



ON THE
REVOLUTION
OF
PEKING
OPERA

by Chiang Ching



On the Revolution of Peking Opera

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FOREIGN LANGUAGES PRESS
PEKING 1968

Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung

All our literature and art are for the masses of the people, and in the first place for the workers, peasants and soldiers; they are created for the workers, peasants and soldiers and are for their use.

*Talks at the Yen-an Forum
on Literature and Art*

History is made by the people, yet the old opera (and all the old literature and art, which are divorced from the people) presents the people as though they were dirt, and the stage is dominated by lords and ladies and their pampered sons and daughters. Now you have reversed this reversal of history and restored historical truth, and thus a new life is opening up for the old opera. That is why this merits congratulations. The initiative you have taken marks an epoch-making beginning in the revolutionization of the old opera. I am very happy at the thought of this. I hope you will write more plays and give more performances, and so help make this practice a common one which will prevail throughout the country.

Letter to the Yenan Peking Opera Theatre After Seeing "Driven to Join the Liangshan Mountain Rebels"

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ON THE REVOLUTION OF PEKING OPERA

— Speech Made in July 1964 at the Forum
of Theatrical Workers Participating
in the Festival of Peking Opera
on Contemporary Themes

by Chiang Ching

I offer you my congratulations on the festival, for which you have worked so hard. This is the first campaign in the revolution of Peking opera. It has achieved promising results and will have relatively far-reaching influence.

Peking opera on revolutionary contemporary themes has now been staged. But do we all look at it in the same way? I don't think we can say so just yet.

We must have unshakable confidence in the staging of Peking opera on revolutionary contemporary themes. It is inconceivable that, in our socialist country led by the Communist Party, the dominant position on the stage is not occupied by the workers, peasants and soldiers, who are the real creators of history and the true masters of our country. We should create literature and art which protect our socialist economic base. When we are not clear about our orientation, we should try our best to become so. Here

I would like to give two groups of figures for your reference. These figures strike me as shocking.

Here is the first group: according to a rough estimate, there are 3,000 theatrical companies in the country (not including amateur troupes and unlicensed companies). Of these, around 90 are professional modern drama companies, 80 odd are cultural troupes, and the rest, over 2,800, are companies staging various kinds of operas and balladry. Our operatic stage is occupied by emperors, princes, generals, ministers, scholars and beauties, and, on top of these, ghosts and monsters. As for those 90 modern drama companies, they don't necessarily all depict the workers, peasants and soldiers either. They, too, lay stress on staging full-length plays, foreign plays and plays on ancient themes. So we can say that the modern drama stage is also occupied by ancient Chinese and foreign figures. Theatres are places in which to educate the people, but at present the stage is dominated by emperors, princes, generals, ministers, scholars and beauties — by feudal and bourgeois stuff. This state of affairs cannot serve to protect but will undermine our economic base.

And here is the second group of figures: there are well over 600 million workers, peasants and soldiers in our country, whereas there is only a handful of landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements, Rightists and bourgeois elements. Shall we serve this handful, or the 600 million? This question calls for consideration not only by Communists but also by all those literary and art workers who love their country. The grain we eat is grown by the peasants, the clothes we wear and the houses we live in are all made by the workers, and the People's Liberation Army stands guard at the fronts of national defence for us and yet we do not portray them on the stage. May I ask which class stand you artists do take? And where is the artists' "conscience" you always talk about?

For Peking opera to present revolutionary contemporary themes will not be all plain sailing. There will be reverses, but if you consider carefully the two groups of figures I have mentioned above, there may be no reverses, or at least fewer of them. Even if there are reverses, it won't matter. History always goes forward on a zigzag course but its wheels can never be turned backwards. We stress operas on revolutionary contemporary themes which reflect real life in the fifteen years since the founding of the Chinese People's Republic and which create images of contemporary revolutionary heroes on our operatic stage. This is our foremost task. Not that we don't want historical operas. Revolutionary historical operas have formed no small proportion of the programme of the present festival. Historical operas portraying the life and struggles of the people before our Party came into being are also needed. Moreover, we need to foster some pace-setters, to produce some historical operas which are really written from the standpoint of historical materialism and which can make the past serve the present. Of course, we should take up historical operas only on the condition that the carrying out of the main task (that of portraying contemporary life and creating images of workers, peasants and soldiers) is not impeded. Not that we don't want any traditional operas either. Except for those about ghosts and those extolling capitulation and betrayal, all good traditional operas can be staged. But these traditional operas will have no audience worth mentioning unless they are carefully re-edited and revised. I have made systematic visits to theatres for more than two years and my observation of both actors and audiences led me to this conclusion. In future, the re-editing and revising of traditional operas is necessary, but this work must not replace our foremost task.

I will next discuss the question of where to make a start.

I think the key question is that you must have the plays. If you have only directors and actors and no plays there is nothing to

be directed or acted. People say that plays form the basis of theatrical productions. I think that is quite true. Therefore attention must be devoted to creative writing.

In the last few years the writing of new plays has lagged far behind real life. This is even more true in the case of Peking opera. Playwrights are few and they lack experience of life. So it is only natural that no good plays are being created. The key to tackling the problem of creative writing is the formation of a three-way combination of the leadership, the playwrights and the masses. Recently, I studied the way in which the play *Great Wall Along the Southern Sea* was created and I found that they did it exactly like this. First the leadership set the theme. Then the playwrights went three times to acquire experience of life, even taking part in a military operation to round up enemy spies. When the play was written, many leading members of the Kwangchow military command took part in discussions on it, and after it had been rehearsed, opinions were widely canvassed and revisions made. In this way, as a result of constantly asking for opinions and constantly making revisions they succeeded in turning out in a fairly short time a good topical play reflecting a real life struggle.

In the case of the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee it was Comrade Ko Ching-shih himself who came to grips with the problem of creative writing. All localities must appoint competent cadres to handle this problem.

It will be difficult for some time yet to write plays specially for Peking opera. Nevertheless, people have to be appointed right now to do the job. They must first be given some special training and then go out to attain experience of life. They can begin by writing short plays and gradually work out full-length operas. It is also good to have short works, if well written.

In creative writing, new forces must be cultivated. Send them to work at the grass roots level and in three to five years they will blossom and bear fruit.

Another good way to get plays is by adaptation.

Theatrical items for adaptation must be carefully chosen. First, we must see whether or not they are good politically and secondly, whether or not they suit the conditions of the company concerned. Serious analysis of the original must be made when adapting it, its good points must be affirmed and kept intact, while its weak points must be remedied. In adapting for Peking opera attention must be paid to two aspects: on the one hand, the adaptations must be in keeping with the characteristics of Peking opera, having singing and acrobatics, and words must fit the melodies in Peking opera singing. The language used must be that of Peking opera. Otherwise the performers will not be able to sing. On the other hand, excessive compromises should not be made with the performers. An opera must have a clear-cut theme with a tightly knit structure and striking characters. In no case should the whole opera be allowed to become diffuse and flat in order to provide a few principal performers with star parts.

Peking opera uses artistic exaggeration. At the same time, it has always depicted ancient times and people belonging to those times. Therefore, it is comparatively easy for Peking opera to portray negative characters and this is what some people like about it so much. On the other hand, it is very difficult to create positive characters, and yet we must build up characters of advanced revolutionary heroes. In the original version of the opera *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold* produced by Shanghai the negative characters appeared to be overpowering, while the positive characters looked quite wizened. Since the leadership gave direct guidance, this opera has been positively improved. Now, the scene about the Taoist Ting Ho has been cut, whereas the part of Eagle — nickname of the bandit leader — has been only slightly altered (the actor who plays the part acts very well). But since the roles of the People's Liberation Army men Yang Tzu-jung and Shao Chien-po have been made more prominent, the images of those negative charac-

ters have paled by comparison. It has been said that there are different views on this opera. Debates can be held on this subject. You must consider which side you stand on. Should you stand on the side of the positive characters or on the side of the negative characters? It has been said that there are still people who oppose writing about positive characters. This is wrong. Good people are always the great majority. This is true not only in our socialist countries, but even in imperialist countries, where the overwhelming majority are labouring people. In revisionist countries, the revisionists are only a minority. We should place the emphasis on creating artistic images of advanced revolutionaries so as to educate and inspire the people and lead them forward. Our purpose in producing operas on revolutionary contemporary themes is mainly to exalt the positive characters. The opera *Little Heroic Sisters on the Grassland* performed by the Peking Opera Troupe of the Inner Mongolian Art Theatre is very good. The playwrights wrote the script for this opera with their revolutionary feeling, inspired by the outstanding deeds of the two little heroines. The middle section of the opera is very moving. It was only because the playwrights still lacked experience of real life, worked in haste and had no time for careful polishing that the beginning and the end of the opera are not so good. As it is now, it looks like a fine painting placed in a crude old frame. In this opera there is one more point worth noticing: it is a Peking opera composed for our children. In short, this opera has a firm foundation and is good. I hope that the playwrights will go back to experience the life of the people more deeply and do their best to perfect their script. In my opinion, we should treasure the fruits of our labour, and should not scrap them lightly. Some comrades are unwilling to revise works they have done, but this prevents them from making bigger achievements. In this respect, Shanghai has set us a good example. Because the Shanghai artists have been willing to polish their scripts over and over again, they have succeeded in improv-

ing *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold* to what it is today. All the items in the repertory of the present festival should be given further polishing when you return home. The items which have already been set on their feet should not be let fall lightly.

