing performances has increased a lot compared with the period of the Cultural Revolution and the early times of the economic reform. Performances can be seen at competitions, traditional festivals, gatherings and other occasions. There are many more government-organized performances or performances at government meetings, cultural festivals and visits abroad, than communal ones or performances at traditional festivals, temple fairs or ceremonies,

and commercial performances in tourist resorts. What is performed and how it is performed is changing as the occasion and the audience change. The government-led performances tend towards a static approach. Such performances are usually chosen from a few limited repertoires and acted on stage without any innovation, after repeated rehearsals, which actually harms or restricts Daoqing shadow theatre to some degree, resulting in a kind of unimaginative reenactment of tradition.

The opportunities for communal performances are also getting less and less, as China has changed from an agricultural society to an industrial one. Even when they are invited to perform commercially in other provinces and cities, troupes have to reduce the number of performers, as the remuneration is minimal. Besides, performances traditionally presented by live artists are sometimes partly replaced by mechanized performances, for example with pre-recorded music.

The government actively organizes Daoqing shadow theatre in China and abroad for two purposes: to make Daoqing a cultural symbol and a city trademark and to use Daoqing culture to attract investments and promote the economic development of Huanxian County. So while it seems that the government is protecting Daoqing as an intangible heritage, in fact what the government does has little to do with protection; instead, what it does is predominantly for local economic development. The Daoqing troupes make very little money from performing and the little money they make has to be divided among the troupe so that everybody can have a share. In short, what they get from performing is too little to live on.

It is fair to say that these performances, whether official or communal, give performers some opportunity to practice the art; yet they are not sustainable as safeguarding measures for Daoqing. What the government ostensibly expects – that Daoqing can be well protected through a combination of Daoqing performances and a

cultural market -- is arguably not happening.

5.2.3 The Neglected Process of Heritage Transmission

“Inheritance” and “inheritors” are the media and the carriers for the survival and development of intangible heritage. The developmental history of intangible heritage is the history of how the custodians ‘inherit’ and pass down that intangible heritage. The custodians are the critical component of intangible heritage. This section will therefore analyze how Daoqing has been passed down, by looking at the case study of a troupe. The government’s policies on how to identify inheritors and safeguarding measures will also be studied and compared with the actual current safeguarding of Daoqing.

a. Identification of Traditional Masters and the Unique Way of Inheritance

As Daoqing is a kind of folk art, the Huanxian community traditionally did not have any fixed criteria on the identification of its Masters; the judgment of who was good at performing, who was good at making shadow puppets, who deserved high prestige and who could be called Master depended on aesthetic judgment and experience. The Masters in a county generally formed a ring. The unique ways in which Daoqing was passed down can be divided into four categories: community inheritance, family inheritance, master-to-apprentice inheritance and social inheritance.

Community inheritance refers here to how people, living in the same area and having a common cultural background and lifestyle, acquire this art through the cultural life and activities in which they all participate. Through a hundred years of participation and development, Daoqing has entered the blood of the villagers. It has become a kind of cultural consciousness. Members of the Huanxian community who

are over the age of 40 can all sing a little. This is the result of community heritage.

Family inheritance means passing the art down among family members. This may happen within the same generation, but more often it is from the senior generation to the younger generations. In his *A Study of the Blood Ties of Chinese Performers* written in the 1940s, the sociologist Pan Guangdan (1941) mentioned that China's performers had a peculiar status -- they were loved, but they were despised. The result of the discrimination against them was that they were segregated from society, both physically and psychologically. Their talents and skills were usually passed down to their children and children's children. This is the traditional inheritance pattern of Chinese folk troupes, and a basic means for Chinese folk artists to pass down their art from generation to generation. The inheritance of Daoqing is no exception -- inheritors must be those who are within the family. Family inheritance was and still is typical.

Master-to-apprentice inheritance, as the name suggests, means that a master teaches his apprentice, or the elderly teach the young how to perform and make shadow puppets. There were special rules for China's master-to-apprentice inheritance. In the case of Daoqing, a formal ceremony for the apprentice to take the master as his teacher, or shifu (師父) was required. In Huanxian, Xie Changchun (解長春) is widely considered as the founder of Daoqing.³⁹ His four disciples became major

39 Xie Changchun was born in 1841 (the 21st year of the Daoguang period of the Qing Dynasty). In 1862 (the first year of the Tongzhi period of the Qing Dynasty), Xie Changchun's families got separated due to the uprising of the Hui People. To make a living after he fled to the north of Shanxi Province, he joined a local theatrical troupe and began to learn how to perform the shadow plays and to sing. He lived in northern Shanxi for over 30 years, during which he improved his skills greatly as he kept meeting all kinds of folk troupes and performers. Then he returned to Huanxian County, where he founded the Xie Troupe to perform Daoqing shadow plays for people in his home town and people in north Shanxi, Inner Mongolia and Ningxia Province. Through constant improvement and innovation, like adopting new ways of singing, his Huanxian-style Daoqing plays gradually matured. After turning 60 years old, he turned his attention to training apprentices. Many young people in Huanxian County and north Shanxi are his apprentices, including Jing Nailiang, Du Minhua, Han Defang and Wei Guocheng, who are considered by the Huanxian people as the "Four Apprentices" of Xie Changchun. Later these four students had their own students: Liang Duochun, Zhao Jianxiang, Xu Yuanzhang and Wei Yuanshou, and so on. Five generations have inherited Daoqing from Xie Changchun, altogether

inheritors. Currently those who are Masters of performance and carving skills in Huanxian County are all disciples of these four disciples. As time went by, family inheritance was also adopted. Some other aspects of Chinese intangible cultural heritage do not need a formal apprentice ceremony, for example, anyone can learn the Green Temple Riddles (*qing lin si cun* 青林寺村)⁴⁰ at any time anywhere, if they are interested.

Social inheritance refers to the way those who are interested learn a certain folk art through participation in festivals, sports events and in many other ways. Daoqing is performed at Huanxian temple fairs, other traditional festivals and all kinds of ceremonies. These performances are gradually mastered by such learners.

b. Inheritance of Shi's Troupe

According to Huanxian's 2004 inventory statistics, there were 48 troupes and 224 artists in existence (CCAHDST, 2006) (Appendix D). These troupes are mostly family-based and geographically-based and each consists of four to six people, that is, the troupes were formed in the traditional way. As the internal structure and way of life of these troupes are substantially the same, the example of Shi's Troupe, which is a typical representative of these troupes, will be studied and analyzed in this section.

Customarily, a troupe is named after the surname of the founder. Shi's Troupe was founded by Shi Zhankui (Shi is the surname), the then head of the troupe, in the 1880s, so it is named "Shi's" (*shi jia ban* 史家班). Currently Shi Chenglin, great-grandson of Shi Zhankui, is the leader of Shi's Troupe. Shi Chenglin is one of

about 300 people. The apprentices and apprentices' troupes are all over the counties of north Qingyang City; even Duan's Troupe and He's Troupe in Luobangyuan, north Shanxi, consider Xie Changchun as their master. In short, Xie Changchun may be honored as the "Originator of Daoqing Shadow Theatre" and the "Founding Father of the Art of Daoqing Shadow Theatre".

40 Riddle (*mi yu* 謎語) is a word game with Chinese characteristics. The Green Temple Village is located in Gaobazhou, Yidu, Yichang City, Hubei Province. Villagers here are very good at making up and guessing riddles. The history of the Green Temple Riddles (*qing lin si mi yu* 青林寺謎語) goes back a few hundred years. On May 20, 2006, it was approved to be one of the first batch for the National Intangible Cultural Heritage List.

the most talented Daoqing performers and the only “Inheritor of the Representatives of National Intangible Heritage” in Huanxian County.

The first inheritor of Shi’s Troupe, the founder, Shi Zhankui (史佔魁), who was born in the fourth year of the Guangxu (光緒) Period of the Qing dynasty (清朝)⁴¹ (1878), learned Daoqing from Master Xie Changchun for a living.

The second inheritor of Shi’s Troupe was the improver and innovator, Shi Xuejie (史學傑), who was born in 1909 as the eighth son of Shi Zhankui; he started to learn from his father at the age of 14 and very quickly learned the performing arts.

The third inheritor of Shi’s Troupe was the disseminator, Shi Chenglin (史呈林), born in 1947, the fourth son of Shi Xuejie, junior high school degree, and he began to learn performing when he was seven years old. He is now the only *Inheritor of the Representatives of National Intangible Heritage (in Performing Category)* of Huanxian County.

Currently, there are five people in Shi’s Troupe. They are families and relatives. Shi’s Troupe is a microcosm of Daoqing troupes. In Shi’s Troupe, the youngest person is 40 years old and the oldest 60. On average, they have junior high school educational level. To be specific, they are:

- Shi Chenglin, head of the troupe, male, born in 1947 in the Shijiagou (史家溝 a valley in which people with the surname “Shi” live), Mubo Town, Huanxian. He is good at maneuvering the shadow puppets and playing instruments like four-string guitar, the drum and the erhu.
- Ma Yanju (马彦举), male, born in 1964 in Fanjiachuan (樊家川| a river by which

41 Reign of Emperor Guangxu, the 11th emperor of the Qing Dynasty. The Guangxu period started in 1875 and ended in 1908.

people with the surname “Fan” live). Having been fond of musical instruments since he was very little, Ma Yanju is adept at playing the four-string guitar and the drum. He started to learn performing from his uncle, Shen Junyue (沈俊月), at 17 and had his debut at 26. He now plays the drum and the four-string guitar in Shi’s Troupe.

- Mayan Xu (马彦旭), male, born in 1969 in Fanjiachuan, first learned the four-string guitar from his uncle, Shen Junyue, at 13, and later learned performing from the older performer, Shi Yulin. He had his debut when he was 23.
- Shi Wenhong (史文红), male, born in 1970 Shijiagou, Mubo Town, nephew of Shi Chenglin, became fond of shadow play when young and learned the four-string guitar and other instruments from his uncle, Shi Chenglin, at 17 and later became a member of Shi’s Troupe at 20.
- Wang Shiyin (王世银), male, born in 1967, learned the four-string guitar from his uncle Wei Tao at 17 and is now a member of Shi’s Troupe.

According to Shi Chenglin⁴², his family has made a living by performing Daoqing since the time of his grandfather, Shi Zhankui, or the Guangxu period. As Xie Changchun’s apprentice, Shi Zhankui had won his Master’s appreciation and praise for having a great voice and learning very hard. Later, when he mastered the performing art, he found he could make a living at it. So he taught three of his eight sons who had talent to perform Daoqing. The three sons were the fourth son, Shi Xuexin, the fifth son, Shi Xueli and the eighth son, Shi Xuejie, namely the father of Shi Chenglin.

Shi Xuejie loved shadow play and was gifted with a great voice. The record in the *Annal of the Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre* says that he sang very clearly, passionately and dramatically, which gave the audience the feeling that the

42 The discussion in this section is all based on the three interviews with Shi Chenglin. (Personal interview, March 29, 2012)

performances were both innovative and traditional, both metrical and variable (CCAHDST, 2006). Normally the singing is done by a single performer without many changes in timbre and tone, but Shi Xuejie is an exception. He can use different tones and pitches to perform different roles, which is highly praised by the locals. Shi Xuejie not only completely inherited his father Shi Zhankui's professional skills, but also traveled to a lot of places and participated in various cultural events and performances, which gave him the opportunity to make contact with many other art forms. Shi Xuejie has taken a lot of trouble to learn from the experience of previous performers, blending in other cultural and artistic elements and making improvements and innovations in line with the changing times. Moreover, he participated in the archival Daoqing music recording in 1977 and sang in the documentary of Daoqing made by the Gansu Provincial Radio Station in the first half of 1979. It is fair to say that Shi Xuejie has made an outstanding contribution to the development and heritage of Daoqing.

Shi Chenglin recalls that "My father (Shi Xuejie) could perform more than 40 plays all by himself. He could still sing the lyrics of over 30 plays without making a mistake before he died at over 80 years old in 1984". (Personal interview, March 29, 2012). Shi Xuejie had been singing for a lifetime since the age of 14, except for the years during the Cultural Revolution when such arts were banned. Two of his disciples, Yang Guangjun and Jing Yangxu, turned out to be outstanding Daoqing performers just like him.

Shi Chenglin, born in 1947, was the fourth child of Shi Xuejie. He had two older sisters, two younger sisters and one older brother. He recalls that he would follow his father whenever and wherever his father went to perform. This gave him the opportunity to see for himself how to control the shadow puppets and play the musical instruments, and how the audience reacted to the play. When he turned seven

years old, his father performed at night and taught him to perform during the day. “In the past we didn’t have a music score, so we were taught by following what our *shifu* did”. (Personal interview, March 29, 2012). Normally the apprentice would learn the instruments first and playing the shadow puppets in the last stage of training. “I was an exception. I learned how to maneuver the shadow puppets first and then play the instruments. Nobody else in Huanxian has learned in this way. I really love shadow theatre”. (Personal interview, March 29, 2012).

Shi Chenglin highlighted in particular his school experience. His father, Shi Xuejie, was not educated, but he did recognize the importance of education. He did not want his son to make the same mistake as he had done of not going to school, so Shi Chenglin was expected to attend Loubao Primary School in Shijiagou (the current Guanying Primary School) when he was 10. Then Shi Xuejie, after being invited to perform by the Gansu Provincial Department of Culture many times, was appointed to work at the Gansu Provincial School of Arts in 1958. Seeing the life in a big city, Shi Xuejie was even more firmly convinced that knowledge can change a person’s fate. He decided to take his son to study in Lanzhou, but Shi Chenglin, who had not even graduated from primary school, became so fond of Daoqing theatre that he was determined to leave school to master shadow puppetry. The father could not change his mind. He began to practice shadow theatre with other people. With his father’s teaching and his own talent and diligence, he became very good at singing and controlling the puppets. His debut was sensational. Shi Chenglin says, “Before I performed in public for the first time, my father was quite worried and watched me in the audience secretly and left quietly when the show was over. When I got home, he told me that he hadn’t expected that I could do it so well. These simple words gave me great confidence and courage”. (Personal interview, March 29, 2012). Since then, his father taught him in a stricter way. Even when his father was in his senior years, he spared no effort to teach him the lyrics line by line. When his father died at the age

of 76, Shi Chenglin had already become a famous Daoqing performer (as famous as his father) in Huanxian County.

