

**KIM JONG IL**

**MAN AND LIFE MUST  
BE DEPICTED IN SONG**

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In *On the Art of Opera*, a talk he gave to creative workers in the field of art and literature between September 4 and 6, 1974, Kim Jong Il clarified the problems arising in developing the art of opera.

The work comprises six parts: the times and opera, the libretto, opera music, opera dance, opera stage art and opera stage representation.

This book contains the full text of *Man and Life Must Be Depicted in Song* from the third part Opera Music.

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

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

Opera is the largest form of the musical art comprising various forms of songs and orchestral music. A single opera includes dozens of songs sung by the characters, *pangchang* songs and a variety of orchestral music. But these songs and music, no matter how many and no matter how varied, will be meaningless unless they are fused to clarify the theme and idea of the opera and to describe the characters' personalities and lives. They become powerful means of portrayal only when they are arranged properly to meet dramatic requirements and to accord with the logic of portrayal, and when they form a natural flow of

feelings and emotions. Whether an excellent drama is portrayed or not by harmonizing the songs and orchestral music depends entirely on the organization of the musical drama.

## **1) THERE SHOULD BE A THEME SONG IN AN OPERA**

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

The portrayal of the hero is essential in musical characterization. The principal character represents the quintessence of the seed and theme of the work

and leads the drama, standing at the centre of events. In works of art and literature the lifelike portrayal of the heroes can have a profound artistic effect and enhance the ideological and artistic level of the works.

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

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

describe the beauty of nature and the change of the seasons. Of all these the theme song embodies the seed of the opera and the characteristic features of the hero most vividly, and plays the pivotal role in developing the drama.

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

In opera other major songs must also be well-composed. In opera the personality of the hero cannot be described fully and deeply by the theme

song alone. An opera needs, along with the theme song, other major songs that support the theme song. A supporting song is a song which contributes to the portrayal of the personalities of the hero and other major characters and the theme thought, while playing no less an important role than the theme song in developing the lines of the characters and events. An opera contains an entanglement of various lines of characters and events, with the hero at the centre; in the course of the development of these events, the spiritual world of the hero and other characters is clarified, the drama deepened and the theme and idea brought out. The supporting songs, dealing with each of the lines of the characters and events and drawing them into one flow, contribute to revealing the personalities of the hero and other characters and clarifying the theme. The song *Don't Cry, Ul Nam* in the revolutionary opera *The Sea of Blood* is sung at the moment when the curtain rises and is repeated several times until the scene where Ul Nam falls, hit by an enemy bullet; it also develops the line of warm tenderness between the mother and her son consistently and provides a profound

clarification of the process of the formation of the heroine's revolutionary outlook on the world. The song *When Women Are All United*, sung in the scene in which the mother goes to the town on the first mission given her by the revolutionary organization, is repeated in the scene of sending supplies in support of the guerrillas and in the scene of the meeting of the members of the Women's Association at a mining village, showing the growth of the personality of the mother after she has understood the meaning of the revolution and stressing the idea of unity. As you can see, while being sung along the action line of the principal and other major characters and the line of major dramatic events, the supporting songs deepen the theme of the opera, emphasize the personalities of the principal and other major characters from various angles and give strong impetus to the dramatic development. If the theme song is referred to as the pivot of opera music, a supporting song can be called a second or third theme song which plays the role of a beam supporting the pivot. Therefore, in order to portray the personalities of the hero and other characters in

song, the supporting songs must be composed well and used effectively.

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

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

## **2) MUSIC AND DRAMA MUST BE CLOSELY ALLIED**

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

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

It is not easy in practical creation to synchronize music and drama. In an opera musical pieces cannot last too long in disregard of the dramatic situation for the sake of sustaining the music, nor can a lot of characters' actions and speeches be performed in order to give prominence to the drama. A piece of

music, however excellent, cannot be sustained, nor can it give life to the drama, unless it is synchronized with the drama. In conventional operas a close alliance between music and drama was impossible. A satisfactory solution to this problem has been found through the introduction into *Sea of Blood*-style operas of stanzaic song and the *pangchang*.

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

In order to synchronize the music and drama, you must use songs and orchestral music to suit the

scenes. The scene is the basic unit of dramatic composition. It is a dramatic phase in which human relations are established, events are developed and the elements of the dramatic development are concentrated. Through the natural sequence from one scene to the next the human relations are deepened and the drama makes steady headway, thus bringing out the characters' personalities and the theme of the work. Only when the scenes are highly dramatic and artistic can the drama develop steadily. Therefore, composers must channel their efforts into portraying each scene in the opera as a musicodramatic scene.

