AN ABSTRACT

The fieldwork focuses on contemporary development of teahouses in Singapore that are all located in Kreta Ayer, namely the Chinese Theatre Circle Teahouse, Opera East Teahouse, and Melody Pavilion.

Nowadays, the modern teahouses function as the entertainment and practice centers for Cantonese Opera fans. This thesis will look into the organizational structures of these three contemporary teahouses and its role and function are being studied. This thesis will also analyze the historical development of teahouses to compare with the present Cantonese opera activities in Singapore. In the 1950’s, earlier information on Cantonese Opera activities in Singapore was also found in teahouses serving Tim Sum.

The research will combine fieldwork, interviews and historical materials. Interviews with the informants working in these three sites will provide a better view of contemporary Cantonese Opera activities in the teahouses. Chapter one shows the methodology being used in this thesis as well as the definition of Cantonese Opera, then Chapter two will analyze the historical development of teahouses and look into the Tim Sum teahouse in Southern Hotel, it will also present the information gathered from the respondents working at these places. Chapter three and chapter four will carry out fieldwork research on the three contemporary teahouses and the conclusion will be presented in chapter five, which shows the relationship between teahouses activities and Cantonese Opera in the past and the present.