Shi Chenglin is also passing on his performing skills to the next generation. According to him, his nephew, Shi Wenhong, has formally honored him as his *shifu*. Despite having had some education, Shi Chenglin cannot read music, so he has to teach his nephew by singing and performing himself. As a National Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritor, he considers himself obliged to teach young people. But he comments sadly that:

Today's young people are not interested in Daoqing anymore. It's OK for them just to watch one or two plays, but very few are willing to learn and work on performing the art. Back in our time, the family would take some gifts as well as their son to the shifu's home to hold a formal ceremony. The apprentice-to-be would koutou, or touch his forehead on the ground, to show respect to the shifu and wait for the shifu to accept him. An oral or written agreement would also be made. When the apprentice had learned all that he could learn, he would work for his shifu's troupe for a few years before he could take part in any other troupe's performance. When he was going to leave the shifu, there was another ceremony with as many rituals as when he was to be accepted by the shifu. But such ceremonies are gone. I have loved shadow puppetry my whole life, from watching other people perform, to learning how to perform myself. Every time I watch Daoqing or look at some shadow puppets, I am so delighted! Today no young person is willing to learn Daoqing, except my nephew Shi Wenhong and some other disciples. But even though they are interested, they can't learn for long. They'll leave Huanxian when they go to university or go to a big city for work. (Personal interview, March 29, 2012).

Shi Chenglin is the only *Representative Inheritor of National Intangible Heritage in the Performing Category of Daoqing Shadow Theatre* in Huanxian and draws a subsidy of 8,000 yuan per year, but he explained that it wasn't he who applied for this, because he had been living in a place over ten kilometers from the county town and had no way of knowing the policy. He himself is not clear about the policy. The nomination and assessment were all conducted by government staff. They simply came to his house and asked him to fill in some kind of form. He has no idea about how they examined and approved it later. He is happy about the additional annual income. Every year when it is time to claim the subsidy, some government staff drive him to the Gansu Provincial Department of Culture in Lanzhou. Without his signature, the subsidy cannot be claimed.

He is also happy about the title of "inheritor". He said:

This is an honor given by our country. I'm proud of that. But I also feel that I don't deserve it as there are so many others in Huanxian practicing shadow puppetry and only I got the title. (Personal interview, March 29, 2012)

When asked whether the sum of money helped with his living expenses and the costs of performing and cultivating disciples, he answered:

Well, it's not too much or too little. Life now is very expensive. Living on this sum of money is impossible. So I still have to do farming, and teach students when I'm not busy farming. I usually buy instruments and shadow puppets to give classes with the money. Anyway it's an honor, and with such a title, I have to take part in government-organized activities regularly. (Personal interview, March 29, 2012)

When his responsibilities and obligations as a national inheritor were mentioned, Shi said that he is not aware of them:

The Huanxian County Government told me to take disciples and attend government-led activities. But the other things, I don't remember now. (Personal interview, March 29, 2012)

Finally, when asked what he had done in recent years to pass down and propagate Daoqing, he answered:

I sang in shadow plays at governmental meetings and performed overseas as a representative of the government. I haven't taken part in the training for young people at schools. Only once I went to Huanxian Primary School and shared my own story about learning shadow theatre. (Personal interview, March 29, 2012)

c. Official Definition and Identification of Daoqing Inheritors

In China, the concept of the “inheritor” of intangible heritage can be taken in both a broad and a narrow sense. In a broad sense, it refers to “those who represent the profound cultural and folk traditions of a certain intangible heritage, who master outstanding techniques, skills or abilities and are recognized by communities, groups or ethnic groups as being influential in the process of inheriting very valuable elements of intangible heritage” (Q. QI, 2006, p.48). Some scholars even expand the concept even more broadly and put it into a larger social context. In his *Does Intangible Cultural Heritage Law Resolve Everything in China?* (2012), Li Luo divides inheritors into three categories:

(a) The inheritors who are members of the indigenous communities or nations

with folklore. They create, originate, develop, and practice folklore in their communities or nations or groups. This type of inheritor is the most basic and common inheritor. From this perspective, these inheritors are both the holders and the inheritors. They also possess folklore; (b) the inheritors who are not the members of the indigenous communities or nations with folklore. They transmit and develop the folklore through their performances, speech or re-creation. This type of inheritor cannot be regarded as the holders, because they only have possession in relation to their performances and re-creation of the folklore, rather than possessing the folklore; (c) the government organs and other social organizations or social groups who save folklore to maintain its development by the identity of the inheritors. (p.357)

Inheritors in a narrow sense, as defined by the law of China, are called “representative inheritors” (*dai biao xing chuan cheng ren* 代表性傳承人) in China. According to the *Interim Measures for the Safeguarding and Management of National Intangible Cultural Heritage*, representative inheritors are those who master and inherit an aspect of national intangible cultural heritage, who are recognized in a certain area, or who are seen as being representative and influential and actively cultivating further inheritors. (MC, 2006)

Significant differences in concepts, conditions and legal status can be seen in China’s general and representative inheritors. Representative inheritors are identified by national legal provisions and procedures, enjoying more rights and bearing more responsibilities. They play the leading role among all the inheritors. According to the *Ordinance of the Management on the Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre Inheritors* (*guo jia fei yi xiang mu dai biao xing chuan cheng ren ren ding yu guan li ban fa* 國家非物質文化遺產項目代表性傳承人認定與管理暫行辦法) issued in 2008, “inheritors” refers to those who have long been engaged in Daoqing singing or

shadow puppet production and are recognized as representative and influential, and confirmed by the county government; or those who have already had the title of “artist” or “inheritor” bestowed on them by a national, provincial or municipal cultural administrative department or civil organization, such as an art association. (HCG, 2008).

On the one hand, representative inheritors are defined by law and identified by China’s national authorities and on the other hand, the identification of an inheritor is a government action -- the inheritors are determined by a combination of national and local policies. National policies are mainly reflected in the *Interim Measures for the Identification and Management of National Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritors* issued by the Ministry of Culture in 2008 and the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Law* of 2011. Local identification is carried out in line with the local government documents. The identification processes are also organized hierarchically -- there are inheritors at national level and at the provincial and municipal levels.

The identification of representative inheritors also follows a rigorous review process. According to Article 29 of the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Law*, a representative inheritor is assessed by an expert review panel and expert assessment committee, organized by the cultural department in accordance with the regulations and requirements for representative inheritors of representative heritage items or projects. The initial evaluation has to be approved by a majority of the review panel, and then the assessment committee evaluates it in a first review and gives its opinions. The government cultural departments then publicize the list of representative inheritors for public comment. If it meets with approval, a final formal list of the representative inheritors is identified and publicized (SCNPC, 2011).

The identification of inheritors of Daoqing performance and shadow puppet

making has been regulated in Articles 8 and 9 of the *Notice on the Interim Provisions for the Safeguarding and Inheritance of Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre (2005)*.

According to Article 8:

People who meet one of the following conditions can be identified as Daoqing inheritors and given a certificate after the review and approval of the county government. The conditions are: performers who have mastered at least two of the skills, such as singing while [maneuvering] the shadow puppets and playing the drum or four-string guitar or other instruments; shadow puppet makers who are very skilled at carving and know a lot about the process; ordinary people who have collected a lot of important material about shadow puppets or [have kept] real shadow puppets. (HCG, 2005)

Pursuant to Article 9:

Performers or carvers who have great skills and who have engaged in the Daoqing art for many years, after review by the assessment team, shall be awarded corresponding honorary titles by the county government and be recommended for municipal, provincial and national honorary titles in line with the nomination and approval procedures (ibid.)

By 2013, there were two *National Intangible Cultural Heritage Representative Inheritors* in Huanxian County. They are Master Shi Chenglin and Master Gao Qingwang (高清旺), who were identified in 2007 by the Ministry of Culture as the representative inheritors for Daoqing in the performing category and the carving category respectively. They are among the first batch of 226 representative inheritors of the national intangible cultural heritage. According to Article 9 of the *Interim Measures for the Safeguarding and Management on National Intangible*

Cultural Heritage, “the Cultural Bureau of the State Council shall make unified target boards of national intangible cultural heritage and allow provincial cultural departments to hand them to safeguarding units to hang them up and save them” (ibid.). Master Shi Chenglin and Master Gao Qingwang were granted certificates and plaques after being appointed.

d. Official Shadow Theatre Inheritor Protection System

What is more important than the identification of inheritors is the protection system concerning inheritors. As laid down in Article 30 of the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Law*, governments at or above county level will take the following three measures, according to their own needs, to support the inheritors’ dissemination and passing down of an intangible cultural heritage (SCNPC, 2011).

Firstly, the government must provide the necessary sites for activities of inheritance or transmission. Article 13 of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention clearly stipulates that States Parties will “promote the establishment of or strengthen the training on the management institutions of intangible cultural heritage and sites or space for the performance of such heritage so as to push forward its inheritance” (UNESCO, 2003). The most direct way to safeguard an intangible heritage is to provide places for the inheritors to conduct their activities or performances. Some place is surely needed for an inheritor to teach his students or disciples or to hold large-scale activities. In fact some aspects of the intangible heritage may disappear because the places they rely on for activities have disappeared. As inheritors usually cannot afford to set up a place all by themselves due to economic conditions, it is the responsibility of the government at or above county level to provide necessary venues or places.

As China’s intangible heritage comes in various forms, each demanding a

different kind of place for heritage activities, and regional economic development also varies, there is no unified standard for creating such places. In the context of China they can be cultural centers, art centers, township cultural centers, thematic museums, cultural plaza and other public institutions; they can also be special places for specific intangible heritage items. These places are for public use, so they should be provided to the inheritors for free or at favorable prices. Inheritors can demonstrate, create and teach in such places, but they cannot use these places for other purposes. In areas with higher levels of economic development, government cultural departments may establish special places for the activities of passing down knowledge about heritage, which is better than the public institutions mentioned just above.

Secondly, the government must provide the necessary funds. Most of China's current intangible heritage inheritors are senior citizens, advanced in age. For example, the oldest among the third batch of 706 *National Intangible Cultural Heritage Representative Inheritors* is one Shahe Mamat (夏赫 買買提) from the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region (新疆維吾爾族自治區), who is already 102 years old. Among these 706 people, there are five inheritors over the age of 90 and only four under 40. Most inheritors are in their sixties to eighties. They need to be supported financially to practice and pass down the heritage.

In the *Interim Measures for the Management of the Special Fund for National Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection*, it is required that local governments subsidize National Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritors who are in difficult circumstances and subsidies are allocated by the central government (MF & MC, 2006). The annual budget of the special funds, or the subsidy, is determined in line with the general plan and annual work plan on the safeguarding of intangible heritage, as well as the national financial situation. The funds are divided into two categories: protection subsidies and fees for management. The former refers to the

fees spent on the protection, preservation, research and inheritance of the heritage on the national heritage list or other major heritage projects. Specifically, this covers the fees for theoretical and skills research, the subsidy for inheritors and their teaching and dissemination activities, the subsidy for folk activities, fees for data compilation and publication, and the subsidy for cultural and ecological zone protection.

Article 6 of the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Law* states that governments at or above county level must include intangible cultural heritage safeguarding and preservation in their economic and social development plan, and include safeguarding and preservation funds in the budget (SCNPC, 2011). The central government strongly supports the safeguarding and preservation of the intangible heritage in ethnic minority areas, remote areas and poor areas.

Generally speaking, the funds are categorized on three levels and in two areas. The three levels refer to the national, provincial and municipal levels; the two areas are support for inheritors and support for the investment and development of the intangible cultural heritage. The National Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritors, a total of 1,488 people who were identified from 2007 to 2009, have been granted 8,000 yuan per year since 2008 for them to pass down the heritage -- collecting data, giving demonstrations and performances, taking part in academic exchanges, teaching their disciples -- and to support their livelihood. The obligation of these inheritors is to take in disciples and teach them. The funds for the investment are granted by local governments according to their own specific circumstances.

The Huanxian County Government, in Article 17 of its *Notice on the Interim Provisions for the Safeguarding and Inheritance of Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre* issued in 2005, stated that:

All the funds shall be included in the budget for the safeguarding of Daoqing. A safeguarding and development fund of Daoqing Shadow Puppetry is to be set up with the investment from the government and sponsorship from social groups for protecting and studying Daoqing, collecting materials and shadow puppets, subsidizing performers' livelihood, cultivating young inheritors, and commending and rewarding. The illegal gains from Daoqing cases handled by the Public Security and Industry and Commerce Departments are also added into the protection and development fund. The special fund and the protection and development fund of all levels of governments must strictly follow the procedure of 'planning, supervision and reviewing'. (HCG, 2005)

Thirdly, the government must support and participate in public activities. The representative inheritors' participation in activities for public benefit helps to improve public awareness of the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. These public benefit activities are: exhibitions, demonstrations of skills and mass festivals of all kinds, for example the series of activities on "Cultural Heritage Day", which is an important way of building the public cultural service system; Chinese patriotic activities; school education, extracurricular activities and social practice, through which the younger generation can experience the charm of traditional culture; and cultural exchange activities with foreign countries.