Finally, I hope that you will spend some energy on learning from one another's presentations so that audiences throughout the country will be able to see this festival's achievements.

HAIL THE GREAT VICTORY IN THE REVOLUTION OF PEKING OPERA

— Editorial of *Hongqi (Red Flag)*, No. 6, 1967 —

The revolution of Peking opera sounded a call to arms for China's great proletarian cultural revolution and marked an excellent beginning of it. It was a tremendous victory for Mao Tse-tung's thought and for Chairman Mao's *Talks at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art!*

Drama and opera are important positions in the struggle between the two classes and between the two lines on the literary and art front. Our great leader Chairman Mao has always attached great importance to them. In 1944, he pointed out after seeing *Driven to Join the Liangshan Mountain Rebels* presented by the Yen-an Peking Opera Theatre:

History is made by the people, yet the old opera (and all the old literature and art, which are divorced from the people) presents the people as though they were dirt, and the stage is dominated by lords and ladies and their pampered sons and daughters. Now you have reversed this reversal of history and restored historical truth, and thus a new life is opening up for the old opera. That is why this merits congratulations.

After liberation Chairman Mao further put forward the important policies of “letting a hundred flowers blossom and weed-

ing through the old to bring forth the new” and “making the past serve the present and foreign things serve China”. Chairman Mao's instructions, the supreme criteria for guiding the revolution of drama and opera, have solved a series of basic questions in this revolution.

Using Mao Tse-tung's thought, Comrade Chiang Ching discussed the great significance of the revolution of Peking opera and expounded its guiding principles as formulated by Chairman Mao, in her July 1964 speech at the forum of theatrical workers participating in the festival of Peking opera on contemporary themes. This speech is an important document which uses Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tse-tung's thought, to solve the problems in the revolution of Peking opera.

For a long time, because of the domination of the counter-revolutionary revisionist line in the field of literature and art represented by Chou Yang, Chi Yen-ming, Hsia Yen and Lin Mo-han, Chairman Mao's revolutionary line could not be carried through in the field of Peking opera. Many bad operas glorifying emperors, princes, generals, ministers, scholars and beauties dominated the Peking opera stage. These bad operas played the reactionary role of disintegrating the socialist economic base to pave the way for the restoration of capitalism.

Abusing their usurped power and position, a handful of Party persons in authority taking the capitalist road and some reactionary “authorities” controlled Peking opera circles, and, by drawing deserters and traitors into their service and forming cliques in pursuit of their own selfish interests, turned these circles into an impenetrable independent kingdom of the feudal landlords and the bourgeoisie.

The top capitalist roader in the Party was the main pillar and support for bourgeois reactionary forces and all ghosts and monsters in Peking opera circles and the biggest obstacle to the revolution of Peking opera. For a long time he stubbornly opposed the rev-

olution of Peking opera and spread the idea that "old operas have much educational value". He heaped praise upon *Fourth Son Visits His Mother*, an opera which disseminated a traitor's philosophy, the philosophy of survival. He said, "It doesn't matter much if this opera is staged. It has been performed for so many years; didn't New China emerge in spite of that?" He lauded *Fierce Tiger Village* which made every effort to prettify scoundrels like Huang Tien-pa, a lackey of the feudal landlords, and described it as "an opera which has been well revised". He even recommended such an obscene Peking opera as *The Dragon Flirts with the Phoenix*. He worked closely with the top counter-revolutionary revisionists in the former Peking Municipal Party Committee and Chou Yang, Chi Yen-ming, Hsia Yen, Lin Mo-han, Tien Han, Chang Keng and company to use old Peking opera to serve a counter-revolutionary restoration of capitalism.

But the new-born forces eventually defeat all that is decadent. Illuminated by the radiance of the great thought of Mao Tse-tung, guided by Comrade Chiang Ching and with the efforts of the great numbers of revolutionary comrades in Peking opera circles, new revolutionary Peking opera finally broke down stubborn resistance to fight its way out from the old fortress of emperors, princes, generals, ministers, scholars and beauties.

Rich results have already been achieved in the revolution of Peking opera. Such model Peking operas as *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold*, *On the Docks*, *The Red Lantern*, *Shachiapang* and *Raid on the White Tiger Regiment* represent most valuable achievements. They are fine models not only for Peking opera, but for proletarian literature and art as a whole. They also serve as fine examples for "struggle-criticism-transformation"¹ on all fronts of the great

¹"Struggle-criticism-transformation" is the abbreviation of the statement in the Decision of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party Concerning the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which reads, "At present, our objective is to struggle against and overthrow those persons in

proletarian cultural revolution. These splendid results of the revolution of Peking opera have shaken the entire field of the arts like a spring thunder-storm, indicating that it is now time for the hundred flowers of the proletariat to bloom. This will have an immense impact and influence on the development of proletarian literature and art as a whole.

Only a short while ago, the handful of capitalist roaders in the Party sneered at the vanguards in the revolution of Peking opera, "So you people want to capture the stronghold?" Yes, we do want to capture the stronghold, to attack this most stubborn "fortress" in theatrical art and to capture for the proletariat this most closely guarded position of the bourgeois reactionary forces. Today, Peking opera has broken through the bonds of counter-revolutionary revisionism. The great red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought has now been hoisted high over the opera stage. The stage once occupied by emperors, princes, generals, ministers, scholars and beauties has been turned into a place where the workers, peasants and soldiers can fully display all their talents. The position for spreading feudalism and capitalism has been turned into one for the propagation of Mao Tse-tung's thought. This is a great victory for Chairman Mao's revolutionary line on literature and art, an earth-shaking transformation. It proves to the masses that the great thought of Mao Tse-tung is all-conquering. Can there possibly be any other old fortress that cannot be taken now that we have succeeded in taking the fortress of Peking opera which was under the strictest control of the counter-revolutionary revisionists and where the old forces were most stubborn?

authority who are taking the capitalist road, to criticize and repudiate the reactionary bourgeois academic 'authorities' and the ideology of the bourgeoisie and all other exploiting classes and to transform education, literature and art and all other parts of the superstructure not in correspondence with the socialist economic base, so as to facilitate the consolidation and development of the socialist system." — *Tr.*

The victory in the revolution of Peking opera has proclaimed the bankruptcy of the counter-revolutionary revisionist line on literature and art and ushered in a brand-new era for the development of new, proletarian literature and art.

The revolution of Peking opera is an important part of China's proletarian cultural revolution. We must make a high appraisal of the tremendous achievements in the revolution of Peking opera and lay great stress on its immense historical significance. A clear understanding of its achievements and significance will increase considerably our confidence in the proletarian cultural revolution. We are convinced that after this cultural revolution, a completely new situation never before seen in history, an encouraging prospect of a hundred flowers blooming luxuriantly, will appear in the field of culture and art in our country.

APPENDICES

**MAO TSE-TUNG'S THOUGHT GUIDES
US IN THE GREAT REVOLUTION
OF PEKING OPERA**

**— A Discussion on the Experience in Script-
writing and Rehearsing by the Opera Group
of *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold* of the
Peking Opera Theatre of Shanghai**

by Kuang Hsin

On the occasion of commemorating the 25th anniversary of Chairman Mao's *Talks at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art*, the revolutionary comrades of the opera group of *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold* of the Peking Opera Theatre of Shanghai held a discussion. With boundless love and loyalty for the great leader Chairman Mao, they talked about how they creatively studied the *Talks* and applied it in practice. They warmly cheered the brilliant victory of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line on literature and art and resolved to hold still higher the great red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought and carry the revolution of Peking opera through to the end.

**GRASP THE TALKS AS OUR POWERFUL WEAPON
IN SMASHING THE CLASS ENEMY'S PLOT
TO CREATE PUBLIC OPINION FOR
THE RESTORATION OF CAPITALISM**

Chairman Mao says:

To overthrow a political power, it is always necessary first of all to create public opinion, to do work in the ideological sphere. This is true for the revolutionary class as well as for the counter-revolutionary class.

While writing the script of *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold*, the revolutionary comrades of the Peking Opera Theatre of Shanghai have come to see deeply the essence of the sharp struggle between the two lines on literature and art. Citing many facts they showed that, with the support of the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road, a handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists in literary and art circles have tried their utmost to take control of the theatre from the proletariat to create public opinion for the restoration of capitalism. Chairman Mao's *Talks* has been a powerful ideological weapon to crush this criminal plot of the class enemy.