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

personality and a particular event and situation.

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

In order to ensure a close alliance between drama and music, the orchestra must link the scenes skilfully. The music in scenes alone cannot provide a full solution to the problem of an alliance between music and drama. A scene in an opera is the

continuation of the previous scene and a precursor for the next scene. In the course of the steady heightening of the drama from one scene to the next, the characters' personalities develop and the theme of the work is further revealed. In opera the music must deal skilfully with the connection of scenes and the continued heightening and development of the drama.

### **3) EMOTIONAL DELINEATION IS THE MAIN ASPECT OF THE ORGANIZATION OF MUSICAL DRAMA**

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

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

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

Ensuring that the songs and orchestral music follow the line of the emotions means that various

emotional changes in the course of the characters' actions are linked into one musical sequence in accordance with the logic of life.

To ensure that the songs and orchestral music follow the emotional line it is essential skilfully to weave the sequence of emotions that underlie the characters' lines of action. When there are ups and downs in life, emotions are bound to change; and when life develops continuously, emotions are bound to change continuously, going through the process of strain and relaxation, build-up and qualitative leap. This means that when there is a line of events in the drama, there is also the line of emotions which follows it. When the sequence of the characters' emotions of different colours arising from the events is linked into one musical sequence, the opera songs and orchestral music can be said to have been put on the emotional line. The characters' inmost depths must be penetrated in order to grasp the line of their emotions that arise from the events. You cannot grasp the emotional line if you are preoccupied with major events alone in the interests of dramatism, instead of exploring the characters' inmost depths. Even when dealing with a small or

ordinary event, the composer must know how to penetrate and experience the inmost self of the character who is living through it.

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

An important factor in keeping the music on the line of the emotions is to provide preconditions and moments in life that occasion the characters' actions, and to build up and develop their feelings by means of songs and orchestral music. In order to build up and develop the characters' emotions by means of music, their psychology and the emotional atmosphere must be shown deeply from various angles at the moment when the line of their destiny alters. That moment is a dramatic phase in which their accumulated emotions are brought to a head. In

opera such moments must be penetrated by songs and orchestral music, and a proper musical timbre chosen to accord with the psychology of the characters and the emotional atmosphere. When I say that a proper timbre of music should be chosen to be in tune with the moment when the line of the characters' destinies alters, I do not imply that it must be changed at each moment without a unified plan for the whole course of the development of their personalities. It is natural that the characters experience vicissitudes in their lives, but they always experience them in particular situations. Therefore, at the moment when the line of a character's destiny alters, the music, while being used in a varied way, must become a part of the unified structure of the characterization. The variety of musical timbre which is used at the moments when the line of a character's destiny changes is inconceivable apart from the manner in which the elements of musical interpretation are used. Composers must explore the situation in the scenes and the inmost depths of the characters at such moments and choose appropriate means and methods of portrayal.

#### **4) THE MUSICAL LINE MUST BE ESTABLISHED**

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

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

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

must be repeated at important moments of the dramatic development.

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

When repeating the theme song and major supporting songs the requirements of dramatic structure must be taken fully into account so that these songs are used in the scenes where the main thought of the opera is given intensive expression. *Song of the Sea of Blood*, the theme song of the

revolutionary opera *The Sea of Blood*, is repeated three times: first, it is played as a prelude, giving a hint to the seed and leading the audience into the world of drama; second, it denounces the bestial atrocities of the Japanese imperialists by being played by the orchestra and sung as a *pangchang* in the scene of the massacre by the Japanese imperialists and in the scene in which Yun Sop is burnt alive; and third, it describes the fighting spirit of the people who resist the Japanese imperialists by being sung as a solo by Kap Sun and as a grand *pangchang* in the scene in which Ul Nam is killed. This method of representation, unlike the techniques of conventional operatic musical dramaturgy, fully accords with the logic of life and of representation. The death of Ul Nam is inconceivable separately from the death of his father, Yun Sop. It is the Japanese imperialists who brutally killed the father, and it is also the Japanese imperialists who killed Ul Nam. The sacrifice of their lives was for the sake of the country and the nation, for the sake of the revolution. The scene of Ul Nam's death, the epitome of the situation in Korea in those days when the whole land was a bloodbath, is a serious dramatic scene which sheds light on the truth