Besides the annual subsidy, there is also a reward and exit policy for the representative inheritors. Article 10 of the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Law* provides that "organizations and individuals (not limited to inheritors) who make a significant contribution in the protection of intangible heritage shall be commended and rewarded in accordance with relevant national regulations" (SCNPC, 2011). Article 24 of the *Interim Measures for the Safeguarding and Management of National Intangible Cultural Heritage* states that "the Cultural Bureau of the State Council

shall reward working units and individuals who have made outstanding contributions to protection” (MC, 2006). Article 15 of the *Interim Measures for the Identification and Management of the Representative Inheritors of National Intangible Cultural Heritage* has a similar statement. The financial or material reward generally consists of a certain bonus and expenses. The difference between such a reward and the subsidy is that the subsidy from the central government can be given to any of the identified representative inheritors, but only those who have made outstanding contributions can receive the reward. So its purpose is to encourage the inheritors to devote more effort to the safeguarding of intangible heritage.

Representative inheritors can also be removed from the list. Article 31 of the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Law* states:

Those representative inheritors [who] fail to perform their obligations [as mentioned] in the last paragraph without good reason will be taken off the representative inheritors list and a new inheritor will be identified by the cultural departments; those who have lost the ability to inherit and pass down the heritage will be replaced by a new representative inheritor by the cultural authorities. (SCNPC, 2011)

The Chongqing (重慶) Municipality was the first city to have a policy on removing representative inheritors from the list. They did so by regulating that the representative inheritors have to submit to an assessment on the number of their disciples and what they teach them, while the disciples have to take a test on their performance or carving skills. The representative inheritors can get the subsidy if they pass the assessment and will be taken off the list if they do not.

The Huanxian County Government made a policy for annual assessment and

evaluation under Article 9 of *the Ordinance of the Management on Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre Inheritors* (2008), which involves five aspects of examining inheritors:

1. All the inheritors are registered and put into files and their performances are inspected from time to time by the Cultural Department.
2. Working groups are set up by the Cultural Department before the end of each year to interview the performers, examine the archives, visit the public and hold seminars (for township and village cadres) from town to town, to assess and evaluate the performers and report the results to the township leaders.
3. The content of the assessment is listed in Article 7 of *The Ordinance for the Management of Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre Inheritors*.
4. The status of those who have serious physical and mental disabilities and have lost the ability to inherit will be terminated and others who meet the conditions will be identified as inheritors according to procedure.
5. The Cultural Publications Bureau will make a summary of the assessment and present the decisions on the existing problems or problems that have occurred during the assessment. (HCG, 2008)

e. Folk Inheritance vs. Official Identification

Firstly, the interview of Master Shi and study of the government documents show that there are drawbacks to China's official representative inheritor identification policy. Among the more than 300 performers in 48 troupes in Huanxian, only two Daoqing performers are recognized as *National Intangible Cultural Heritage Representative Inheritors* -- Shi Chenglin and Gao Qingwang. That is to say, a person can only be an inheritor if he or she is recognized by the government. The advantage of this is that the national authorities can be mobilized to effectively protect the inheritors, and these very rare inheritors with government recognition are the outstanding ones out of the mass of ordinary inheritors.

The disadvantage is that the government says nothing about “ordinary inheritors”. Apart from the two representative inheritors of Huanxian, the other 300 and more performers receive no attention. To mobilize concerted efforts to support the representative inheritors does fit international practice and China’s state of the nation, yet in order to be sustainable it is necessary to expand this support to the masses of ordinary inheritors. China has a large number of intangible heritage and cultural resources in various areas. If the policy only takes into account the few inheritors, other people who are willing to be engaged in the heritage are likely to be ignored. If there were a supplementary registration of the ordinary inheritors, people with difficult circumstances who are participating in passing on the heritage can be registered, which means they may be subsidized if necessary.

Secondly, the criteria for identification are not scientific or viable. The *Intangible Cultural Heritage Law* stipulates that inheritors should meet three conditions, namely that they “have mastered well a particular kind of national intangible cultural heritage, are recognized as representative and influential within a certain area or field, are actively passing down the heritage and cultivating successors” (SCNPC, 2011). What is unscientific is the phrase, “actively passing down the heritage and cultivating successors”, the premise of which should be “after acquiring the status of inheritor”. Before a performer becomes a representative inheritor, he might not be able to cultivate successors due to economic reasons or he might not have realized that the skills he has mastered are part of an intangible heritage which should be passed down. This aspect should refer to an inheritor’s obligation, rather than be a condition for him to be identified. There are also no specific standards on how “well” a person “has mastered” a heritage and how “influential” the person should be. The number of inheritors needed is also not specified. A heritage cannot be safeguarded if there are not enough inheritors.

Thirdly, the nomination process is located entirely within official government procedures. Before the representative inheritors can be financially assisted by the central government, they need first to be approved by the assessment committee. And the committee is composed mainly of government officials and experts, with very few people from non-governmental organizations and other civil organizations. This leads to partiality and political preferences. Article 4 of the Ministry of Culture's *Opinions on Strengthening the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* states that a folk artist can make an application and become a representative inheritor, after being examined and approved by the cultural department (MC, 2005). This sounds very impractical. It can be seen from the interview with Master Shi Chenglin that many folk performers are illiterate or live in poor remote villages -- the chance of them knowing about a policy is very limited. Even if they knew of the policy, how could they manage to apply to corresponding governmental departments?

In terms of the identification procedure, on the one hand experts on folklore and intangible heritage researchers give their opinions on the assessment and then the government makes the identification. Such a model is professional and authoritative, as intangible heritage experts and scholars have made a comprehensive theoretical study of the subject, which is good. Yet on the other hand, only experts, scholars and government officials are involved and other members of society are completely excluded.

The inheritors of intangible heritage are very much connected to the inheritance of traditional culture and cultural resources, but many experts and scholars who live far away from the region and from the ethnic groups whose heritage is to be preserved simply conduct research based on written materials and short-term filed investigations. They cannot integrally and comprehensively get to know the locals'

attitudes and opinions on inheritors. The locals who live in the same region or within the same ethnic group, who share the same living environment and cultural tradition with the inheritors, know more about the inheritors and hence can give a more legitimate assessment of whether a person can or cannot be a representative inheritor. Only with their participation can the assessment be scientific and fair.

Fourthly, identification tends to be given more importance than the actual inheritance activities. Even the clauses on the obligations of inheritors stated in the *Intangible Cultural Heritage Law* are only macro-plans; no detailed guidance is given on specific activities for inheritance or transmission. The training and cultivation of inheritors are actually the most important links in all the safeguarding measures; the identification or subsidy is just a complementary measure. Master Shi's interview reflects this point. Except for the title, he has never taken part in any training or public activity that is targeted at transmitting the intangible heritage, or any kind of test. This is a significant weakness and a loophole, leaving the entire safeguarding measures as a vague concept.

5.3 The Utilization of Daoqing for the Economy

The last section analyzed how Daoqing is being safeguarded. This section will analyze how Daoqing is being used since it was inscribed in the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*. The safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, the cultural industry and the development of the local economy are three seemingly quite unrelated topics, yet in Huanxian County they are all entwined as one. Discourses on “the uses of Daoqing shadow theatre”, “making Daoqing a cultural industry” and “the local economic development of the Huanxian County” are reiterated repeatedly in the county government's policies and documents.

Article 1 of the 2005 *Notice on the Interim Provisions for the Safeguarding and Inheritance of Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre* states that the safeguarding and management of Daoqing must be included in the medium- and long-term plan and annual plan of the government at both the county and township levels (HCG, 2005). In the *Work Report on the Protection and Inheritance of Huanxian County's Intangible Heritage and Industrial Development of 2009* (*huan xian fei yi bao hu chuan heng ji chan ye fa zhan gong zuo hui bao* 環縣非物質文化遺產保護傳承及產業開發工作匯報) there was a statement that: “We put the intangible cultural heritage protection on the agenda and protect and develop it as a city [trademark] and industry” (HCG, 2009). In March 2009, the *Report on the Development of Huanxian's Cultural Industry* (*huanxian wen hua chan ye qing kuang hui bao* 環縣文化產業開發情況匯報) put it more directly:

We will expand the scale of shadow performance, accelerate the development and sale of shadow puppets and make the industry bigger and stronger, with efforts in the three aspects of [expansion in scale], group management, market-oriented operation, in the hope of driving forward Huanxian County's economic development. (HCG, 2009)

Policies made by the Huanxian County Government are in accordance with the policies of government at higher levels. So if one analyzes the Chinese central government's policies, one can easily understand why the Huanxian County Government expends so much effort in tying Daoqing's cultural industry to local economic development. As the central government put forward in the *Opinions on Strengthening the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage*, the safeguarding principles of intangible cultural heritage in China are “safeguarding is fundamental; salvaging is top priority; uses should be rational; transmission goes along with development” (MC, 2005). It stressed that “the relationship between safeguarding and

utilization must be correctly handled”, that “[it should be] reasonably used with the premise of effective safeguarding” and that “local governments at all levels shall place intangible cultural heritage protection on their agenda, in the overall planning of economic and social development and in cultural development” (ibid.). The Chinese government believes that developing Daoqing into a cultural industry is an effective way to protect it and to promote the local economy at the same time.

In the 2008 *Work Report of the Huanxian County Department of Cultural Affairs*, it says that “being identified by the Ministry of Culture for inclusion in the first batch of pilot cultural protection projects is a favorable condition for industrializing Daoqing. Daoqing-related projects should be created and promoted, to provide a platform for the county’s cultural products to enter the market and [for it to] become a city [trademark] to promote more rapid development of the local economy” (HCDCA, 2008).

This section will be divided into four parts, in order to analyze how Daoqing is combined with the local cultural industry. The first aspect to be explored is the dissemination of cultural industry policy in the county. The analysis will tell us whether the use of Daoqing has been demonstrated as an effective measure to safeguard intangible cultural heritage, as the government publicizes it.

5.3.1 Daoqing and Cultural Industry

The term “cultural industry” was coined by T. Adorno and M. Horkheimer in the 1940s. Adorno (1972) characterizes it this way: In the developed monopolistic and capitalist countries, the industrial entertainment system that copies and disseminates cultural products on a large scale with modern technology is the means and carrier for producing and disseminating mass culture. It manipulates the non-spontaneous,

materialized and false culture through more direct mass media, such as film, television, radio, newspapers and magazines, turning it into a tool that constrains people's awareness and misleading the public in a mild and clever way (ibid.). Adorno believed that arts and culture had been closely blended with commercial operations. The production and consumption of cultural products follow the laws of economic value and market exchange, which are the common forms and characteristics of products (ibid.). The cultural industry is a modern capitalist cultural system that is market-oriented and mass-produced, and follows the principle of exchange of goods. In short, it is a product of modern technology.

The UNESCO report *Culture, Trade and Globalization: Questions and Answers* stated that the cultural industry is closely related to the production and creation of content industry (Cano & Garzón et al., 2000). This refers to a special group of commodities which intangible culture also belongs to, commodities that need copyright protection and usually appear in the form of goods and services. In the technical field, the cultural industry is also known as the “creative industry” or the “content industry”.⁴³

In China, the term was first mentioned officially in the *Major Strategic Decisions -- Accelerating the Development of Tertiary Industry* (*zhong da zhan lue jue ce---jia kuai fa zhan di san chan ye* 重大戰略決策---加快發展第三產業) compiled by the State Council in 1992. In 1998, the Cultural Industry Bureau was established in the Ministry of Culture. In 2003, it was defined in the *Opinions on Supporting and Promoting the Development of Cultural Industry* (*guan yu zhi chi he cu jin wen hua chan ye fa zhan de ruo gan yi jian* 關於支持和促進文化產業發展的若干意見) issued by the Ministry of Culture as a business sector that is engaged in cultural

43 According to UNESCO, cultural industry refers to the industrially standardized, sequential activities of production, reproduction, storage and distribution of cultural products and services which fit the following characteristics: being in a series, standard, refined production process and mass consumption. (Cano & Garzón et al., 2000)

production and cultural services (Cultural Industry Bureau, 2003). Cultural industry and creative industry are both important aspects of the construction of socialist culture. As stated in *the Cultural Development Plan for the Eleventh Five-Year Period* (*shi yi wu shi qi wen hua fa zhan gui hua gang yao* 十一五時期文化發展規劃綱要), the overall objectives of the cultural industry are to make it a pillar industry of China's national economy within 15 years (by 2020), accounting for 2.5% to 5% of China's GDP, and to catch up with the USA in half a century to become a world-class cultural industry powerhouse (General Office of the Communist Party of China, 2006). As stated in the 2009 *Cultural Industry Promotion Plan* (*wen hua chan ye zhen xing gui hua* 文化產業振興規劃) – the first special plan for cultural industry in China, the cultural industry was raised to the level of a strategic national industry, which means that the cultural industry is not only a component in the national economic structure but also a leading strategic new industry with strong driving power (SC, 2009).

It is not hard to understand why intangible heritage has been actively combined with the cultural industry, as China has been working on promoting the latter and hopes to protect the intangible heritage and develop the cultural industry at the same time. Thus the Huanxian County Government has vigorously promoted the integration of Daoqing as an art, an intangible heritage and a cultural industry. As Huanxian County and Qingyang City are in economically deprived areas of Gansu Province, their tourist industry is relatively undeveloped. Without a large number of tourists, the chance that shadow theatre will bring economic benefit is very small, but it has great advantages as a resource for the cultural and creative industries.