In 1958 the revolutionary comrades of the Peking Opera Theatre of Shanghai began their collective work of writing the script of *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold*, a Peking opera on a revolutionary contemporary theme. Relying on the power and influence of the top capitalist roader in the Party, the handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists in literary and art circles viciously attacked the staging of revolutionary contemporary operas, alleging that this would "fritter away the youth of stage artists" and would be "a waste of energy and money". During the period of practising and rehearsing, they put up many obstacles, such as refusing to let the principal actors and actresses take part, withholding the

stage costumes and even a make-up box. At the same time they arranged to stage a great many operas on old themes, such as *The Trial of Yu Tang Chun* and *The Capture of Yen Tang Shan*. They used a cunning device in insisting on staging "two old plays for each modern play" in order to sabotage the revolutionary contemporary operas by a higher box office record. They vainly hoped to nip this sprouting young plant in the bud.

Confronted by such sharp class struggle, comrades of the opera group of *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold* again and again read the *Talks* and pondered over Chairman Mao's teaching:

All our literature and art are for the masses of the people, and in the first place for the workers, peasants and soldiers; they are created for the workers, peasants and soldiers and are for their use.

Like a bright light, Chairman Mao's teaching lit up the hearts of the revolutionary artists. Confident that their orientation was correct they decided to rebel against the old Peking opera, and their confidence and strength in struggle grew when Comrades Ko Ching-shih and Chiang Ching gave them solicitous attention. After some revisions *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold* was staged in the 1964 National Festival of Peking Opera on Contemporary Themes. It was enthusiastically received by the workers, peasants and soldiers. But Chou Yang, Lin Mo-han and other counter-revolutionary revisionists, supported by the top capitalist roader in the Party, who was the back-stage general manager for the black line on literature and art, threw cold water on it and smeared it, describing it as "without much flavour of Peking opera", "just plain boiled water" or "a third-class crop". They instigated their followers to write articles viciously attacking it, in a vain effort first to strangle it and then all other Peking operas on revolutionary contemporary themes.

At a critical moment in the struggle, on July 17, 1964, Chairman Mao, the red sun that shines most brightly in our hearts, saw a performance of *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold*. This gave the revolutionary comrades of the Peking Opera Theatre of Shanghai great encouragement and strength — so much so that they could not sleep the whole night. Stimulated by the great leader's profound solicitude for the revolution of Peking opera, they read the *Talks* again and again. They pledged to Chairman Mao that they would go forward in the direction in literature and art pointed out by him and would fight all difficulties and obstacles in carrying the revolution of Peking opera through to the end.

They were acutely aware that the struggle between the two lines on literature and art around the presentation of *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold* was a struggle between supporting and opposing Chairman Mao's revolutionary line, between the restoration of capitalism and the proletariat's opposition to it.

This opera reflects how in the early years of the War of Liberation the People's Liberation Army resolutely carried out Chairman Mao's instruction regarding the establishment of stable base areas in the Northeast. It praises the Chairman's great strategic concept of surrounding the cities from the countryside and Comrade Lin Piao's correct views on boldly arousing the masses and setting up revolutionary bases. Because this opera praised Chairman Mao's revolutionary line and criticized and repudiated the Right opportunist line put forward by the top capitalist roader in the Party and pushed by the counter-revolutionary revisionist Peng Chen when working in the Northeast, these reactionaries became infuriated and frantically attacked it. Aided and abetted by the backstage general manager for the black line on literature and art, Chou Yang, Lin Mo-han and their ilk, for their own ends, attempted to eliminate the opera's central content, which sang the praises of Mao Tse-tung's thought, and proposed to put in some "moving episodes" and "startling scenes". Comrade Chiang Ching promptly

ly saw through the enemy's vicious scheme. She whole-heartedly approved of this opera in these encouraging words: "*Taking the Bandits' Stronghold* is sure to come out well. You must have the determination not to leave the front line until you achieve your aim!" The comrades' confidence was heightened as they read Chairman Mao's *Talks* and listened to Comrade Chiang Ching's instructions. It is the responsibility of revolutionary literary and art workers to resolutely defend Chairman Mao's revolutionary line and whole-heartedly praise the invincible thought of Mao Tse-tung. Whoever opposes praising Mao Tse-tung's thought is our enemy.

Chairman Mao says:

The aim of every revolutionary struggle in the world is the seizure and consolidation of political power. Similarly, the sole aim of counter-revolution in desperately struggling against the revolutionary forces is the preservation of its political power.

The handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists and their backstage general manager tried every means to oppose the revolution of Peking opera and to exclude Mao Tse-tung's thought from the stage in order to prepare public opinion for a capitalist restoration. But in the face of the invincible thought of Mao Tse-tung, of the vanguard fighter in the cultural revolution, Comrade Chiang Ching, and of the revolutionary fighters in literature and art armed with the *Talks*, they could not stop the creation of the opera *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold*. Their plot went bankrupt.

GRASP THE TALKS AS OUR POWERFUL WEAPON IN PORTRAYING THE HEROIC IMAGES OF THE PROLETARIAT

Chairman Mao says:

If you are a bourgeois writer or artist, you will eulogize not the proletariat but the bourgeoisie, and if you are a proletarian writer or artist, you will eulogize not the bourgeoisie but the proletariat and working people: it must be one or the other.

While writing the script of *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold*, the comrades of the opera group, under the guidance of Comrade Chiang Ching, holding aloft the great red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought, began a sharp class struggle against a handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists and bourgeois reactionary "authorities" around the major issue of portraying the positive or negative roles in this opera.

When Comrade Chiang Ching led the revision and re-editing of the script for this opera, she emphasized from the beginning the importance of taking the side of the positive roles which should stand out in sharp relief; efforts must be made to use literature and music to create images of proletarian heroes nourished by Mao Tse-tung's thought. Thus, something new — new in the sense that it is socialist — and original — original in the sense that it is proletarian — might be created out of this opera; Chairman Mao's concept of people's war more sharply underlined and the lofty spirit of the Chinese People's Liberation Army made vivid in its whole-hearted service for the people. Comrade Chiang Ching's instructions and concern let loose for the revolutionary comrades of the opera group a flood of inspiration.

Realizing that they could no longer voice their opposition in the open, the handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists and

reactionary "authorities" resorted to the two-faced tactics of apparently supporting but actually sabotaging this opera. Standing on the side of the negative roles, they tried their best to build up images of the chief villains, Eagle and the Taoist Ting Ho. With a great flourish they painted the fierceness of Eagle, using such effects as loud beating of gongs and drums greeting his first appearance on the stage to give the impression that he was a powerful figure, and in Scene Six, "The Bandits' Lair", they added colour to Eagle's inflated arrogance. They made a special arrangement with a counter-revolutionary revisionist to compose the music for the words which clearly expressed the reactionary mentality of the Taoist Ting Ho. They tried their best to play down the roles of the proletarian heroes like Yang Tzu-jung. Scene Five, "In the Mountains" (in which Yang Tzu-jung kills a tiger), had a deep significance as the killing of a real tiger symbolized his ability to subdue the group of paper tigers in the stronghold. However, this bunch of counter-revolutionary revisionists, instead of portraying Yang Tzu-jung's courage and alertness, incarnated in this play the old Peking opera *Wu Sung Kills a Tiger* by degrading the proletarian revolutionary hero to the level of Wu Sung, the individualist "hero" as described by feudal scholars. In Scene Six, "The Bandits' Lair", and Scene Ten, "The Hundred Chickens Feast", the revisionists did their utmost to make Yang Tzu-jung behave like a bandit in their criminal attempt to defame proletarian heroes and the People's Liberation Army.

Under the guidance of Comrade Chiang Ching and using the *Talks* as a magic monster-detector, the revolutionary comrades of the opera group promptly discovered the trick, "the best defence is attack", employed by the handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists in sabotaging the revolution of Peking opera, and resolutely waged a fight against them. In the revised script, four negative roles and some scenes in which they were highlighted were deleted and the stage actions of the negative roles were greatly

curtailed. Changes were also made in the part played by Eagle to reduce the impact caused by his arrogance. The positive roles were made to stand out in every way, particularly the dominant heroic image of Yang Tzu-jung, so that they would at all times completely overshadow the negative roles politically and morally. Yang Tzu-jung would no longer depend on make-up to "out-bandit the bandits" in order to win the confidence of Eagle and his gang but on his courage and alertness arising from his disdain and contempt for them, no longer depend on his "bandit" tactics to outwit Luan Ping but on a Communist's fearless spirit and readiness to sacrifice himself.