of the revolution that where there is exploitation and oppression, there is resistance and the struggle of the people. If another song relating to the death of Ul Nam, not the *Song of the Sea of Blood*, is sung in those scenes, the tragedy of the family cannot be shown in one unified musical sequence, nor can it clarify the profound thought that Ul Nam's death is not the death of an individual but the misfortune and suffering of the whole nation. Because the song which was sung so bitterly in the scene of the massacre, in the scene where Yun Sop was burnt alive, is repeated by Kap Sun as a solo and as a grand *pangchang* in the scene of Ul Nam's death, the audience, thinking not only about the death of Ul Nam but also about Yun Sop's sacrifice, boils with resentment at the Japanese imperialists who have killed both the father and his son and plunged the whole village and the whole country into a sea of blood.

Furthermore, the audience is moved to think a great deal by the song *You Have Brought Medicine for Your Mother* in the revolutionary opera *The Sea of Blood*, which Kap Sun sings while embracing Ul Nam, who has bought medicine for his mother by

selling the fish he caught, just before he is killed by the enemy. The melody of that song is that of the song *Don't Cry, Ul Nam* which his mother, with him, an innocent, suckling baby, on her back, used to sing quietly as a lullaby with Kap Sun, and a meaningful melody which is played by the orchestra for the future of young Ul Nam at the time when his mother, bereaved of her husband, was wandering from place to place. By repeating the heartrending song for the last time just before his death, Kap Sun makes his death seem more tragic. Thus, it is only when the theme song and the major supporting songs are repeated to tell of the eventful story of the principal character's life at important stages of the drama that they add to the philosophical depth of the interpretation and emphasize the ideological content of the work.

The theme song and the major songs that support it must be repeated at important moments which show the development of the characters' personalities. These songs have deeper meanings, cover a wider scope of portrayal and rouse richer emotions than any other songs; so when they are repeated at those moments, they can describe more

vividly the process of the development of their personalities and the shaping of their revolutionary outlook on the world. If they are needed to show the characters' inmost thoughts and feelings and develop the drama they can be repeated even within a single scene in various forms. The melody of the song *It Is an Honour to Be Alive or Dead on the Road of Revolution* is repeated in different forms within the one scene of departure in the revolutionary opera *Tell O Forest* so as to describe the character's inmost depths and to add momentum to dramatic progress.

An operatic representation can be improved or impaired and the general sequence of the music can sound interesting or dull depending on how the songs are repeated. Therefore, songs must be repeated in a proper manner. Dealing properly with the repetition of songs is a creative process that requires thinking, inquiry and skill. If it is necessary to repeat songs, the logic of dramatic progress must first be considered carefully, and then the scenes where they should be repeated must be determined and the songs and the situation in the scenes must be allied closely with each other. If repeated songs do

not suit the situations, they will sound superfluous; such a repetition will not be as good as providing new songs. Opera songs that are repeated must be seasoned with new flavour. Since the events and situations involved in the dramatic development do not repeat themselves, the songs that justify repetition must be developed and used in different forms and by different methods so as to produce a new flavour, as the logic of life requires. When the theme song is to be repeated, the theme melody can be re-arranged for the purpose or a song derived from that melody can be sung. When altering the melody, the original timbre must be preserved. The theme song and other excellent songs must be used in such a way as to retain and stress their original timbres despite being repeated in a varied fashion.

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

personalities and the situation in the scene. This is the way to create a realistic musical interpretation.

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

It is an important principle in the organization of the musical drama of *Sea of Blood*-style operas to position songs and orchestral music properly and organize them carefully to accord with the characters' personalities, the logic of life, the content of the scene and the requirements of the situation. The observance of this principle can sustain the music itself, establish a correct musical line, form a consistent flow of emotions by means of songs and orchestral music and forcefully promote the drama. It can also show the depth of the development of the characters' personalities and create a clear musical interpretation of the theme of the opera.

In organizing the musical drama, creative workers occasionally deviate from this principle and emphasize their subjective points of view or the so-called logic of music itself. This shows that they are not yet completely free from the old concept of musical dramaturgy. In conventional operas it was a

set pattern to include a few recitatives before the aria sung by the hero, and to include an arioso after the aria. A departure from this pattern was considered a violation of the rules of musicodramatic organization. Such a pattern can result in a separation of the content from the form in art. In opera the logic of music must always be based on the characters' personalities and the logic of life. There can be no logic of pure music separated from the characters' personalities and life.