Shadow puppets are beautiful and exotic and they can be processed into different products and sold to different places. Big shadow puppets can be hung, small ones can be displayed, and their pictures can be printed on T-shirts. Since its nomination in 2003 as a national intangible cultural heritage, Daoqing has been

produced and sold as a commodity. In Huanxian County, shadow puppets are hung on the walls of government buildings and in hotels, are displayed at bus stops and pasted on street lamp posts. In Qingyang City there is a famous street of folk culture, where shops with an ancient flavor on both sides of the street sell Daoqing shadow puppets along with other cultural products, such as Qingyang embroidery, sachets, paper-cutting and embroidered shoes. The street was built by the Qingyang Municipal Government in order to trademark their city culture. The companies that produce shadow puppets produce them in large numbers and variety to meet the needs of different markets. They earn a lot in this business.

In a *Work Report of the Huanxian County Department of Cultural Affairs*, the Head of the Department of Cultural Affairs of Huanxian County wrote: “The nomination to the World Heritage List is not only conducive to the safeguarding of traditional culture, but also helpful in developing the county’s economy and tourism. The purpose of the nomination should not be limited to safeguarding culture, because another important objective is to drive economic development” (HCDCA, 2009). It is obvious that the Huanxian County Government is eager to promote the local economy.

However, although Daoqing shadow puppetry is an ancient handicraft art, it is different from Suzhou embroidery (*su xiu* 蘇繡) and lacquer baskets (*qi lan* 漆籃) or some other traditional handicrafts that have been sold as commodities for a long time, for embroidery and lacquer baskets can be used in daily life. China is a traditional agricultural society and handicrafts were developed as cottage industries in that society, in which the surplus labor needed to work and to earn a certain income. “Cottage industry, from an economic point of view, is ‘a kind of industry to solve livelihood problems at slack seasons.’” (X. Fei, 2007, p. 338). These handicrafts have basically gone through several stages: small family-unit production and sales, small

factories in the late Qing Dynasty when capitalism emerged, cooperatives and state-owned factories when new China was established, and the self-employed, family workshops and private companies since Reform and Opening Up. But Daoqing has not experienced any such stages, and shadow puppets, as an element of performance, do not have any practical functions in daily life. This is the difference between Daoqing and other handicraft examples of heritage used in merchandising.

5.3.2 A Battle for Cultural Resources

Compared with Daoqing shadow performances, Daoqing shadow puppets have more commercial advantages. Since their inscription in the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* as part of Chinese shadow puppetry, the production and sale of shadow puppets has been strongly supported by the county government. Shadow puppets, which were originally for use in shadow plays and which were each unique, thanks to the skills of farmers who were also masters of puppet-making, are now being publicized, packaged and used in a new expression of official ideology. It is a new path of development. As a cultural product, a shadow puppet is supposed to have unique features tied to its geographical location, which makes it more attractive and meets the tastes and interests of customers.

Since there is a variety of style of shadow puppets and the shadow puppets in the two neighboring provinces of Gansu and Shanxi are very similar in style, the Huanxian County Government took the initiative to clarify the origin of Daoqing, in an aim to give it a profound “historical” appearance and emphasize its “Huanxian Style”. The governments of Gansu, Shanxi and Qinghai Provinces -- which are all in northwest China, have a low population density, are economically underdeveloped and share a similar tradition of shadow play and shadow puppet-making -- are constantly trying to promote their own shadow puppetry and to stimulate the

development of its cultural industry, in the hope of making their own shadow puppet industry more valuable and competitive. To win this contest, the Huanxian County Government has tried hard to showcase Daoqing as having a long history and being unique, focusing on its origin.

The *1993 Annal of Huanxian County*⁴⁴ states: “Shadow theatre was brought into the county in the early Qing Dynasty and developed constantly after that in the practice of performers and carvers. Now it has become a unique style of [performance]”. (CCAHC, 1993, p. 147). The record clearly shows that shadow theatre was introduced into Huanxian rather than originating from it. Since the rule of the Qing Dynasty in China began in 1644, the time when Daoqing was introduced into Huanxian County should be shortly after 1644. Yet no documentation of Daoqing was found by this researcher in the *1754 Annal of Huanxian County*. In fact, it is not mentioned with a single word. This suggests that Daoqing had not become a traditional performance by then. The *Annal of the Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre* states that the origin of Daoqing was “developed in the Song and Yuan Dynasties” (CCAHDST, 2006, p. 66) – about 500 to 800 years earlier than the *1754 Annal of Huanxian County*. It also claims that Daoqing “matured in the Ming and Qing Dynasties and the early days of the Republic of China. The time between 1936, when Huanxian County had just been liberated, and 1968, when the Cultural Revolution started, was the time when Daoqing was rescued and protected”.⁴⁵ The *1993 Annal of*

44 The two annals are the old *Annal of Huanxian County*, compiled in 1754, and the new *Annal of Huanxian County*, published by the Huanxian County Government in 1993.

45 The *Annal of the Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre* is a local annal published by the Huanxian County Government in 2006. The postscript reads: “Under the leadership of and with support from the Party Committee of Huanxian County, the Standing Committee of the People’s Congress of Huanxian County, the People’s Government of Huanxian County and the Huanxian Committee of the CPPCC, the compilation of the annal began in September 2005, with material gained from the field investigation that had begun at the beginning of 2004. After a whole year of hard work, the draft was finished by this August and was then revised by Professor Zhao Xinjian from the Literature School of Lanzhou University. Professor Hao Sumin, member of the Expert Committee on the Protection Project of Chinese Ethnic and Folk Culture and professor at Northwest University for Nationalities wrote the title for the annal. The annal is composed of eight chapters and 25 sections, covering a chronicle of events, repertoires, Daoqing music, shadow puppets, styles and schools, characters, “protection, inheritance, reform and development”, and notes. The chronicle of events was edited by Zhang Yong,

Huanxian County and *2006 Annal of the Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre* were drafted by the Huanxian County Government with the purpose of endowing Daoqing with more historical and artistic value, for the more historical and artistic value Daoqing has, the more commercial value it can bring.

So what the government is trying to do is to exaggerate the history of a folk art like Daoqing. Its origin can hardly be traced anyway and one can make as wild a guess as possible and then expand on its philosophical and cultural symbolic implications. Huanxian is not alone in this, as the neighboring provinces are doing the same in developing their shadow puppet industries. Over the past few years, the provinces in northwest China, where cultural resources are few and far between and the economy is very undeveloped, have fought over the claim that they are the “birthplace of shadow puppetry” (*pi ying zhi xiang* 皮影之鄉), in order to make their shadow puppet products more competitive on the cultural market, and ultimately to promote their economy.

The origin of Daoqing is not only “identified” in official publications and political documents, but also theoretically confirmed by academic studies. In order to establish a rigorous theoretical system to demonstrate the origin of Daoqing, the Huanxian County Government made a great effort to build a collaborative research framework. In August 2008, the Daoqing Shadow Theatre Research Society was established under the leadership of the Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with five universities: Northwest University for Nationalities, Lanzhou University, Northwest Normal University, Hebei Normal University and Longdong University.

Daoqing music by Zhang Yuqing, shadow puppets, styles and schools by Dao Jinping and Deng Tingbin, characters and notes by Wang Lizhou and Du Qingxiang, “protection, inheritance, reform and development” by Zhou Aijun and Zhang Dong. It was the first time we had compiled an annal on Daoqing shadow puppetry. As there are no written records or materials for reference, mistakes and errors are inevitable. It is our sincere hope that the mistakes and errors can be pointed out or corrected by the readers”. These words show that the annal was compiled by the Huanxian government.

Four collaborative research groups on the folklore of Daoqing, Daoqing music, the art of shadow play and oral literature were formed. During the two Huanxian Shadow Theatre Festivals, the Huanxian Daoqing Reform and Development Seminar and the Annual Huanxian Daoqing Research meeting were held. The *Symposium on the Protection of Ethnic and Folk Intangible Culture Heritage* in northwest China was held in July 2005 at Northwest University for Nationalities.

Although the scholars and media at these meetings had different interpretations of Daoqing, the local authorities tended to hold that these seminars indicated Daoqing had a long history and had made a great contribution to the development of China's shadow play development during the past thousand years. Such a conclusion is more like the declaration of a claim than confirmation based on evidence. It declares that Huanxian County has more right than other provinces to own the cultural symbol and that it made a bigger contribution than the others did. In this competition, the unanimous approval and the so-called arguments of the experts and officials and the advocacy of the media are particularly important, because it is on the basis of such authorities that Huanxian County was named as the "Birthplace of China's Shadow Play" (*zhong guo pi ying zhi xiang* 中國皮影之鄉).

After that, the Party Committee of Huanxian County held a number of seminars and meetings on how to develop the shadow play industry, with the main purpose of "driving the economy **greatly** by developing the **little** shadow play" (HCG, 2005a, p. 3). The record of the meetings of the Huanxian County Government describes that:

The government keeps stressing that the development of the county culture should be given great importance. Economy or culture, if well developed, can

count as political performance for the local government. Huanxian needs its own cultural trademark and that is Daoqing shadow theatre, which is a native cultural resource claiming a long history and commanding great popularity. Importance should be attached to the development and transformation of the economic value of the cultural resources. The government-led and the market operation should be combined, to transform cultural heritage and cultural resources to cultural products of both cultural and economic value, incorporating cultural content in the county's economic development. Meanwhile more market means should be adopted to boost the cultural efforts, to develop the cultural industry and establish a cultural trademark with unique characteristics. All these would enhance the image of the local culture and promote the comprehensive and coordinated economic and social development of Huanxian County. (ibid., p. 6)

Daoqing has won the battle for cultural symbolic resources for the time being. But this cannot prevent Daoqing from becoming extinct, or stop the local community from having their own understanding of Daoqing. There is great controversy among the locals as to whether Daoqing originated in the Song or Yuan Dynasty, as stated in the *Annal of the Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre*. This is a very sensitive issue for all the Daoqing groups and senior puppet carvers. The Government does not allow any disagreement on the origin of Daoqing, or how Daoqing is referred to in the Huanxian dialect.

However, the members of the Huanxian community, who grew up watching the Daoqing shadow plays, have their own views. Master Wang, a Daoqing shadow puppet producer, said:

Daoqing must have been introduced from out of the county, somewhere in

Shanxi. I learned from my father, my father learned from my grandfather, and my grandfather learned from Master Xie Changchun. I remember when I was young my grandfather mentioned Master Xie's apprenticeship in Shaanxi. There had been no shadow play in Huanxian County (Personal interview, April 8, 2012).

Master Shi also talked about the origin of Huanxian Daoqing:

It is not responsible to say that Daoqing was originated in the Yuan or Song Dynasties. Actually, they (the government) know it can't be that early. All this is for publicity. (Personal interview, March 29, 2012).

In short, the history of Daoqing is selectively articulated and constructed by the Huanxian County Government to establish its local cultural trademark, in a process whereby the local historical and cultural resources are being manipulated to an extreme extent. The local government takes the advantage of controlling the official mainstream discourse, using the academic authority of the experts, to recreate a folk art with a local history and folk culture and to bind Huanxian culture, shadow theatre and economic interests together. The *Annal of the Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre*, official documents and media reports have accelerated the process of forgetting the real history. Daoqing was reinvented and reshaped as an economic trademark for Huanxian's traditional culture.

5.3.3 Family Workshops and Leading Enterprises with Unequal Resources

At present, in terms of the production and operation modes of Daoqing shadow puppets, family workshops (*jia ting zuo fang* 家庭作坊) and government-supported large-scale enterprises (or leading enterprises) (*long tou qi ye*

龍頭企業) coexist. This section will analyze their business models, their relationship with the government, the staff and the range of products, and how Daoqing is tied to the cultural industry and to economic development, as well as whether making Daoqing a cultural industry is an effective way to safeguard it.

In Huanxian, the great majority of the Daoqing shadow puppets are made and sold by the self-employed workshops. These workshops are companies, production units based on the family. The family is the basic unit of the society for Daoqing. As Fei Xiaotong puts it, “In oriental culture, ‘family’ plays a big role. Handicrafts are part of household production and are an important mode of production.” (L. Fang, 2005, p.7.). These family workshops are in essence part of the private sector, with the workplace being the household, the staff being the family members, or family members and a few staff from outside the family, and the production, processing, management and storage all being carried out within the same building, which is also the family’s residence, and sometimes the dormitory for other staff. According to the *Report on the Development of Huanxian’s Cultural Industry*, there were nine family workshops by 2012 (HCG, 2012) and there were nine family workshops by 2012. Master Wang’s family, five kilometers away from the county, is a typical village representative of such workshops.

Master Wang, born in 1946, was taught from childhood by his father how to make shadow puppets. Although he is not identified as a *Representative Inheritor of the National Intangible Cultural Heritage*, he is recognized as the person who makes the best shadow puppets in Huanxian County. His workshop was started in 2007. Only he and his wife make the shadow puppets; his son, though he has learned how to make them, only helps when he is not busy at work in the company in the county.

There is only one large-scale enterprise that manufactures and sells shadow

puppets, the Huanxian Longying Cultural Industry Co. Ltd. (hereafter referred to as the Longying Company 龍影公司), which was established in 2002 by Ms. Li Yaping, who is the Head of the Sales Center for Huanxian Shadow Puppets and who raised 300,000 yuan by herself, quit the Department of Cultural Affairs and set up the company. She got the “Longying” brand registered and started a new production line for shadow puppets.

In 2005 the Longying Company spent 2 million yuan to construct a new office building that covers an area of 900 m². Since then, shadow-puppet carving, processing, sales and performance marketing are all conducted in this building. The company has 50 staff, 40 of whom are shadow-puppet carving masters at national, provincial or municipal level. In recent years, its products have been sold to Lanzhou, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Beijing and other cities. Sales outlets have been set up in Yinchuan, Jiuquan, Liaoning Province, Lanzhou, Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang and Beijing.