After taking part in the 1964 National Festival of Peking Opera on Contemporary Themes, the comrades of the opera group, guided by Comrade Chiang Ching, carefully re-edited the script. Comrade Chiang Ching suggested adding a scene "Asking About Past Bitterness" in order to accentuate the point that Yang Tzu-jung integrates himself with the masses and relies on them in his reconnaissance. This brought out more sharply Chairman Mao's idea of people's war and more deeply reflected the nature of a people's army, making Yang Tzu-jung a more ideal hero. The comrades keenly felt that only by following Chairman Mao's teaching in his *Talks* about what to eulogize and what to expose would they be able to truly portray the proletarian heroes.

The comrades of the opera group also made extensive revolutionary changes in music, singing, décor and lighting which had been used in the old operas for the roles of emperors, princes, generals, ministers, scholars and beauties.

The handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists and reactionary "authorities", not reconciled to their defeat, continued their sabotaging and trouble-making in every way. Comrade Chiang Ching instructed that it was important to support the heroes with musical effects and use a complete "song cycle" to express revolutionary aspirations. The revisionists immediately raised objections,

criticizing this opera for having too much singing and claiming that the singing was long-drawn-out. The comrades sharply fought them. They broke the inhibitions of the old ways of singing to meet the needs of expressing true feelings. In Scene Eight when Yang Tzu-jung sang the words: "I'll melt the ice and snow with the sun that is in my heart", the rhythm of the song *The East Is Red* was used at the end of the sentence in order to emphasize Yang's boundless love for Chairman Mao. The audience was moved to applaud. The reactionary "authorities", however, said, "Peking opera is Peking opera; yours is foreign-style opera!" They cried hysterically, "The style of singing of Peking opera is sacred and inviolable. You are abusing the art of Peking opera!" In the scene "In the Mountains", the comrades of the stage art group used rays of powerful sunlight through the forest to symbolize Yang Tzu-jung's advance under the brilliance of Mao Tse-tung's thought. The reactionary "authorities" said, "These rays spoil the scene." The comrades of the opera group waged a sharp struggle against them using the *Talks* as their guide. They were ready to act or make corrections in whichever way would best present Mao Tse-tung's thought and create images of proletarian revolutionary heroes. They quoted Chairman Mao, "**We should support whatever the enemy opposes and oppose whatever the enemy supports.**" They said firmly, "What the bourgeois reactionary 'authorities' forbid us to destroy, we *will* destroy, and in a big way. What they do not want to establish, we *will* establish, and in a big way too! We insist that there must be a thorough revolution of Peking opera so that a proletarian new Peking opera may be created!"

GRASP THE TALKS AS A POWERFUL WEAPON IN THOROUGHLY REMOULding OUR OUTLOOK

The revolutionary comrades of the opera group have learnt from their experience that the struggle between the two lines on literature and art around the revolution of Peking opera is reflected in the thinking of each and every revolutionary, expressed in the struggle to get rid of selfish ideas and foster devotion to the public interest. This struggle has a vital bearing on the struggle between the two lines on literature and art. In carrying out the revolution of Peking opera we must follow Chairman Mao's teachings to the letter and in the spirit of the *Talks*. We must make serious efforts in remoulding our world outlook, whole-heartedly serve the workers, peasants and soldiers and defend Chairman Mao's line on literature and art. To waver and vacillate, to peer before and behind, to be preoccupied with personal gain or loss, or to hang on to outdated and decadent things will hamper the carrying out of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line on literature and art. Only by making vigorous efforts to get rid of selfish ideas and foster devotion to the public interest can one resolutely stand on the side of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line and successfully carry out the revolution of Peking opera.

From the very first day when the revolutionary comrades of the opera group began to take part in the revolution of Peking opera, they have taken Chairman Mao's *Talks* and the "three good old articles" (*Serve the People, In Memory of Norman Bethune and The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains*) as weapons, made energetic efforts to get rid of selfish ideas and foster devotion to the public interest and to revolutionize their thinking. "Perform revolutionary operas and be revolutionaries" has become their motto. Chairman Mao said:

Our literary and art workers must accomplish this task and shift their stand; they must gradually move their feet over to the side of the workers, peasants and soldiers, to the side of the proletariat, through the process of going into their very midst and into the thick of practical struggles and through the process of studying Marxism and society.

Following Chairman Mao's instructions they went to live with the soldiers and became soldiers themselves to remould their world outlook by creatively studying and applying Chairman Mao's works and making efforts to get rid of selfish ideas and foster devotion to the public interest. When they returned to the theatre they brought back with them the experience in the creative study and application of Chairman Mao's works as practised among the soldiers. They got a firm grip on the living ideas in people's minds and put up boards with quotations from Chairman Mao on rehearsal stages, from which they derived inspiration to overcome difficulties and selfish ideas. The revolutionization in their ideology helped to accelerate the revolution of Peking opera. The artists, who used to be "rivals" or "enemies" among themselves, are now comrades-in-arms. Formerly, when two actors played the same role, each would compete to seize the maximum number of performances and be in the limelight. Now they behave like brothers and help each other in every way. While one is performing on the stage, the other, for example, would make tea for him. They say with feeling, "We are now playing roles in revolutionary operas; we must fight selfishness. We won't be able to give a good performance unless we get rid of selfish ideas."

The comrades have reached a common understanding that the more the literary and art workers study and apply the *Talks* and the "three good old articles" in a creative way, the more thoroughly will they revolutionize their thinking and the greater will be the result of the revolution of Peking opera. They ex-

press their determination to continue to criticize and repudiate the counter-revolutionary revisionist line on literature and art and its back-stage general manager and to carry out still better Chairman Mao's proletarian line on literature and art so that the great red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought will for ever fly over the stage of proletarian literature and art.

A FIERCE STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL OF THE PEKING OPERA STAGE

— The Production and Staging of *On the Docks*,
a Peking Opera on a Revolutionary
Contemporary Theme

by Hsieh Wen-ping

Under the brilliance of Mao Tse-tung's thought and the solicitous guidance of Comrade Chiang Ching, revolutionary writers and artists in Shanghai have written and staged *On the Docks*, a fine Peking opera on a revolutionary contemporary theme. This was the outcome of their rebellion against the counter-revolutionary revisionist black line on literature and art, against the domination of the stage by emperors, princes, generals, ministers, scholars and beauties. This new Peking opera, which shines with the brilliant thought of Mao Tse-tung, for the first time reflects the militant life of the Chinese working class in the new era of socialist revolution in the 1960s. It warmly eulogizes the heroes of the working class armed with Mao Tse-tung's thought and penetratingly reveals the acute class struggle in the ideological field. This marks an important victory for Chairman Mao's revolutionary line on literature and art.

Chairman Mao says: "Everything new comes from the forge of hard and bitter struggle. This is also true of the new

culture. . . .” An intense and sharp class struggle developed round the script-writing, rehearsal and presentation of *On the Docks*.

In September 1962, our great leader Chairman Mao issued the great call **“Never forget class struggle!”** On New Year’s Day, 1963, Comrade Ko Ching-shih set a fighting task before the writers and artists in Shanghai: “Go all out to write about the thirteen years since liberation and eulogize the workers, peasants and soldiers!” Shortly afterwards, *Morning on the Docks*, a *Huai chu* opera (northern Kiangsu opera), the first play to give expression to the struggle of the dockers of the socialist era, was produced. Comrade Chiang Ching went to see the performance and immediately approved of it, pointing out that its main merits were in depicting the courage and lofty ideals born of the internationalism and patriotism of the dockers in Shanghai. She suggested that the Peking Opera Theatre of Shanghai should adapt it for Peking opera. She encouraged the revolutionary comrades of the theatre and expressed the hope that they would succeed in producing this opera, which eulogizes the workers of the socialist era, creating sublime images of working-class heroes to inspire and educate the people, and making still greater contributions towards the Chinese revolution and world revolution. Persistently adhering to Chairman Mao’s revolutionary line on literature and art, Comrade Chiang Ching once again led the revolutionary literary and art workers in fearlessly declaring war on the counter-revolutionary revisionist black line on literature and art and its back-stage general manager.

The Peking Opera Theatre of Shanghai had been an important stronghold of the counter-revolutionary revisionist black line on literature and art. There have always existed acute and complicated struggles between the two classes, the two roads and the two lines. Backed by a handful of Party persons in authority taking the capitalist road in the old Shanghai Municipal Party Committee, a small number of capitalist roaders in the Party and reactionary bourgeois “authorities” frenziedly resisted the rev-

olution of Peking opera. They clamoured, “The improvement of traditional Peking operas should be tackled first of all”; “Peking opera is unsuitable for the staging of operas on contemporary themes”; “The proportion of Peking operas on contemporary themes to those on traditional themes should be one to nine”. In particular, they opposed operas on the current struggles of the working class, saying, “It is very difficult to produce operas on industrial themes and it is very unlikely we will succeed no matter how hard we work”; “If workers appear on the stage, it will be hard for them to sing and dance in the style suited to Peking opera”; and so on and so forth. In a word, they left no stone unturned to keep the heroic characters of the working class off the stage.