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

so as to form a single musical sequence. Only then can the opera songs and orchestral music agree with the logic of the development of the drama, and promote the drama forcefully.

In order to establish the line of opera music you must use songs and orchestral music scrupulously. If you use them inappropriately, they will sound similar to one another, obscure the characters' personalities, weaken the musical impression made on the audience, cause the musical flow to become monotonous and relax the dramatic tension.

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

An opera requires a good prelude, good music

for the climax and a good finale.

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

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

has a succinct and plain musical structure and communicates its message clearly.

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

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

The preludes to *Sea of Blood*-style operas have taken on a new form which combines orchestral

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

The music for the climax to the opera must be used properly. In the past the question of the standard for and principle of using music at the climax of the opera was interpreted in several ways.

When *Sea of Blood*-style operas were being created for the first time in our country, some people insisted that the style of an aria or recitative should be used for the climax, claiming that this type of music was strongly dramatic, while some people were reluctant to use the theme song or supporting songs on the ground that a new song that conforms with the situation must always be used at the climax.

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

A new song can be used at the climax of an opera, but it is still better to repeat the theme song or a supporting song to suit the situation. In repeating these songs at the climax, the dramatic effect must be sustained by combining various means of musical interpretation according to the dramatic

requirements of the climax. At the climax, intercommunication between the characters should be realized by using the theme song or a supporting song in accordance with the requirements of the situation and with the flow of the characters' emotions, and the freedom of characters should be ensured by means of the *pangchang* in the scenes where it is needed. A *pangchang* should be sung at the moment when a character's action is more important than his song. At the climax various forms of music can be used, but they should be fused by orchestral music. Only when the stage is brought to life in this way will the climax be sustained.

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

The form of the finale and the methods of its interpretation may vary in different operas; however, it should always emphasize the theme of the work and have a strong lingering emotional effect on the audience. It should have greater depth,

breadth and impact than any other music in any other scene. The finale of an opera must not be like the finale of a music-and-dance epic or the finale of a song-and-dance ensemble. Music-and-dance epics often end with a chorus which is combined with a magnificent dance. But the finale of an opera must not do so. The dramatic flow from climax to resolution in an opera is different from that in a music-and-dance epic and so is the resolution of the hero's destiny. The finale must, therefore, be suited to the content of the drama.

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

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

filial duty becomes a flower basket of struggle and revolution. As you can see, the prelude, finale and the music at the climax should be used in a consistent manner in keeping with the logic of life and portrayal; only then can they sustain the musical line, depict the characters' personalities, develop the drama and bring out the theme to the full.

## **5) THE MOOD OF THE MUSIC MUST BE COORDINATED**

Coordinating the mood of the music is very important in providing unity of operatic portrayal. A work with distinct mood can sustain the emotional tones of life vividly. The mood of opera music is defined in the libretto. Nevertheless, an opera becomes unidiomatic unless the timbre of each piece of music is sustained. If you are to produce an idiomatic opera you must make effective use of musical timbre. Coordinating the mood of opera music does not mean coordinating the timbres of all the musical pieces included in an opera. It would be

impossible to weave a legitimate drama with serious and solemn music alone, or a comedy with light and satirical music alone, or a tragedy with doleful music alone. There are joy and sorrow, laughter and tears in human life. Works of art represent various aspects of life. That is why a work of opera with distinct style includes different musical timbres. Only when each song and each piece of orchestral music are idiomatic enough to match the real tone of life can the emotional colour of portrayal be sustained. However, even though different songs have different characteristics and produce different emotional colours, they will not prove idiomatic unless they are welded into the general mood of the work. The complicated creative work of coordinating into one mood the emotional tones of the songs and orchestral music which are performed at different stages of the dramatic development can only be successful when the musical drama is organized skilfully.

In order to sustain the mood of the opera music, it is essential to make the mood idiomatic by means of the theme song and to harmonize other songs and orchestral music with the theme song and theme melody. The idiomatic timbre of an individual

interpretation can remain alive only within the harmony. The unity of mood can be ensured only when all the songs and orchestral music harmonize with the theme song and theme melody while retaining their peculiar timbres.

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

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