The company has participated many times in various cultural fairs and received a number of awards. The newly created 29 × 39 box set of shadow puppets at the Thirteenth Investment and Trade Fair of Lanzhou was named the province’s outstanding product⁴⁶ and awarded the “Famous Brand of Gansu Province” in 2009. In the same year, the general manager, Li Yaping, was named the “Leading Figure in the Cultural Industry of Qingyang City” and listed as one of the “Top Ten Women of Qingyang City”.

The company has become the city’s largest shadow puppet industrial base and its “leading company” enjoys strong support from the government. A leading

46 The Lanzhou Investment & Trade Fair is one of the main investment and trade fairs of northwest China and has become an international and professional large-scale exhibition in the Northwest. The 2012 fair was the 18th fair held by the Ministry of Commerce and Lanzhou Investment & Trade Fair has since become a national-level fair.

company is one which has a deep impact on other companies, is able to set a good example to other companies and lead them, and has made outstanding contributions to the area where it is based, the industry it is in and the nation in general. To put it simply, a leading company is an enterprise (or a group) with any form of ownership, at or above a certain size, which takes an active role in the development of the industry and influences other companies.

Generally speaking, such companies are closely linked to the local government, financially and technically supported by the government and finally examined and identified as leading companies by the government. These companies attract the surrounding small and medium-size enterprises and local resources to support their industrial chain, forming a network of cooperation and enhancing the core competitiveness of the industrial cluster. They also apply or develop advanced science and technology, establish development centers and accelerate research into and development of new technologies and products, so as to increase their value and market competitiveness. Leading companies are important centers of research and development, applying and promoting of science and technology.

a. Production Methods and the Business Model

The production process of Daoqing shadow puppets can be divided into three steps: carving, coloring and mounting. The first step, the core step, is carving, which requires seasoned carving skills. Shadow puppets that are carved by experienced craftsman and ordinary craftsman can be so different in terms of artistic achievement. Therefore this step, technically the most difficult, is generally completed by a respected and prestigious carver. In Master Wang's family workshop, Master Wang himself is responsible for shadow carving. He carves at his own pace, respecting his physical condition and following the customer's order. Master Wang's advanced age and poor eyesight mean that he can only carve two ordinary shadow puppets a day. If

he does not feel well or is busy with farming, his son helps carving. His son, who learned carving 20 years ago and is now working at a company in the county, can carve four shadow puppets a day.

By contrast, of the 50 employees of the Longying Company, 40 are highly skilled carvers; one of these employees is the *Representative Inheritor and the National Cultural Heritage* and three are masters at municipal and county levels. The rest of the highly skilled carvers, though they have no titles, have a lot of experience in shadow-puppet carving. The writer found that these full-time employees are paid according to how many shadow puppets they make, except for the representative inheritor who has a basic salary. They can carve on average ten shadow puppets a day. As the handmade shadow puppets cannot meet the increasing orders, the company has purchased a carving machine that can carve automatically, when the pattern is fed into the machine. This machine can process about 60 shadow puppets.

Master Ma said his opinion in the interview:

The shadow puppets made by the machine are not exquisite. Shadow puppet carving is an exquisite task which requires time and patience. The Longying Company machine carves on three piled-up leathers, which is to say, it can carve three at a time, in poor quality of course. One piece of leather at a time is right. The company does it just for money, because every extra shadow puppet means extra profit. What's bad about the company is that they claim that those machine-made shadow puppets are handmade ones. Buyers in other places may believe it; the local people will not. (Personal interview, March 27, 2012)

The second step is coloring. This process is not as difficult as carving and the coloring skills can be mastered within a short time. But the study of color and

coloring is needed to ensure the beauty of the color combinations; repeated practice is also necessary, otherwise it is difficult to make sure the colors are properly distributed. In Master Wang's workshop, this process is done by his wife, who has helped Master Wang make shadow puppets for several decades. In fact she can carve puppets. But in order to make sure the shadow puppets are of a good quality and are perfect, generally Master Wang carves and she colors. In the Longying Company, coloring is done by the carvers' students, usually more than 20 ordinary shadow puppets per person per day.

Mounting is the third step. A traditional Daoqing shadow puppet for performing is composed of a shadow puppet, the small sticks behind it, and the wires that connect the puppet and the sticks. As a commodity to be sold, most of the shadow puppets are processed into hanging decorations, which requires that the shadow puppet is fixed to cardboard and mounted on a frame before it is packed. This process does not require any technical skill, so any person can do it after learning how to mount the puppets, and that is very simple. The mounting frames and packaging are produced in other provinces instead of in the family workshop or the Longying Company. In Master Wang's family workshop, the last step is completed by all three families. As there are not many orders and the poor light in the evening is not suitable for carving, Master Wang and his wife spend that time mounting the shadow puppets. In the Longying Company, three employees are responsible for the last step because of the large number of orders.

Family workshops like Master Wang's have very simple production methods and a basic business model; their workplace is their own homes and the employees are their family members. Carving, coloring, mounting and storage are all carried out in their houses. Their customers are usually introduced by acquaintances. It is not stable and the market is small. By contrast, the Longying Company adopts the typical model

of vertical production, which is a large-scale and standardized form of production. There is a clear division of labor among the workers responsible for different production procedures on an assembly line. Such large-scale production can increase the intensification of production and reduce intermediate links, thereby reducing production costs and improving production efficiency. Such a model is quantitative, standardized and on a large scale; it can meet the demand of modern society to popularize handicrafts.

Master Wang's family workshop and the Longying Company are competitors. The latter is a large-scale company that enjoys advantages such as government support, funding and products. From an economic perspective, the company integrates three major areas: production, wholesale and retail, which is an entire chain from production to transportation and sales. It is easy for the Longying Company to control the market.

They have cooperation, too – the Longying Company buys semi-products from the family workshops. As the shadow puppets are handmade in the family workshops, they are of a very high quality, but are produced more slowly and in smaller numbers, and therefore cannot meet the demands of the modern market. So when the Longying Company receives a large order for fine shadow puppets, it purchases the semi-finished products from family workshops like Master Wang's and processes them, mounts them, packs them and sells them. Master Wang has only a fixed number of customers, so he sees the Longying Company as an avenue for sales.

b. Relationship with the Government and Government Support Policies

The government, as one of the stakeholders in the market economy, tends to initiate incentive mechanisms with limited resource supply. Article 37 of the

Intangible Cultural Heritage Law states: Local governments at or above county level should support units that make a rational use of representative intangible cultural heritage, and the units that make a rational use of representative intangible cultural heritage will enjoy favorable taxation policies (SCNPC, 2011). Under these provisions, the Huanxian County Government has frequently supported workshops and companies engaged in shadow puppet production, in terms of funding and taxation. It has supported the shadow play development project since Daoqing was listed as one of the ten pilot projects in protecting China's folk culture. This is an important political mission.

So an institution in the cultural industry was established, a development plan was drawn up, a leading company was supported, a batch of new products was developed, a website on shadow play was set up and a performance company was founded. That is how the government founded the Office on Cultural Industry Development and the Industrial Association. Then, when the *Five-year Development Plan (2006-2010) on the Development of Huanxian County's Cultural Industry* was drawn up, the government expected there would be 2,000 people engaged in Daoqing production and that this would create a turnover of 15 million yuan. In addition, the Department of Cultural Affairs organized relevant people to investigate and learn from the advanced experience of developing cultural industry in Shanxi Province and cities such as Chengdu and Tangshan.

The 2011 *Opinions on the Development of Cultural Industry of the People's Government of the Qingyang City* (*qing yang zheng fu guan yu fu chi wen hua chan ye fa zhan de yi jian* 慶陽市人民政府關於扶持文化產業發展的意見) formally introduced 15 specific policies to support the development of cultural industry, with five aspects or principles: relaxing market access, prioritizing land use, tax concessions, more financial support and optimizing the development environment.

This was a major initiative that the determined and confident Qingyang Municipal Government took in order to support the cultural industry openly. This policy applied to the industrialization of Daoqing, as it required the Huanxian governmental departments to apply preferential policies to enterprises that were investing in cultural industry.

Cultural enterprises or units that are owned or jointly owned by well-known cultural talents, within the framework of the laws, regulations and policies, are to enjoy priority in planning, selection of project sites and land purchase or transfer through a government allocation. Various construction fees such as planning and ancillary fees that are controlled by the municipal and county governments will be reduced. The leading cultural enterprise with 1 million yuan investment or more will receive an interest-free loan from the municipal and county Women's Federation and the Bureau of Labor and Social Security.

The 2011 *Opinions on the Development of Cultural Industry of the People's Government of Qingyang City* also introduced specific regulations for the funds. A Special Fund for the Development of Cultural Industry was founded by the Qingyang Municipal Government, setting a 10-million-yuan budget annually for cultural brand innovation, staff training, talent introduction, new product development, marketing at home and abroad, rewards for those who make big contributions, major cultural infrastructure, supporting projects and other subsidies. It also set up a special "working cash" fund of 10 to 20 million yuan to support the leading enterprises when they have orders worth 1 million yuan or above, but do not have enough cash flow for production, marketing and developing new products. The turnover period is one year. The county governments have also set up special funds of 100-300 million yuan every year to support cultural companies. (Qingyang Municipal Government, 2011)

Another policy is “replacing subsidies with awards”, which means that the government would grant a sum of up to 200,000 yuan for establishing a shop in Qingyang City and up to 100,000 yuan for a shop that is established in another first-class city; a new product would be awarded 10,000 to 50,000 yuan if it is suitable for large-scale production and has a certain share of the domestic market, or if it has a very promising future in the market and can lead the cultural industry of Qingyang and become a famous brand; products that are independently innovated and win the “Good Product” prize at national level are awarded 20,000 yuan and products that win the prize at provincial and municipal levels are awarded 10,000 and 5,000 yuan respectively; products at major exhibitions at home and abroad are awarded 20,000 yuan for winning a foreign prize, 10,000 yuan for a national prize of China and 5,000 yuan for a provincial one (ibid.).

Funding is essential for both family workshops and large companies. As mentioned the *Report on the Development of Huanxian’s Cultural Industry*:

One of the current problems in the development of the cultural industry is insufficient investment capital. Among the ten cultural industry companies in the county, only the Longying Company has built a production base with self-funded money, while the others who do not have enough capital have acquired their production plants through leasing, borrowing or for free. These plants are usually small and severely restrict development. Project support and loans are what they need most of all. Yet field research and interviews have indicated that the Huanxian government’s funds have often flowed into the Longying Company, while less funding has been given to the family workshops. These small workshops have few connections with the government and cannot get the required information in time. Master Wang has a small shop in the county which has only won 100,000 yuan of funding from the government,

while the Longying Company has received government support six times, a total of 2 million yuan. Besides, it has been granted a piece of land by the government with a 10,930m² construction area for its production base, this piece of land is valued at 10 million yuan. (HCG, 2009)

c. Practitioners

According to the 2008 *Work Report of the Huanxian County Department of Cultural Affairs*, there are about 200 shadow puppet producers in Huanxian County, most of whom are farmers (HCG, 2008). As China's modernization and urbanization continue, these handmade crafts face the danger of extinction. The above-mentioned machines are one of the challenges and the migration of villagers to the city is another. Most of the young villagers are eager to make money in big cities instead of inheriting the craft, even though the money they can make at home or working for the Longying Company may be the same as their earnings in a big city. Some young people, after attending university, cannot return to the county and engage in the industry, even if they would like to.

So currently those who work in family workshops are generally older farmers. For example, only Master Wang and his wife make shadow puppets in their workshop -- Master Wang carves them, his wife colors them and they pack them together at night. Master Wang's son and daughter-in-law come to help them only at the weekend or when they are free. Master Wang said:

I don't want my son to come into this business. I told him to study hard and go to university in the big city instead of staying in the county. You can't make a lot of money by making shadow puppets. You can only consider it some extra money for daily living expenses. He is now working in the county and would come to help me during weekends or when he is not busy. He likes shadow

puppets. I've been making shadow puppets for over 40 years. I've got a lot of experience. I hoped that my son could carry on what I'm doing, but he has his own job and I hope he can do something big, bigger than just making shadow puppets, too. It's a pity that the treasure passed down from our ancestors is disappearing, but one can hardly live on it. Many young men have come to me to learn the craft and quit soon after. They just cannot sit there for ten or more hours to practice carving. In the past such craft could only be passed down to your own son, sometimes your son's wife, and nobody else, and we were supposed to keep some important skills and not teach them to the learners. Now I can teach whoever wants to learn whatever I know. But less and less people are willing to learn it. We kept some of the most important skills for our own offspring, for fear that if people who were not our family learned them, they would get our business as well. But now, everything is different. I teach my apprentice who is not our family everything I know. The reason is simple. If I don't, my crafts passed down from our ancestors won't be able to be passed down any more. Some young men work really hard when they are learning the craft from me. I thought they might help me in my workshop, but after they learn the skills, they either own their own stores in the city or go to work for the Longying Company where they are paid more. (Personal interview, April 8, 2012)

Among the 50 employees, five are management staff, five are ordinary workers and the other 40 are professional technical staff, i.e., those who participate in the carving process. Masters like Gao Qingwang, the *Representative Inheritor of the National Intangible Cultural Heritage* granted by the Ministry of Culture, and other representative inheritors at provincial, municipal and county level are included in the professional technical staff. They are mostly farmers and are now hired by the Longying Company after being given the title of representative inheritor. Apart from

farmers, most of the staff are young women who have only had middle school education; they are from more remote villages and have been introduced by their acquaintances to work in the county. These young people do not have much knowledge of shadow puppetry and they mostly work for the money. Learning or inheriting the crafts is not their concern.

d. The Challenges of Shadow-Puppet-Making Machines

Shadow puppets are part of the shadow performance and do not have any practical functions by themselves. To meet the market demand, a shadow puppet as merchandise must be processed and innovatively repackaged before it is sold as a product. Through fieldwork and interviews, this researcher has found that innovative designs for shadow puppet products depend on both the raw materials and the processing craft. Traditionally the raw materials are cowhide and sheepskin. A whole piece of donkey skin can be made into ten ordinary shadow puppets and a few large pieces of furniture or sets for the shadow performance. And just the leather processing would take about one month. This obviously cannot meet the large market demand. So the Longying Company and the workshops no longer process the leathers for making shadow puppets themselves; instead, they buy them from processing plants in Hebei and Shanxi Provinces.