Chairman Mao said:

When things are going badly for them, the representatives of the exploiting classes generally resort to tactics of attack as a means of defence, for the sake of immediate survival and future growth. . . . They have long years of experience in class struggle. They are skilful in waging struggle in different forms — both legal and illegal.

Since Comrade Chiang Ching suggested the adaptation of *Morning on the Docks*, the counter-revolutionary revisionists who had always opposed the revolution of Peking opera suddenly became “enthusiastic”. Feigning agreement to the adaptation, they usurped leadership in this work. Then employing the tactic of attack as a means of defence as well as the trick of “stealing the beams and pillars and putting up rotten timbers in their stead”, they viciously substituted for the main theme the “bringing up of successors to the revolutionary cause”. They wrote prolifically about “middle characters” in a futile attempt to exclude the spirit of internationalism and patriotism of the proletariat and oust the heroic images of the working class from the stage.

After seeing the *Huai chu* opera *Morning on the Docks*, the top capitalist roader in the Party poured cold water on it. He concocted a story, alleging, "At that time the underground Party raised quite a big sum of money to bring relief to the dockers on the picket-lines. It turned out that some received money twice, and others received it under false names. Then a way was devised: every docker was required to present his carrying-pole to qualify himself as a recipient of the money." What a vile slander and attack against the dockers this was! In his eyes the dockers were only an ignorant and selfish "mob". This same person even openly proposed that the opera should dwell on the "bringing up of successors", that is, to expose the "seamy side" and portray the "middle characters". Dancing to the tune played by China's Khrushchov, the handful of ghosts and monsters who had control of the adaptation of the play for Peking opera cudged their brains to portray the young worker Han Hsiao-chiang as a "middle character", ideologically backward and with a confused state of mind, and tried to make him play a leading role in the opera. They also did their utmost to tamper with the revolutionary content of the Peking opera *On the Docks*. There were the words sung by Fang Hai-chen, the woman Party secretary:

*Oh, our Party and Chairman Mao,
Look! Fine sons of dockers freely breathe in the storm.*

The capitalist roaders in the old Shanghai Municipal Party Committee, in their hatred for such words, odiously crossed out the line "Oh, our Party and Chairman Mao". They used every possible counter-revolutionary means to resist and undermine the revolution of Peking opera.

In March 1965, after seeing a performance of the opera, Comrade Chiang Ching explicitly pointed out that it distorted the original theme of the opera, and seriously criticized the many errors in the adapted version. She, therefore, reorganized the opera group

of *On the Docks*, rearranging the cast and strengthening the script-writing team. She personally led the work of script-writing. Holding aloft the great red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought, she charted a new course for them. Her thoroughgoing dauntless fighting spirit inspired all the revolutionary comrades of the theatre. The revolutionary comrades of the opera group studied Chairman Mao's teachings anew: **"If you are a proletarian writer or artist, you will eulogize not the bourgeoisie but the proletariat and working people."** Acting upon Comrade Chiang Ching's instructions, they threw themselves into a new fight and rewrote the script. They concentrated on creating images of Shanghai's advanced dockers emerging from actual life. They stressed the character Fang Hai-chen, a woman worker and secretary of the local Party branch, and Kao Chih-yang, leader of the loading team who came from a docker's family, and the heroic images of the dockers as a group. In order to give prominence to the role of Fang Hai-chen they arranged a complete song cycle for her to express her boundless loyalty to the Party and Chairman Mao as well as her strong will and fighting spirit. They also composed a series of melodies bringing out the image of Kao Chih-yang: his straightforwardness, heroic calibre and high sense of political responsibility. The role of a warehouse keeper who had served since the time of the Kuomintang rule was added to the second revised version so that the theme of class struggle in the ideological field runs through the whole opera. Instead of emphasizing the sufferings of the old society, it fires the audience by the heroic struggles of the dockers in pre-liberation days. The mood that goes across to the people is one of militancy and daring. By recalling the past and looking forward to the future as she comes to the exhibition hall of education in class struggle, Fang Hai-chen helps the young worker Han Hsiao-chiang see the importance of his work in the spirit of dedication to world revolution. Thus the opera gives

expression to the mighty power of Mao Tse-tung's thought and the role of leadership of the Party.

The handful of capitalist roaders in the Party and reactionary bourgeois "authorities" had sent their henchmen to worm their way into the opera group in another vain attempt to lead the work of rewriting the script astray. The revolutionary comrades of the group waged a sharp struggle against them, seized their pens and recaptured the power which they had usurped. Basing themselves on Comrade Chiang Ching's instructions and the opinions of the workers, peasants and soldiers, the comrades completed the new version of the script of *On the Docks*.

The workers, peasants and soldiers warmly praised the new version. But the handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists maligned it as being "devoid of artistic quality". They debased the role of Fang Hai-chen, saying, "Fang exists only for the sake of carrying out the Party's policy." They also said, "Although Kao Chih-yang's shortcomings have been corrected, he has become lifeless, almost to the point of becoming a 'dummy'." They raised a clamour that they would criticize and discredit the wording of the opera's songs, sentence by sentence. When the opera group gave a performance in celebration of National Day, October 1, 1966, it again met with obstacles put in their way by a handful of capitalist roaders in the Party in the old Ministry of Culture. They asked the group to reduce the number of performances on various pretexts and forbade it to give any performance for foreign guests. They went so far as to obstruct a performance for the leading comrades of the Party's Central Committee. However, the revolution of Peking opera is irresistible and the revolutionary model opera *On the Docks* cannot be suppressed. The Peking opera stage must become a red classroom for the propagation of Mao Tse-tung's thought. Comrade Chiang Ching, adhering to Chairman Mao's revolutionary line on literature and art, led the revolutionary comrades of the opera group in carrying out resolute struggles against

the class enemy. She encouraged them by saying: "The oppressed people all over the world are longing to see our operas on revolutionary contemporary themes. We should have the highest aspirations and resolve to serve the need of the Chinese people as well as the oppressed people of the whole world." Under her leadership and encouragement and with the powerful support of the revolutionary dockers, the comrades of the opera group used Mao Tse-tung's thought as their weapon and smashed the unbridled attacks of the class enemy. They successfully completed the adaptation of *On the Docks* and presented it on the stage. This added a new lustre to the revolution of Peking opera.

As in the case of other revolutionary model operas, the victory won in the opera *On the Docks* is, first and foremost, a victory in the seizure of power. The experience in the script-writing, rehearsal and staging of the opera fully shows that the struggle between the two classes and the two lines in the political arena is bound to be reflected in the field of art where such struggle is likewise sharp and complicated. If we do not use Mao Tse-tung's thought to occupy each and every position in the field of literature and art, the bourgeois and revisionist ideology assuredly will. Therefore, we must pay the closest attention to the class struggle in this field. We must topple the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road, who is the back-stage general manager for the revisionist black line on literature and art. We must completely recapture the leadership in this field.

On the 25th anniversary of the publication of Chairman Mao's *Talks at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art*, while the great victories of more than a year of the proletarian cultural revolution are being acclaimed, the brand-new opera *On the Docks*, born and matured in the intense class struggle, is presented for the vast audience of workers, peasants and soldiers. We warmly congratulate its success and ardently wish for more and more images of heroes armed with Mao Tse-tung's thought to occupy the Peking opera stage.

LET HEROIC IMAGES OF THE PROLETARIAT SHINE ON THE PEKING OPERA STAGE!

by the Revolutionary Committee of
the China Peking Opera Theatre

In high spirit and with lofty aspirations, we revolutionary fighters in literature and art are most warmly celebrating the 25th anniversary of the publication of Chairman Mao's brilliant work the *Talks at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art*. The celebration takes place at a time when the deep-going process of the great proletarian cultural revolution has reached a new high tide and when we are singing songs of one victory after another for Chairman Mao's revolutionary line.

By this illustrious work, our most respected and beloved great leader Chairman Mao has creatively formulated the most complete, thoroughgoing and correct proletarian revolutionary line on literature and art, and has opened up a brand-new road for the revolutionary literature and art of the proletariat.

This essential work of Chairman Mao's has illuminated the road for the revolution of Peking opera. It was under the radiance of this work that *The Red Lantern*, a prototype of the proletarian revolutionary Peking opera, came into being.

The Red Lantern, shining with Mao Tse-tung's thought, possesses a profound revolutionary content and a powerful artistic effect, with which it has attracted the broad sections of the workers,

peasants and soldiers and the revolutionary masses, and received from them a warm welcome and high approbation.

The Red Lantern has created noble heroic images of the proletariat on the Peking opera stage. This is an achievement of the struggle in which Comrade Chiang Ching has led us against the counter-revolutionary revisionist black line on literature and art. This is a significant victory for Chairman Mao's revolutionary line on literature and art.

