Chinese Opera: Transformation of Its Teaching Method in Relation to Consumption Culture

Abstract

In order to ensure the survival of a tradition Arts form, nurturing a new generation is an important task. This is even more true for Chinese opera. Today with the immense impact of new consumption culture and technology which are developed partly due to modernization and westernization, the method of teaching Chinese opera had undergone an evolution. In this modern society, a new form of teaching has emerged. The aim of this Honours Thesis is therefore, to provide an insight of the ambivalent relationship between the transformation of the teaching method of Chinese opera and consumption culture. Through the “consuming” of the lessons of Chinese opera, the students are also consuming the symbolic meanings which they have embedded into their learning process.

The investigation will be carried out in three phases: 1) Collecting of materials by conducting a fieldwork study at Tampines Community Club where Mdm. Chen Yan Fen taught. 2) Transcribing and analyzing of the data. 3) Interpreting of the results obtained.

This study of the teaching method of Chinese opera is placed within the framework of modern day consumption culture. It aims to examine the
change of a traditional form of teaching in our modern society. Comparisons will be made between modern practice and the traditional practice, in which the latter will be using Mei Lan Fang as a classic example. Despite the great changes that had occurred due to the immense impact from the consumption culture, the students still manage to find meanings from the opera lessons which they had chosen to consume.