The way shadow puppets are made today is also different from how they were made before. In the past, one piece of leather would be carved into only one shadow puppet; now, some manufacturers produce the same shadow puppet many times by carving on pieces of leather that are stacked together. In the past, the face and clothes of a shadow puppet were carved exquisitely and the head, body and legs of the puppet were connected by iron wires to enable flexible and vivid movements in the performance; today, many shadow puppets are fixed on cardboard and framed to be hung on the wall as a decoration, the various body parts of which do not need to be

moveable. Therefore, a lot of details of the carving are ignored. The head and the body are carved as an integrated piece that cannot move, for instance. Traditional mineral pigments are not used in coloring anymore; instead, chemical pigments have been adopted, to make the colors brighter and more diversified.

In spite of all the differences mentioned above, the biggest difference is that machines are used to make the shadow puppets. The development of modern science and technology and the emergence of large-scale machines are having a big impact on the production of traditional handicrafts. Machines' highly efficient mass production and lower cost for single pieces are squeezing out traditional handmade methods and threatening the practical value of many traditional handicrafts. Gansu Province was not the first province where machines were used to make shadow puppets.

As early as 2000, some places in Shaanxi Province invented machines to produce shadow puppets. These machines, into which the production programs for the patterns of shadow puppets can be entered, can make standardized shadow puppets in larger numbers. Machine-produced shadow puppets are carved very simply without any craft skills, but they can be produced very quickly with a reduced labor force. The few machines that the Longying Company has purchased to produce shadow puppets on a large scale, to meet the demands of the tourist sites in other parts of China, have reduced its production costs and the time required, with increased profits.

Buyers at tourist sites in other places, who have no idea of the craft of Daoqing, cannot tell the difference between a hand-made puppet and one which has been machined-produced. What they can tell is that one of them is three times cheaper than the other. So the machine-produced shadow puppets which cost less sell better. The traditional rural handicrafts cannot compete with modern technology. Daoqing has lost the social conditions for its survival, and the foundation its culture is based on.

Consequently, people are gradually losing their norms, values and cultural identity – a kind of amnesia in traditional handicrafts and customs. The natural elements of agricultural civilization can no longer be found in them.

The situation may be described like this:

The value and direction of cultural development cannot be controlled by human beings; rather, it is the culture itself [that] raises an inherent requirement. The introduction of new technologies inevitably leads to a chain of reactions in society. Every new technology gives humanity a new cultural factor and enriches the original culture; meanwhile, the culture itself and the society adapts or assimilates through appropriate cultural forms, or promotes cultural evolution through the adjustment and transformation of the old culture. Accordingly, technology is the basic driving force of cultural change and evolution. (L. Fang, 2000, p.196)

Traditional shadow puppets have been developed into a variety of products to be sold and used in modern daily life. The main products that the Longying Company and the family workshops make are hanging decorations and free-standing decorations. The so-called hanging decorations are to be mounted on a frame which can be hung on the wall like a painting. Free-standing decorations are similar to hanging ones, except that hanging ones are bigger. Free-standing decorations can be appreciated like a framed picture on the desk. Apart from these products, the Longying Company print the patterns of shadow puppets on clothing, bedding, home accessories, bath hygiene products, office supplies, decorative items, packages, toys and other tourist souvenirs. This author has noticed tableware and wallpaper printed with shadow puppet images in a few restaurants in Huanxian County, and pillows and quilts with printed patterns of shadow puppets in the hotels of Huanxian County.

These products are innovative in terms of their forms, yet the design of the shadow puppets themselves is not in any way a breakthrough.

Traditionally, shadow puppets were designed in certain fixed patterns and types, as the shadow puppets were just for performance. The repertoires determined the kinds of shadow puppets, how many were made and what images they had. The products of the family workshops and the Longying Company use the same patterns as the traditional ones. Several traditional themes are used repeatedly. The so-called innovation is usually some new combination of old characters; no substantial innovation is ever made.

The reasons are not difficult to find. Family makers, very skilled as some of them are, are mostly farmers who have not received much education, which means that they have much more carving experience than the ability and talent to create their own designs. The Longying Company, as a leading enterprise that enjoys support from the government, could train its staff in art or cooperate with art experts at universities to create new designs for shadow puppets, but that would mean more costs and so the company has not done anything. After all, its main purpose is profit, rather than passing down the heritage.

5.3.4 Lack of Market Structure and Government as the Biggest Buyer

The client structure of Master Wang's family workshop is simple. According to the information given during the interview, most of Master Wang's shadow puppets are sold to a legal department of the Huanxian government, and the unframed and half-finished shadow puppets are sold to the Longying Company. Individual clients are very few. Master Wang's workshop makes 30 or 40 sales each month. As the production cost of a single shadow puppet is over 80 yuan and a framed and packaged

shadow puppet can sell at about 180 yuan, Master Wang gains 3000 to 4000 yuan profit every month. Business is better at the end of the year, with profits up to 10,000 yuan per month.

Since the managers at the Longying Company were reluctant to take part in an interview and provide file documents, this author had to get the relevant documents and sales records of the company from the Qingyang Municipal Cultural Industry Department. As stated in the 2011 *Current Status and Overall Planning of the Longying Cultural Industry Development Co., Ltd.*, the company only had a registered capital of 300,000 yuan and total assets of 500,000 yuan in 2002; but these figures have soared to 5 million and more than 20 million yuan respectively. The company has an annual output of 100,000 shadow puppets, selling to big cities like Beijing, Shenzhen, Guangzhou, Lanzhou and Shanghai, with outlets in cities like Beijing, Xi'an, Lanzhou, Yinzhou, Shenzhen and JiNan. Presently, the exact total assets of the Longying Company are 25,360,000 yuan. As shown in the income statement of the report mentioned above: in 2011, total business income was 10,073,586 yuan; total costs 6,872,781 yuan; operating profit 1,852,614 yuan; income tax 4,631,153 yuan; net profit 1,389,461 yuan (*Longying*, 2011)

The question of who are the buyers is the core issue in the industrialization of Daoqing, along with the question of whether industrialization is an effective way to protect it. According to the fieldwork, interviews, documents, files and participant observations, the clients can be classified into three categories: Qingyang municipal and Huanxian county governmental departments, tourists from outside Huanxian County and local people from Huanxian County⁴⁷. Surprisingly, government

47 The summary of these three categories is based on the author's field investigation, interviews, participant observation and the governmental files. The 2008 *Development Thoughts on the Cultural Industry of Daoqing Shadow Play in the Work Report of the Huanxian County Department of Cultural Affairs* mentioned that to better safeguard, inherit and develop Daoqing, the Department of Cultural Affairs must take action on the following aspects: "...Third, expanding sales. The shadow puppet products should be sold through the following three channels: 1. Since Huanxian County is the

departments are the largest buyers. Taking the Longying Company as an example, most of their shadow puppets, all of which are handmade, are sold to the government; while the machine-made ones are sold in popular tourist resorts outside Gansu Province in very small numbers. The author saw Daoqing being sold as souvenirs on Jinli Street during his visit to Chengdu, Sichuan in 2011. Sichuan has its own traditional shadow theatre and most tourists can't tell the difference between Sichuan shadow puppets and Huanxian shadow puppets or the difference between machine-produced and handmade ones. They buy them as souvenirs or gifts. Locals who buy Huanxian Daoqing are mostly students and workers returning home from university or from working in the city. They buy the shadow puppets in their home town, usually just a single piece, to give someone as a special gift when they get back to the big city.

What is worthy of discussion is that if Daoqing is being industrialized as the government publicizes it, Daoqing's sales should be decided by the market. Why is it the case that the Qingyang Municipal Government and the Huanxian County Government are the biggest buyers? The author spent two weeks observing the Longying Company and some family workshops and found to her surprise that the people who came to take shadow puppets from the Longying Company, five or six batches of them in just one day, were from various government departments. These government staff had an agreement with the company: they take the puppets, sign the bill, and pay the money at the end of the year. They did not have many requirements as long as the shadow puppets were handmade. Occasionally, an individual would come to the company to inquire, and leave as the price was too high. As for the family workshops, apart from the few individuals who come in and buy a few small puppets,

'Birthplace of the Shadow Plays', shadow puppets have become a symbolic gift that can be bought by working units and people in the county and sent to their colleagues, relatives or other friends. 2. Shadow puppets can be exhibited at all kinds of festivals and exhibitions in and outside the county, so that more people get to know Huanxian Daoqing and more Daoqing can be sold. 3. Outlets can be set up in cities like Beijing, Guangzhou, Xi'an, Yinchuan and Lanzhou." (HCDCA, 2008a)

some government staff (much fewer than those who go to the Longying Company) would also buy some shadow puppets.

Why did the government buy these puppets? Why does the Longying Company get more governmental buyers than the family workshops? The answers might be found in Master Wang's explanation:

My business is getting worse. The main buyer is a fixed government department recommended by my acquaintance. They would come twice or three times a month, and buy around ten puppets each time. Now that shadow play is an intangible cultural heritage, it can be used as a gift with local characteristics when the county government applies to the municipal government for funding, when the municipal governmental leaders apply for funding from the central government in Beijing, or when officials from the provincial and central governments are leaving at the end of a meetings or an examination is over. There are always meetings and inspections, so there is always the need for shadow puppets. One of my relatives is a director of the legal department, so the legal department is my fixed client -- this is all guanxi, or connections. The more acquaintances you have in the government, the more business you have. I am getting old and don't have enough energy to make more connections, one fixed client is enough for me. The guys from the government don't care about the price -- the government pays the bill anyway. I sell my ordinary shadow puppets at 180 yuan each. The cost is about 80 yuan. Actually the cost of making a shadow puppet is very low, but the cost of the frame and packaging is high. I can't buy as much packaging at a time at low prices as the Longying Company does. I can sell 30 to 40 shadow puppets a month, and get a few thousand yuan of profit from this, which is better. This is much better than farming, which only brings me a little over 3,000 yuan a year. I am happy. The

shadow puppets are complementary gifts, so the men from the government are not picky at all, as long as the shadow puppets are handmade. There are individual customers as well, but very rarely. They are mostly students who want to buy something for their teachers and friends when they go back to their universities. We can't compare with the Longying Company. It has more connections and offers more rebates. We small businesses can't afford to do that.

(Personal interview, April 8, 2012)

The government pays a lot attention to safeguarding Daoqing because intangible cultural heritage is becoming a kind of cultural resource that can not only raise the reputation of the nation in the global context, but can also create a new local economic growth factor. But as much as the Huanxian County Government wishes it were so, the shadow puppets are not a real industry yet.

On the one hand, despite all the favorable policies the Huanxian County Government has given to Daoqing, it is not the market that dominates the sale of Daoqing shadow puppets -- it is still not a real industry with a real market.

On the other hand, the target of heritage protection that the industrialization of Daoqing is meant to serve is not being achieved; instead, the changing ways of making shadow puppets, the working staff and the relationship between the Longying Company and family workshops have done harm to the traditional craft itself. As producers know that their products will be bought by the government, they need not worry about the quality of the shadow puppets or innovations in their form. It is simply a case of a large company bringing a lot of pressure and unfair competition to the smaller workshops. The older farmers are becoming potential shadow puppet processing workers, since the existing workers are aging and the young people are leaving the county.

In the meantime, a township enterprise like the Longying Company is developing fast. It is busy receiving orders from cities and organizing production and processing puppets with employees from more remote villages, which disrupts the small peasant economy on which the traditional folk crafts were based and leads to the traditional craft market being replaced by industrial products. At the same time, the company tends to use machines to reduce the costs of human labor. New farmer entrepreneurs like the general manager of the Longying Company spend no time and pay no attention to considerations of the safeguarding of Daoqing or research on Daoqing.

Besides, the modern globalized cultures that have entered into households via television and the internet have changed the Huanxian community's traditional way of life, values and aesthetic standards. To many of the young people, the value of shadow puppets lies in their price rather than their value as a traditional craft. In short, the major targets of the Longying Company are to reduce as many costs and gain as much profit as possible. Meanwhile, challenges in the inheritance, development and improvement of the craft are all cast aside.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSIONS

The prolegomena to this thesis proposed to explore and analyze the transformation and safeguarding of Daoqing in socialist China by adopting a socio-historical approach. In the course of the research, the author combined government archives reflecting Huanxian county's political, economic and cultural conditions with the information obtained through interviews with Daoqing inheritors, in order to analyze, on the basis of the macro and micro views of the Chinese government and the Huanxian Community, how Daoqing was transformed through different stages of China's political and economic change. The transformation includes Daoqing's social identity, its social function and its values, how it is interpreted, the efforts and activities to safeguard it and its internal characteristics.

How many periods of major transformation has Daoqing experienced in the past 60 years under the administration of the Chinese Communist Party? What were the characteristics of its transformation in the periods of political volatility and economic reform? How did the central government change its interpretation of Daoqing and its cultural policy towards Daoqing? What were the driving forces behind the changes? How did the Huanxian community change its understanding and its ways of safeguarding Daoqing? How does the relationship between the government and community work and how is the fluctuation in their power reflected in different cases? What are the problems with China's safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, as seen in the case of Daoqing? Will Daoqing continue to exist? All these questions will be answered in the conclusions which follow.