I

With regard to literature and art Chairman Mao teaches us: **"This question of 'for whom?' is fundamental; it is a question of principle."** He added:

All our literature and art are for the masses of the people, and in the first place for the workers, peasants and soldiers; they are created for the workers, peasants and soldiers and are for their use.

For a long period the sharp struggle between the two classes — the proletariat and the bourgeoisie — and the two lines on the literary and art front has centred on the fundamental question of "for whom?".

The proletariat strictly adhere to the teachings of Chairman Mao. They devote great efforts to creating and ardently singing the praises of the heroic characters of workers, peasants and soldiers so that Mao Tse-tung's thought will occupy all the positions in literature and art in the service of the political line of proletarian revolution and of the strengthening and consolidation of the political power already won by the proletariat. However, Chairman Mao constantly teaches us:

The overthrown bourgeoisie is trying, by all methods, to use the position of literature and art as a hotbed for corrupting the masses and preparing for the restoration of capitalism.

To carry out their plot for a capitalist restoration, the top capitalist roader in the Party, together with a handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists, had long tolerated emperors, princes, generals, ministers, scholars, beauties, ghosts and monsters dominating the arena of literature and art, thus turning it into a position for preparing public opinion in favour of a capitalist restoration.

On the Peking opera stage these people eulogized emperors, princes, generals and ministers, and prettified scholars and beauties. They advocated the view that "it is right to oppress" and "exploitation has its merits". They advertised feudal and bourgeois ethics and morality and peddled wares which were vulgar and obscene. As a result, Peking opera theatre was replete with bad plays of all descriptions and in fantastic styles, which for years had corroded the minds of the people. What was worse was that several years ago when activities of the class enemy, both at home and abroad, aimed at a comeback had reached a peak, *Fourth Son Visits His Mother*, a poisonous opera propagating national and class capitulation, cropped up with direct support from the top capitalist roader in the Party. Backed by the same person, China's Khrushchov, the ghosts and monsters became still more unscrupulous and *Hsieh Yao-huan*, *Li Hui-niang*, *The Mouth of the Nine Streams*, *A Visit to Hades*, and other bad plays sprang up one after another. In our theatre the counter-revolutionary revisionists were prepared to stage *The Dragon Flirts with the Phoenix*, a play depicting the lustful, dissipated life of a feudal monarch. Peking opera stage was haunted by ill winds and shrouded in deadly mists. How arrogant were the counter-revolutionary revisionists who chanted elegies to landlords and

the bourgeoisie and cast spells to summon the ghost of capitalism!

At the time of sharp class struggle between the two classes and the two lines on literature and art Chairman Mao issued important instructions on two occasions to literary and art circles, one in December 1963 and the other in June 1964, with which he personally kindled the torch of revolution in literature and art. And Comrade Chiang Ching holding high the great red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought sounded the battle-drum of the proletarian revolution in literature and art. After a thorough study and investigation for a long period, she took her place in the lead of a broad section of revolutionary literary and art workers. She used the invincible thought of Mao Tse-tung as a weapon to launch bold, persistent attacks on feudal, bourgeois and revisionist literature and art. She came to our theatre in 1963 and called on us to create works of literature and art in defence of our socialist economic base. She gave personal leadership during our creative and rehearsal work on *The Red Lantern*, fighting valiantly to seize control of the stage from the bourgeoisie.

II

Chairman Mao teaches us:

If you are a bourgeois writer or artist, you will eulogize not the proletariat but the bourgeoisie, and if you are a proletarian writer or artist, you will eulogize not the bourgeoisie but the proletariat and working people: it must be one or the other.

To eulogize which class, create the heroes of which class, and allow the characters of which class to take the dominant place in literary and artistic works — this constitutes the focus of the class

struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie on the literary and art front. It also provides the criterion by which one is to judge to which class a literature and art belongs and the political line of which class it serves.

Comrade Chiang Ching has said:

It is inconceivable that, in our socialist country led by the Communist Party, the dominant position on the stage is not occupied by the workers, peasants and soldiers, who are the real creators of history and the true masters of our country.

The heroes springing up from among workers, peasants and soldiers who are nurtured by the thought of Mao Tse-tung are true heroes of our socialist era, and in their fine quality is reflected in concentrated form the class character of the proletariat. It is a fundamental task for the revolutionary literature and art of the proletariat to work enthusiastically for the characterization of heroes from among workers, peasants and soldiers who are armed with Mao Tse-tung's thought and to make them occupy the stage at all times. Only by so doing will it be possible to get to the roots of the task of the fundamental orientation in literature and art serving workers, peasants and soldiers, the orientation pointed out by Chairman Mao.

In the process of guiding the writing of *The Red Lantern*, Comrade Chiang Ching never failed to devote her energy to creating revolutionary heroic images of the proletariat. Besides, she had to wage resolute struggles against the handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists on a series of questions of principle, such as whether or not it was necessary to create heroic images of the proletariat and how to create them.

Thanks to the constant explanations and instructions by Comrade Chiang Ching we came to understand the essential significance of the characterization of the proletarian hero Li Yu-ho. She stressed the necessity of creating heroic images of the proletariat,

specifically the image of Li Yu-ho. She demanded that *The Red Lantern* should have a distinctive type of character so that it not only would convince the domestic audience of the truth that the political power of the proletariat is not easily won in order to educate posterity, but would also be a contribution to all the people in the world who are fighting for liberation by providing them with a lesson. We have seen that the feudal landlord class in the past always devoted its energies to creating "heroes" like Huang Tien-pa, henchman of the feudal ruling class. Today, why should we not exert the utmost effort to create the noble image of such a proletarian hero as Li Yu-ho for our socialist stage? Only among the proletariat armed with Mao Tse-tung's thought will be found the greatest and most brilliant heroes in history who bear their country in mind, extend their view to embrace the world and set themselves the task of liberating the whole of mankind. On our stage there are not too many but too few heroes of this kind.

Chou Yang, Lin Mo-han and their lackeys who are extremely hostile to revolutionary contemporary opera were compelled to accept the work of revising *The Red Lantern* after their various schemes had gone bankrupt. However, they in one way or another resisted Comrade Chiang Ching's instructions by resorting to various kinds of disruption and obstructions. They relegated Li Yu-ho to a secondary role and deleted the scene "A Commotion at the Gruel Stall" in which Li Yu-ho was portrayed as courageous and resourceful. Particularly in the scene "A Fight in the Face of Death" they made Tieh-mei, Li's daughter, run about frantically at the sight of her grandmother and father being tortured by the enemy, in order to reveal her mental "conflict", "agony" and "vacillation". By emphasizing horror and suffering, they tried to upset and poison the audience with a touch of bourgeois sentimentality. On the other hand, the Japanese aggressor Hatoyama was shown in all his arrogance. The scene "Hatoyama

Is Defied" highlighted this chief of the Japanese gendarmerie, who, while going off with the singsong girls in his train, laughed bombastically like a conqueror. In peddling the traitor's philosophy of the top capitalist roader in the Party, Chou Yang, Lin Mo-han and their followers did all they could to show the "mental suffering" of the traitor Wang Lien-chu in the act of betrayal. They vainly hoped to smuggle rubbish from feudalism, capitalism and revisionism into this revolutionary contemporary opera, divert it from serving proletarian politics on to the adverse road of serving bourgeois politics, and by covert means remove the heroic characters of workers, peasants and soldiers from the stage.

Comrade Chiang Ching sternly criticized them and repeated her express assertion about the necessity of creating revolutionary heroic images of the proletariat in *The Red Lantern*. She pointed out that the heroic character of Li Yu-ho as an ideal type of proletarian revolutionary fighters should be moulded in the light of the history of our Party's revolutionary struggles, and that in the person of Li Yu-ho the fine quality and thoroughgoing revolutionary spirit of the proletariat should be embodied.

Comrade Chiang Ching worked arduously with us on portraying the heroic character of Li Yu-ho, establishing the positions of the leading and minor roles, positive and negative characters and arranging episodes, music and songs, stage setting and scenery, costume, property and lighting. The opera develops with Li Yu-ho as the centre; negative characters yield ground to positive ones so that the latter have a decided superiority over the former. Given the best position and ample scope for movement, Li Yu-ho holds sway on the stage and gets the upper hand of the enemy.

We restored the scene "A Commotion at the Gruel Stall" because it shows Li Yu-ho's underground struggle, the sufferings of the labouring people under the heel of the Japanese invader and Li's deep class feeling for them, his self-possession, resource-

fulness and courage in fighting the enemy, and things that inspire him with wisdom and strength. At the same time we resolutely struck out the part of the scene which depicts the arrogance of Hatoyama and the "mental suffering" of the traitor.

Comrade Chiang Ching also waged a firm struggle against the counter-revolutionary revisionists over the scene "A Fight in the Face of Death", the climax of the opera. Bearing Comrade Chiang Ching's views in mind, we highlighted Li Yu-ho and gave prominence to his revolutionary heroism and optimism by making him sing a moving song cycle of different airs so that he could give full expression to his broad vision and noble spirit. *The Internationale* played when the execution takes place rouses an emotion which is revolutionary and political. We also resolutely did away with the details of torturing Li Yu-ho and his mother on the stage because we simply reject naturalism and sensationalism.

Holding firm to Chairman Mao's revolutionary line on literature and art, Comrade Chiang Ching on the spot gave concrete guidance for rehearsal and persevered in the struggle by relying on the revolutionary masses. In the end she broke through all obstacles and disruption and made the image of Li Yu-ho, a proletarian of heroic stature, tower on the stage of our socialist land and for ever live in the hearts of the millions who have made up the audiences.

III

The struggle centring on the question of creating the brilliant image of the proletarian hero Li Yu-ho is one between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and between the proletarian and bourgeois lines. The counter-revolutionary revisionists tried in a thousand and one ways to distort and smear proletarian heroes

so as to remould the world according to their reactionary bourgeois world outlook. Comrade Chiang Ching led us in adhering to a proletarian world outlook which enabled us to create noble images of proletarian heroes. Anything detrimental to the characters of the revolutionaries of three generations in Li Yu-ho's family — be it an episode, an aria, a sentence, a minor movement, or even a costume or make-up which was found to be a little out of place — was altered over and over again till it came up to the required standard. Many of these changes relating to singing, words and movement were made by Comrade Chiang Ching herself. Holding high the great red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought, she worked according to the policy of "making no concession on questions of principle and settling questions of art in practice". It was in this way that, together with us, she smashed the plots of the counter-revolutionary revisionists and created the noble image of Li Yu-ho, with the result that the revolutionary contemporary Peking opera *The Red Lantern*, which combines revolutionary political content with highly-developed artistic form, has won the warm approbation of the broad sections of workers, peasants and soldiers and the revolutionary masses, and the enthusiastic appreciation of many foreign friends as well. All revolutionary people, at home and abroad, have cheered this great victory for Chairman Mao's thinking on literature and art.

On the occasion of celebrating the 25th anniversary of the publication of the *Talks at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art* we cannot restrain our elation as we reminisce about the revolutionary road which we have opened up in our struggle through thick and thin, guided by Chairman Mao's thinking on literature and art. At the crucial juncture when Peking opera theatre was shrouded in the miasma of "emphasis on the ancient as against the contemporary" and "emphasis on the dead as against the living", it was Mao Tse-tung's thought which, like a lodestar,

led us forward to blaze a trail! It was the invincible thought of Mao Tse-tung which encouraged us to wage a dauntless battle against the counter-revolutionary revisionist black line on literature and art, and defeat and smash the schemes of obstruction, disruption and attacks by the handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists.

We shall always remember those days of intense creative work and rehearsal on *The Red Lantern* when the amiable and endearing Comrade Chiang Ching often came into our midst, carefully listening to our views and earnestly giving us guidance. When we were in difficulties she never failed to urge us to be bold in creation and innovation. She ardently induced us to eulogize the workers, peasants and soldiers, and advance along Chairman Mao's line on literature and art. Who can tell how much energy she has expended on *The Red Lantern*! What outstanding contributions she has made to the great proletarian cultural revolution!

We are determined to devote our greatest effort to the creative study and application of Chairman Mao's works. Following Comrade Chiang Ching's example, we shall always be loyal to our great leader Chairman Mao, to the great thought of Mao Tse-tung, and to the revolutionary cause of the proletariat and be thorough revolutionaries! We are determined to keep to that orientation in literature and art serving the workers, peasants and soldiers as pointed out by Chairman Mao, to reverse what has been reversed on the old stage, restore the history of the people which has been distorted by the reactionary ruling classes to what it should be, send to the deepest pit of hell all those emperors, princes, generals, ministers, scholars and beauties who have dominated our stage for thousands of years, and let heroic images of the workers, peasants and soldiers, creators of the world, shine forth on the stage of Peking opera!

MAO TSE-TUNG'S THOUGHT ILLUMINATES THE ROAD OF REVOLUTION OF PEKING OPERA

by the "Shachiapang" Revolutionary Fighting Regiment
of the No. 1 Peking Opera Company of Peking

Chairman Mao's brilliant work the *Talks at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art* has creatively and with genius developed the Marxist-Leninist world outlook and theory on literature and art. It represents the acme of Marxist-Leninist theory on literature and art in the present era. It has completely, comprehensively and systematically summarized the struggle between the two lines on the cultural front. It is the most powerful weapon with which proletarian literary and art workers defeat all sorts of bourgeois ideas on literature and art; it is the supreme guide for our every action as proletarian literary and art workers.

The No. 1 Party person in authority taking the capitalist road and a number of counter-revolutionary revisionists under his aegis, including Lu Ting-yi, Chou Yang and Hsia Yen, were mortally afraid of, and nursed implacable hatred for, the *Talks*. For a long time they had usurped the leading positions in literary and art circles and countered Chairman Mao's proletarian line on literature and art with a thick and long counter-revolutionary revisionist black line which they obstinately pursued. They desperately opposed, attacked and shamelessly tampered with the *Talks*, attempting to turn literature and art into an instrument

of public opinion for the restoration of capitalism. Before it set about the transformation of Peking opera under the leadership of Comrade Chiang Ching, the No. 1 Peking Opera Company of Peking had been a tenacious stronghold controlled by the counter-revolutionary revisionist black line on literature and art. The No. 1 capitalist roader in the Party also extended his tentacles into our company through the old Propaganda Department of the Party's Central Committee, the old Ministry of Culture and the old Peking Municipal Party Committee.

Chairman Mao teaches us, "Everything new comes from the forge of hard and bitter struggle."

The birth of the revolutionary modern Peking opera *Shachiapang* was preceded by an intense struggle. It was a battle against the obstructions and sabotage by the counter-revolutionary revisionist black line, a battle waged by all the revolutionary comrades of our company under the leadership of Comrade Chiang Ching, holding aloft the great red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought. The production was a triumph for Mao Tse-tung's thought, a triumph for Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line on literature and art.

I

While under the control of the counter-revolutionary revisionist black line, the No. 1 Peking Opera Company, on the pretext of "reviving tradition", had for a long period filled the stage of our socialist land with emperors, princes, generals, ministers, scholars and beauties, with the result that a noxious atmosphere hung over the whole stage which emphasized the ancient as against the contemporary, the dead as against the living. There were such operas as the big anti-Party poisonous weed *Hai Jui Dismissed from Office* which tried to reverse the verdict on the Right

opportunists; *Chen Fei* which lauded an agent of imperialism; *Fourth Son Visits His Mother* which extolled the philosophy of a traitor; and *Executing a Judge in Hades* which propagated feudal superstition. As a result, our stage was shrouded in dark clouds, with ghosts and monsters carrying the day.

Chairman Mao teaches us:

Imperialist culture and semi-feudal culture are devoted brothers and have formed a reactionary cultural alliance against China's new culture. This kind of reactionary culture serves the imperialists and the feudal class and must be swept away. Unless it is swept away, no new culture of any kind can be built up. There is no construction without destruction, no flowing without damming and no motion without rest; the two are locked in a life-and-death struggle.

With infinite loyalty to Mao Tse-tung's thought and a high sense of responsibility towards the proletarian cause of literature and art, Comrade Chiang Ching has since 1963 led all the revolutionary comrades of our company in a great revolution of Peking opera and in an intense struggle against the counter-revolutionary revisionist black line on literature and art. She acted in accordance with Chairman Mao's teachings that literature and art should serve the workers, peasants and soldiers and proletarian politics.

Comrade Chiang Ching with much feeling taught us that it was incompatible with the socialist economic base and political system to let emperors, princes, generals, ministers, scholars and beauties continue to appear on the socialist stage. You must, she said, overcome all the obstacles and dare to do what your predecessors haven't done; you must stand in the forefront of the revolutionary struggle and completely break away from the roles of emperors, princes, generals, ministers, scholars and beauties; you must

make a great endeavour to write about and play workers, peasants and soldiers.

These instructions of Comrade Chiang Ching's gave us confidence and strength in launching a revolution of Peking opera in a big way. Under her leadership we were determined to hold high the great red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought, throw overboard all the old operas portraying emperors, princes, generals, ministers, scholars and beauties, and whole-heartedly serve the workers, peasants and soldiers and proletarian politics. We began to rehearse a new Peking opera, *Sparks amid the Reeds*, which was adapted from a Shanghai opera bearing the same title, brought to us from Shanghai by Comrade Chiang Ching.