6.1 Conclusions

6.1.1 Daoqing as a Reinvented Intangible Cultural Heritage

Daoqing has undergone three transition stages in socialist China: The first stage is from 1949 to 1976. As soon as the Chinese Communist Party had control of the state, it launched a political campaign to transform traditional Chinese society as it established the new ideology. The most extreme version of this campaign was the Cultural Revolution, in which many folk traditions were dismissed as “feudal superstition” or a “remnant of feudalism”. One example was Daoqing, which represented Taoism (and in part Confucianism); on account of its functions of worshipping the gods and enlightening and entertaining the Huanxian community, it was considered anti-socialist, anti-people and against social progress. Daoqing -- its style of performance, stories, shadow puppets and troupe composition -- was completely transformed to promote the Communist Party’s political ideas, to sustain their legitimacy and to consolidate their political purposes.

Towards the end of this period, traditional Daoqing was banned, traditional shadow puppets were destroyed and artists who dared to perform traditional repertoires were persecuted, while the “Daoqing revolutionary model plays” were created. The transformed Daoqing was largely used to propagate the Communist Party’s policies, with its value reduced to one of reflecting and promoting the ideology of the prevailing regime. Daoqing troupes were ordered to spread Communist ideas so that the Communist Party could consolidate its political power. It is fair to say that Daoqing in this period was merely a political tool.

The second stage is from 1978 to the late 1990s. As the economic reform of 1978 set common goals for the Chinese government and all the members of society, with the focus of national policies turning from political struggle to economic construction, Daoqing, previously subordinate to and serving politics, slowly recovered from its enforced silence. It escaped the currents of political movements and moved towards the center of the new economic developments. At this point, the

policies developed by central government were conducive to Daoqing's recovery, but Daoqing's uneasy social identity under socialist ideology meant that it was still regarded as "feudal superstition".

The government tried to provide a more relaxed environment for Daoqing by organizing performances and seminars, which laid the foundation for it becoming an intangible cultural heritage in the future. Later, as the economic reform penetrated cultural life, Daoqing was gradually restored and developed by itself. But that did not mean there was no political control at all over Daoqing; on the contrary, Daoqing was always "political" and had to change in line with the nation's norms, under guidance. This stage was a recovery and transition period for Daoqing.

The third stage is from 2003 to the present day. When China signed the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention in 2003, Daoqing suddenly became a National Intangible Cultural Heritage and in 2011 was included in the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*. The previous "remnant of feudalism" now became a treasure of the nation.

As economic construction is without doubt at the center of China's development, Daoqing is considered as a kind of economic resource. In order to combine it with other commodities in the cultural industry and create market efficiency, the government has reinterpreted the history and value of Daoqing and re-transformed the performing styles and the contents of its stories. The safeguarding activities for Daoqing are also in line with its economic value. Daoqing performance can frequently be seen in activities for the propagation of policy or promotion of the local economy; the mode of production for Daoqing shadow puppets has changed from family workshop to big corporation. In a word, Daoqing in the third stage of China's transformation has become an economic resource as well as a "national

treasure”.

So at each of the three transition stages since 1949, when new China was founded, the policies and the implementation of policies on Daoqing have changed as its social identity and interpretation changed. This suggests that an intangible cultural heritage like Daoqing belongs to the whole society and is no longer inherited through family members, as it used to be in the traditional society. New political and economic elements and contents have been added to the intangible cultural heritage, prompting its transformation and development. Such shifts bring great challenges to the intangible cultural heritage and the danger of extinction means that safeguarding measures must be discussed.

The safeguarding policies and protective measures for Daoqing have also experienced significant changes. In the first phase, a minority of the political elite and intellectuals did realize that it was necessary to protect traditions, yet they could not do anything, as culture was held hostage by politics and traditions were being abandoned. So basically there was no policy or practice for safeguarding Daoqing.

The government even worked out policies to transform, criticise and ban Daoqing, which was the opposite of safeguarding. The Huanxian community, unable to perform or inherit Daoqing in the traditional ways under such political pressure, cooperated in the destruction of Daoqing, actively or passively. Fortunately, many people had the wisdom to keep practicing and passing down Daoqing secretly, saving Daoqing from being completely destroyed. This demonstrates the Huanxian community’s spontaneity and initiative in protecting Daoqing.

In the second phase, the ban on Daoqing was gradually lifted, as politics loosened its control over the tradition. The government introduced a few safeguarding

policies: first, to recover the traditional ways of performing, the traditional content and formation of troupes; second, to introduce economic measures for the development of Daoqing, as the economic reform had permeated all aspects of society. The safeguarding policies were designed to correct the wrongs that had been done in the Cultural Revolution. Bringing economic instruments into the cultural system did not produce any systematic or theoretical awareness of Daoqing, or policies or behaviors to protect it.

In the third phase, with the deepening of the economic reform, all the safeguarding policies for Daoqing have been implemented with a view to one goal, “taking good advantage of it” -- behind which is the force of economic interests. Nominating Daoqing for the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, promoting inventories and performances at home and abroad, and supporting its integration into the cultural industry all serve economic interests. For the previous 30 years, Daoqing was forced to transform under political pressure and now it is being forced by the Chinese government to develop within a new economic framework in disguise. The safeguarding policies being carried out are designed to make use of this intangible heritage.

The decision-makers think that using Daoqing equals protecting it. To be more precise, these policies bundle together intangible heritage and the cultural industry; the core concept here is to stimulate inheritors and stakeholders to produce intangible heritage by using the power of the market. The Huanxian community, eager to get out of poverty, as the county is extremely underdeveloped, has therefore begun to reexamine Daoqing and cooperate with the government in converting Daoqing into a commodity. The new policies and the Huanxian community’s behaviors are arguably doing harm to Daoqing, once again.

The above is the trajectory of Daoqing's transformation in socialist China. Its social image, interpretation, value, performance, production and social functions, as well as protective activities, have differed from one period to the next. This whole process illustrates that the publicized "national treasure" of today is not the traditional Daoqing any more; instead, it is a "reinvented" intangible cultural heritage. It is not Daoqing that is performed on stage; it is the concept of something that is not present -- the concept of those in power -- that is performed. The real leading "role" is being played by the Chinese political movement and economic interests, rather than Daoqing itself.

Daoqing has appeared in different forms at different times. It could be eliminated due to political reasons; it could also be changed and reshaped and combined with the economy. On the one hand, what is recognizable about Daoqing has been developed, altered, integrated and transformed so that it can survive through historical phases and constitute the basis of culture in the next phase; on the other hand, what has been rejected in Daoqing may also be reaffirmed and converted into an important force in cultural inheritance or an important factor in the continuation of traditional culture in the next phase. Daoqing is a microcosm of China's intangible cultural heritage. What it has experienced in the past 60 years has also been experienced by other forms of intangible heritage in the categories of the performing arts, crafts and festivals. In short, much of China's intangible cultural heritage has been *reinvented*.

6.1.2 The Joint Actions of Government and Community in the Reinvention of Daoqing as an Intangible Cultural Heritage

The transformation and safeguarding of Daoqing reflect the relationship between the state and the community, from antagonism to interdependence to cooperation. Most literature in the past has focused only on the power and functions

of the nation or only on the community's behaviors, ignoring the relationship between the two and how such relations have fluctuated. This study suggests that it is due to the state and the community working together that Daoqing has been reshaped, reformulated and reinterpreted.

To a varying degree, the nation has involved Daoqing in political dogmas or in economic development and controlled its performing styles, content, performers and troupe composition; meanwhile, the public have participated in constructing Daoqing in their own proprietary ways. With regard to Daoqing, the attitudes, ideas, interpretations and safeguarding actions of the government and of the community were initially different and gradually became the same; their behaviors toward Daoqing changed from totally hostile to cooperative. Yet what cannot be ignored is that it is the very conflict and tension between the state and the community that has guaranteed the existence and development of Daoqing.

At the first stage, the relationship between the state and the community was "violently controlling and passively being controlled". The plays that were performed, how they were performed and how the troupes were formed were strictly controlled according to the will of the government; the community -- as the inheritor of Daoqing -- was completely manipulated and had no power to do anything for Daoqing. The state repeatedly used Daoqing for its own interests and plans, while the masses could not stop the invasion of the dominant discourse. These two sides were in complete opposition. The positive outcome of this was that state suppression made the Huanxian community yearn for and cherish Daoqing more than ever. They protected Daoqing secretly under great political pressure.

In the second phase, the state gradually withdrew from political intervention in cultural life, freeing up some space for the public and for the development of

Daoqing. The Huanxian community thus enjoyed some autonomy and did not need to practice or perform secretly. The relationship between the state and the community began to ease and Daoqing avoided being artificially eliminated, providing the preconditions for later becoming an intangible cultural heritage for commercialization and industrialization.

In the third phase, the state is treating Daoqing more rationally. Daoqing was included in the *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* through consultation and cooperation between the government and the public, reaching a consensus through common economic goals. A new kind of relationship has been formed, whereby the state's actions reflect political and cultural rationality, the influence of the international cultural environment and the global attention toward safeguarding intangible cultural heritage; in the meantime, the actions of the Huanxian Daoqing troupes reflect a type of economic rationality, as Daoqing can bring them more income.

Through these three phases of transformation, the state power has had the absolute right to speak. It has been the most important force in every transformation of Daoqing, whether this meant being bundled with politics, freeing itself of political control or integrating with the market. Yet the community as a group does not only passively accept all that they face. They have the potential to become active. Politics and power should not be thought of in a simplistic way; attention must be paid to the interaction between the government and the public, including resistance and negotiation, rather than simple overriding and yielding. The existence, transformation and safeguarding of Daoqing needs cooperation between the state and the public. It is just that their relationships have changed from time to time. Be it antagonism or interdependence, their inseparable relationship constitutes the current Daoqing. The close link between them has created a new interactive force that bonds them together

to build a huge influential network for Daoqing.

The different attitudes to and understanding of heritage protection of the Chinese government and the general public in different regions have given rise to a complex network of relationships. Through changes and developments in Daoqing, the state and the community have formed a network or union which has continuously deconstructed, reconstructed, reinvented and reshaped Daoqing. It is not so much that Huanxian has an old tradition; it is that the state and the community co-invented a new intangible cultural heritage.

To put it more specifically, Daoqing's transformation is a process of collective construction involving multiple participants. The relationship network created in the process contains the rules that constrain the conduct of the participants and support Daoqing's development. The changes and safeguarding processes that Daoqing has experienced also reflect the changes in the state and in the community's rules of conduct in relation to Daoqing. Such rules of conduct contain not only political rationality but also economic rationality, forming a new support structure for Daoqing. In that respect, it is fair to regard Daoqing as a participant in its own reconstruction -- after all, the actions of all the relevant members of society have been conducted around it. It is just that the logic of their actions was not always the same, as their objectives varied through different periods of time.

As mentioned above, Daoqing is a microcosm of China's intangible cultural heritage. The safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage is inseparable from the network co-created by the state and the community. The state, or the government, has a certain responsibility for the changes in the intangible cultural heritage or safeguarding it, for it must create a favorable policy and institutional environment to enable the intangible cultural heritage to be sustained and developed. The community,

on the other hand, must also take active action because they are the main carriers of the intangible cultural heritage. Any fracture of the link or a withdrawal by one side would break the entire network and it would be impossible to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage. Therefore, only when the relationship between the government and the community and their respective links with the intangible cultural heritage are clarified, can the heritage be better protected.

6.1.3 Problems in Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage as Reflected in the Case of Daoqing

The changes in Daoqing through three phases have given rise to changes in the formulation and implementation of policies, which reflect three problems in the safeguarding of China's intangible cultural heritage:

Firstly, safeguarding is in "blood-transfusion style" rather than "blood-generating style". The protection of the intangible cultural heritage in China has been increasingly dependent on the government. As the government's penetration into the intangible cultural heritage gets deeper, all the safeguarding efforts become nationalized. The main carriers of the intangible cultural heritage, or inheritors and relevant communities, are getting more and more dependent on the government and have themselves only a faint awareness of protection. In the case of Daoqing, the government makes policies without communicating with inheritors; troupes and performers wait passively for government actions -- issuing policies, arranging performances or giving financial support -- rather than giving their opinions. The problem can be most clearly seen in the production and sale of shadow puppets. With government intervention, sales are not regulated by the market any more and the government has become the largest buyer of shadow puppets.

While the intangible cultural heritage is seemingly being safeguarded

through the joint efforts of the government and community, it is in fact controlled by the government, which has both political and economic advantages. Thus the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage in China is always in a top-down “blood-transfusion” style. The community at the bottom only passively accepts it. Different kinds of safeguarding policies involve different political and economic purposes. Such purposes not only make the heritage an “intangible cultural heritage”, but also ensure its normal operation according to the government’s will. This may lead to the end of the “blood-generating” of the intangible cultural heritage and the destruction of its capacity for self-renewal.

Secondly, there is a logical dislocation between safeguarding and utilization, between inheritance and development. Since China signed the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, its nomination for intangible cultural heritage at a global level and its safeguarding of cultural heritage all came with a strong economic motivation. Consequently, Daoqing is used -- in the name of safeguarding and inheritance -- as a kind of economic resource or a city trademark, to develop the economy. Other examples of the intangible cultural heritage of China face the same problem, i.e. more attention is attached to utilization and development than to safeguarding and inheritance. Obviously, development creates profits while safeguarding requires input; inheritance benefits future generations, which few people care for, whereas improving political performance and creating economic benefits are achievements in the present. So although such a perspective is very short-sighted, most of China’s intangible cultural heritage is facing such problems.

The reasons behind this are obvious. Since the economic reform initiated by Deng Xiaoping introduced the market mechanism to socialist China, the pursuit of economic interests is to a great extent widely accepted in society. Profit-oriented behaviors have a direct influence on people’s mindsets. During the process of

economic transformation, new resources were needed for economic development. However, many regions of China were in a state of vacuum, as the old system was in demise, but the new system had not yet been completely established. The channels through which a community could obtain resources were very limited. In the drive for monetary interests, the communities began to look for anything that was likely to be useful as an economic resource. When it came to the question of what they were most familiar with, the answer would be the traditions they had known and been closely tied to for a long time. So with the complicity of the government and the villagers, tradition has become known as an example of intangible cultural heritage, to be used as a resource for economic development. The safeguarding of the heritage as such is for better usage of it. This is why the concepts of utilization and safeguarding are tangled up in the case of Daoqing.

Thirdly, the fact that the community had high expectations of the monetary advantages which could come from the intangible cultural heritage has been much neglected. Research in the past focused only on the government's role in taking advantage of the intangible cultural heritage as a kind of economic resource; this ignored that the inheritors and the community also participate in this process. It is a pity that only the government's inclinations and policies have been observed while the community's economic demand is overlooked. The above analysis has shown that the inheritors also try to make use of their old tradition to generate more income. In the case of Daoqing, many troupes have cut the number of performers and the length of the shows, all for the sake of earning more money. If they ARE "forced" to make some changes in government-organized performances, they ARE NOT in their private performances.

The current status of China's development may be described as "three stages coexisting; one stage being skipped", i.e. agricultural civilization, industrial

civilization and post-industrial civilization coexist, although some regions are having to leap from an agricultural civilization to a post-industrial civilization, skipping industrial civilization (X. Fei, 1989). In many poor remote mountainous areas that are still in the stage of agricultural civilization, Huanxian County, for example, examples of the intangible cultural heritage may be available in great diversity. But as these areas are undeveloped, the local people cannot see their culture objectively and act rationally. They can only try to find a way out of poverty by exploiting the name of the intangible cultural heritage. To them, the concept of safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage is too vague and remote; they care only about how to survive and live a modern life, just as some communities in the developed regions do. Marshall Sahlins said (1976) that traditional culture can be protected only when the economy develops well. The community in China would not deny that.

So the Huanxian community, despite some veiled criticisms of the county government's policies, is making use of its intangible cultural heritage, too. If people's crafts and skills can bring them enough wealth and they are respected enough, they may cling to their old profession and traditions. But Daoqing, unfortunately, cannot bring them wealth. So they put their hope in modern industry, which brings them higher returns more quickly, even if this means ruthlessly abandoning their intangible cultural heritage.

Problems like the "blood-transfusion style", the contradiction between inheritance and utilization or the demands of inheritors cannot be avoided. The safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage is a practical issue for which one should not blindly copy foreign experience and it must be understood on the basis of fieldwork and research, taking into consideration China's special circumstances. Any would be imaginative concepts misleading. The government, in any case, should not regard Daoqing as an appendage of politics or the economy; rather, it must examine

and recognize its intrinsic value. It should create a favorable external environment for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage; furthermore, it should stop its intervention and let inheritors and the heritage-related communities rely on themselves. Change is inevitable; but the awareness, idea and consciousness of safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage are constant.

6.2 Discussion

6.2.1 How Will Daoqing Survive?

During the fieldwork in Huanxian, the author observed how the ancient idyllic villages in one's imagination no longer exist; what have replaced them are streets full of modern vehicles and crowds, cave dwellings transformed by modern household appliances even in remote mountainous areas, and widespread use of cell phones to communicate with the outside world. The 40 years of political and economic reform have worked like an "invisible hand", exerting long and powerful control over the rural communities' livelihoods and values. What Daoqing used to reflect was a mode of cultural life embedded in agricultural civilization, which can hardly survive under the control of the "invisible hand" in contemporary China. Therefore, the original Daoqing which was an integral part of its original ecology can hardly survive, either.

But does this mean that China's intangible cultural heritage as represented in the example of Daoqing may be in decline? Can it survive today? Daoqing was not eliminated by politics or devoured by the economy; instead, it changed and adapted. In other words, its hardiness has enabled it to survive and continue in its unique way. No matter what external political or economic elements are added to Daoqing, it is arguably still a continuation of the traditional practice -- if one speaks of the core value of Daoqing.

This study holds that Daoqing, as a tradition, can provide the Huanxian community with a sense of security and trust as it connects the past, present and future, and allow the community to find trusted connections through their customs and practices. Though the outlook for the production and performance of Daoqing in Huanxian County is not optimistic -- the masters of its skills are advanced in age and Daoqing is not attractive enough to the youth -- it is still very likely that Daoqing will continue with its own strength and in its own way. The two reasons why it will not be instantly abandoned as a result of the rapid social changes and developments are as follows.

Firstly, Daoqing is deeply loved and it brings a sense of reassurance to the Huanxian community. Be it the Huanxian County Government, the elderly or the young, people cannot completely master life in modern society. When facing the changing world, the Huanxian community thinks first of their local resources. Their unique way of understanding and grasping the world is still active, and people still respond to the changes in modern society in their own style. It is not only the strong political and economic factors, but also the Huanxian community's love of tradition which have made Daoqing a national intangible cultural heritage. The ancient tradition, despite being reshaped, still gives the community a sense of continuity and reassurance.

Besides, the Huanxian community loves Daoqing. As Rainer Maria Rilke mentioned, things can only be understood and grasped, and their value can only be recognized through LOVE. How the community responded to the government in the Cultural Revolution and how they have actively given life to Daoqing again, all prove the intimate sentiments and attachment the Huanxian community has for Daoqing. This is the charm of tradition; such is the richness of a community's feelings towards

tradition.

Secondly, Daoqing is still inseparable from the Huanxian community's daily life and is needed by the society. The holistic cultural heritage of the agricultural civilization of Huanxian fostered Daoqing, making it an expression closest to the life of the ordinary people and the best indicator of the local community's aesthetic tastes. Even when modern folk ceremonies are getting more and more popular, traditional weddings and traditional ceremonies at all kinds of festivals are frequently seen. As an important part of rural tradition, Daoqing will continue to exist together with other related rituals and ceremonies. Such is the Huanxian County's unique local geographical and cultural characteristics. The transformation of Daoqing by the government and other stakeholders, according to their respective interests, just goes to show that they all regard Daoqing as a representative form of culture that stands for the image of Huanxian County. For whatever purpose, as long as Daoqing is still needed and used, it can continue to exist.

Although some examples of the intangible cultural heritage may become different from the image long imprinted in the minds of many in the community, the new appearance which emerges will become part of life. As Marshall Sahlins (1976) put it, "History is showing us a new set of culture, practices and political structure" (p. 67), "Culture disappears when we explore how to understand it and reemerges then in a way we never imagined" (ibid.). China's intangible cultural heritage demonstrates a process of reproduction of reconstructed tradition. Daoqing is an "invented" new tradition, an "invented" intangible cultural heritage, yet it is not useless; it still serves the community.

Thus, if we consider the intangible cultural heritage as alive and developing, we must admit that it is a part, a changing part, of communities' lives. As society is

continuously developing, the heritage is constantly changing and being reconstructing as well. Furthermore, however the intangible cultural heritage changes, and whatever the government's safeguarding policies and the community's protective measures may be, their durability will have to be tested by practice. This study is a piece of research in progress. With new materials, the conclusions of this paper will have to be reevaluated.

6.2.2 Limitations of the Research and Further Outlook

The above are the conclusions of this research. This academic paper is far from being perfect. Due to the limits of time and resources, the theoretical perspectives may still be lacking in depth, the logical arguments may not be far-reaching enough, the discourse may not be grand or uniform in outlook, there may seem to be some contradictions waiting to be resolved, and the description of Daoqing in each chapter remains merely fragments. Even more effort will be put into the follow-up research. The author hopes to be joined by scholars who have similar interests to study and understand China's intangible cultural heritage together.

But hopefully through this effort, the theoretical foundations, the methods, the collection of government archives and interviews, the constructed transformation framework of three phases or stages, and the analysis of the relationship between the government and the community will nevertheless provide some new ideas, as a prototypical approach to help future research on other examples of China's heritage. For instance, topics such as "The Cultural Rights of the Inheriting Community" and "The Intangible Cultural Heritage and Civil Society" can be further studied as they are valuable but rarely discussed topics. The author expects the topic of the intangible cultural heritage in socialist China to be further studied, based on the existing results of the author and similar studies by other researchers.

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Appendix A

Sample Questions from Semi-Structured Interviews

(Conducted in Huanxian, Qingyang, China, March to April, 2012)

Part I: Interview protocol for Daoqing shadow theatre performers

1. Please state your name, age, educational background and occupation.
2. What role do you play in the Daoqing troupe? Please describe how you learned the Daoqing performance skills.
3. Please recall the memories that you have of your experiences with Daoqing during the period of the Cultural Revolution. What were your feelings at that time?
4. During the Cultural Revolution, what was the most serious crisis for Daoqing? Did you continue to practice Daoqing at that time?
5. Please recall the memories that you have of your experiences with Daoqing in the years of the Initial Period of Economic Reform. What were your feelings at that time?
6. Please recall the memories that you have of your experiences with Daoqing in more recent times, especially since Daoqing has been designated as National Intangible Cultural Heritage.
7. Do you know what “intangible cultural heritage” is?
8. Do you know about the nomination of Daoqing in Huanxian? Please describe how you were involved in the nomination process. Did you provide your signature on the nomination files?
9. Please describe how you were involved in the inventory process.
10. After Daoqing was designated as Chinese National Intangible Cultural Heritage, did anything affect your performance?
11. Are you happy with the nomination of Daoqing as intangible cultural heritage?
12. Do you have any plans to transmit your performing skills to young people?
13. Have you received any financial support from the government for practicing or transmitting Daoqing?

14. Do you often participate in commercial Daoqing performances? How high is the income from them?
15. Do you often participate in Daoqing performances that are organized by the government? How much are you paid for them?
16. Thinking about the Cultural Revolution, the Initial Period of Economic Reform and the more recent times, which section of the history of Daoqing has made the most impression on your memory?
17. What are the major differences and changes in performing Daoqing in the period of the Cultural Revolution, the Initial Period of Economic Reform and the more recent times?

Part II: Interview protocol for Daoqing shadow puppet makers

1. Please state your name, age, educational background and occupation.
2. Please describe how you learned the Daoqing puppet-making skills.
3. Please recall the memories that you have of your experiences with Daoqing in the period of the Cultural Revolution. What were your feelings at the time?
4. During the Cultural Revolution, what was the most serious crisis of Daoqing? Did you continue to make Daoqing puppets at that time?
5. Please recall the memories that you have of your experience with Daoqing in the years of the Initial Period of Economic Reform. What were your feelings at the time?
6. Please recall the memories that you have of your experiences with Daoqing in more recent times, especially since Daoqing has been designated as National Intangible Cultural Heritage
7. Do you know what “intangible cultural heritage” is?
8. Do you know about the nomination of Daoqing in Huanxian? Please describe how you were involved in the nomination process. Did you provide your signature on the nomination files?
9. Please describe how you were involved in the inventory process.

10. After Daoqing was designated as Chinese National Intangible Cultural Heritage, did anything affect your puppet making?
11. Are you happy with the nomination of Daoqing as intangible cultural heritage?
12. Do you have any plans to transmit your puppet-making skills to young people?
13. Have you received any financial support from the government for producing or transmitting Daoqing?
14. Please talk about your Daoqing shadow puppet business.
15. How high is the income from producing the shadow puppets?
16. Thinking about the Cultural Revolution, the Initial Period of Economic Reform and the more recent times, which section of the history of Daoqing has made the most impression on your memory?
17. What are the major differences and changes in performing Daoqing in the period of the Cultural Revolution, the Initial Period of Economic Reform and the more recent times?

Appendix B

Figure a
The Interpretation of Daoqing Puppets: The Role of the Human and Monster



Figure b
The Interpretation of Daoqing Puppets: The Role of the Military Official Riding on a Hourse, Kylin and Aminal



Figure c
The Interpretation of Daoqing Puppets: The Furnitures



Appendix C

The Letter from Cecil Duvelle



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

Culture Sector
Division of Cultural Objects and Intangible Heritage

Mr Shijun Liang
Director of Department of Culture of Gansu
Social Culture Division
No. 323, Jingning Road
Lanzhou
Gansu Province
China

7 April 2011

Ref.: CLT/CIH/ITH/0062600001
Reference to be used on all correspondence: 00626

Dear Mr Liang,

I am pleased to acknowledge receipt of the proposal submitted by China to be selected and promoted as best reflecting the principles and objectives of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Your proposal entitled 'Integrative safeguarding project of Huanxian Daoqing puppet shadow drama' has been registered under the number 00626. Please refer to this registration number in any future correspondence concerning this request.

In accordance with Paragraph 54 of the Operational Directives adopted by the General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention at its third session (Paris, France, 22 to 24 June 2010), the Secretariat will contact you as soon as possible and in any case before 30 June 2011, in the event of missing information.

Complete files will be transmitted for examination to the Consultative Body established by the Intergovernmental Committee for this purpose. Its recommendations will be transmitted to the Committee, which will decide whether or not to select the proposal for the Register of Best Practices during its seventh session to be held in autumn 2012.

Yours sincerely,

Cécile Duvelle
Secretary, Convention for the Safeguarding of the
Intangible Cultural Heritage
Chief, Intangible Cultural Heritage Section

cc: Permanent Delegation of the People's Republic of China to UNESCO
National Commission of the People's Republic of China for UNESCO

1, rue Miailis
75732 Paris Cedex 15, France
Phone: +33 (0)1 45 68 43 95
Fax: +33 (0)1 45 68 57 52

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Appendix D

The Distribution Map of Daoqing Troupes

(Huanxian Daoqing Shadow Theatre Protection Center, 2006)

环县道情皮影戏班分布图