However, a handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists, with the support of the top capitalist roader in the Party, did their utmost to sabotage, obstruct and suppress the revolution of Peking opera. They wildly clamoured, "Do not make forced changes in traditional operas on old themes, for they have educational value"; "Peking opera's artistic level is very high and you can't alter it just as you please"; "As there is a history course in the school, so there must be traditional operas on the stage"; "You must walk on two legs [meaning both traditional and modern operas should be staged at the same time]"; and "All three kinds of opera [that is, traditional, modern and newly produced historical operas] should be presented at the same time." They viciously slandered, "Operas on contemporary themes are just like plain boiled water." They tried hard to preserve feudal and capitalist art lest it should be impaired in the slightest degree. On the other hand, they were extremely hostile to operas on revolutionary contemporary themes, attacked them in a thousand and one ways and would not rest content until they were eliminated.

At the crucial moment of the fierce struggle Comrade Chiang Ching brought to the theatrical workers the golden treasury of

revolution, the *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, helping them to study the great, invincible thought of Mao Tse-tung. Chairman Mao said:

Any given culture (as an ideological form) is a reflection of the politics and economics of the given society, and the former in turn has a tremendous influence and effect upon the latter.

Chairman Mao's teaching broadened our vision and developed our minds. We engaged in cultural revolution and the transformation of opera because we wanted to make our superstructure correspond with the socialist economic base. But the top capitalist roader in the Party and his henchmen desperately opposed the transformation of opera and tried to undermine the cultural revolution because they wanted to destroy the socialist economic base and pave the way for a capitalist restoration. We would never allow this to happen! No, never!

Workers, peasants and soldiers can never co-exist on the socialist stage with emperors, princes, generals, ministers, scholars and beauties. It is either one or the other, for this is a life-and-death struggle. Such fallacies as "walking on two legs", and "staging all three kinds of opera at the same time" must be exploded. Emperors, princes and their cohorts must be driven off the stage and replaced by workers, peasants and soldiers. Otherwise, our proletarian new literature and art will be unable to secure absolute control of the socialist stage and to serve the workers, peasants and soldiers and proletarian politics.

In order to smash the schemes of capitalist restoration, we must foster the fearless spirit of "pulling out the tiger's teeth", and open fire on the grim fortress.

II

July 23, 1964 was the most unforgettable and happiest day for every one of us. On this day Chairman Mao, our great leader, saw our performance of *Sparks amid the Reeds* and at the end of the show he mounted the stage, shook hands and had a picture taken with us. This was the greatest encouragement, support, solicitude and confidence the great leader showed us and many of us were moved to tears. Soon afterwards Comrade Chiang Ching transmitted to us Chairman Mao's instructions on the opera. He stressed that prominence must be given to armed struggle, that armed revolution should be used to smash armed counter-revolution, and that the opera should end with the people's army fighting its way into the enemy's den. He urged us to strengthen the parts showing the relationship between the army and the people, and to improve the way in which the heroic images of the positive characters are portrayed and the musical effects used in supporting these characters.

All the revolutionary comrades of the company were exhilarated when they heard Chairman Mao's instructions and expressed their firm determination to follow the instructions and act accordingly.

But the handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists of the old Propaganda Department of the Party's Central Committee, the old Ministry of Culture and the old Peking Municipal Party Committee, with the support of the top capitalist roader in the Party and in collusion with the reactionary "authorities" in our company, contrived a series of despicable double-dealing tricks to resist Chairman Mao's instructions and sabotage the transformation of Peking opera. In every way they attacked, and made things difficult for, Comrade Chiang Ching and the revolutionary comrades of our company, in an attempt to nip in the bud this new flower of proletarian art. They wildly clamoured, "Chairman

Mao's words only have a reference value and it is not necessary that all Comrade Chiang Ching's views should be followed."

Chairman Mao teaches us:

If you are a bourgeois writer or artist, you will eulogize not the proletariat but the bourgeoisie, and if you are a proletarian writer or artist, you will eulogize not the bourgeoisie but the proletariat and working people: it must be one or the other.

While revising the script of *Shachiapang*¹ the handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists tried to wreck it as a model of revolutionary opera. They cudgelled their brains to polish up two negative characters, Hu Chuan-kuei and Tiao Teh-yi, playing up their parts to show how cunning they were in countering the New Fourth Army. On the other hand, they slighted the character of Kuo Chien-kuang, political instructor of a New Fourth Army detachment, with the result that Kuo's image became a hotchpotch. They did "design" some singing parts for Kuo Chien-kuang, but these were loosely connected tunes which would interest no one. A political instructor armed with Mao Tse-tung's thought was thus relegated to an insignificant supporting role. Ah Ching Sao, the underground Party worker, was depicted as a worldly proprietress and furthermore a woman impersonator was assigned to play the part. All these measures were aimed at besmirching the heroic characters and belittling the decisive role played by the New Fourth Army in the armed struggle at Shachiapang.

Comrade Chiang Ching led us in a firm struggle against these counter-revolutionary revisionists. Guided by Chairman Mao's instructions she made it clear that the heroic image of Kuo Chien-kuang must be made prominent and his singing parts should

¹The Peking opera *Sparks amid the Reeds* was later renamed *Shachiapang*.

consist of a song cycle of stirring melodies so as to show the inner thoughts and valour of a hero. Raising high the great red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought, Comrade Chiang Ching engaged in the actual work and gave us guidance in person. After an arduous struggle Comrade Chiang Ching, together with us, eventually succeeded in making *Shachiapang* an embodiment of the great strategic concept of our great leader Chairman Mao concerning armed struggle and people's war, highlighting the positive characters, strengthening the close unity between the army and people, exposing and defeating the enemy.

When their plot to distort the script was crushed, the handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists were far from giving up their sinister schemes. They tried to use their "designs" in music and singing as well as the conventional and outmoded artistic form of Peking opera to tie the hands of the *Shachiapang* players. They advanced the view that in Peking opera the music was "neutral" and could be used to portray both the positive and negative characters and that conventional and stylized stage movements such as mincing and quick steps and "entrance and exit musical accompaniment", portraying emperors, princes, ministers, generals, scholars and beauties, could also be used to depict workers, peasants and soldiers.

Under Comrade Chiang Ching's leadership we carried out a tit-for-tat struggle against the "neutral music". To us revolutionary fighters in art and literature, workers, peasants and soldiers have nothing in common with emperors, princes, generals, ministers, scholars and beauties, and the positive and negative characters are diametrically opposed to each other in their thoughts and feelings as well as in image. How can the same "neutral music" be used to portray characters of two different classes? Such views were most absurd and were designed to smear the heroic figures of the workers, peasants and soldiers and to sabotage operas on contemporary themes and the transformation of Peking opera.

Music has a class character and there is no music that is above classes. It serves either this or that class.

Chairman Mao teaches us:

What we demand is the unity of politics and art, the unity of content and form, the unity of revolutionary political content and the highest possible perfection of artistic form. Works of art which lack artistic quality have no force, however progressive they are politically.

It was in accordance with this teaching of Chairman Mao's that Comrade Chiang Ching boldly carried out reforms to cater to the needs of the revolutionary political content, making it possible for Peking opera to depict more and more characters of different types. Thus the schemes of the handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists to use the conventional forms to destroy operas on revolutionary contemporary themes were smashed.

III

Chairman Mao teaches us:

China's revolutionary writers and artists, writers and artists of promise, must go among the masses; they must for a long period of time unreservedly and whole-heartedly go among the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers, go into the heat of the struggle, go to the only source, the broadest and richest source, in order to observe, experience, study and analyse all the different kinds of people, all the classes, all the masses, all the vivid patterns of life and struggle, all the raw materials of literature and art. Only then can they proceed to creative work.

Since our literature and art serve the workers, peasants and soldiers and are created for them, we must be familiar with their ideas, feelings and language. If we don't share their ideas and feelings and don't know their simple and vivid language, it will be impossible to produce works of literature and art that they like, that portray them well and eulogize them. And in such a case it is out of the question to speak about serving them and proletarian politics.

However, when our company was controlled by the counter-revolutionary revisionist black line on literature and art, it persistently refused to allow the actors to go among and integrate with the workers, peasants and soldiers to remould their ideology. When forced by circumstances it had to send the actors down to the countryside, they were pushed into a car for a quick tour of the villages, had their pictures taken by the fields, and, upon their return, the event was shamelessly played up in the newspapers. Such counter-revolutionary tricks filled us, the revolutionary literary and art workers, with the utmost fury.

In strict accordance with Chairman Mao's instructions, Comrade Chiang Ching paid great attention to the problems of how to help the actors keep close touch with life and remould their ideology. In order to achieve good results in the transformation of Peking opera, in operas on revolutionary contemporary themes, she asked us in 1965 to go to Yangcheng Lake in Kiangsu Province to live among the peasants. Through the introduction of the poor peasants and former cadres of the New Fourth Army of the war years we achieved a better understanding of the background of the struggle waged by the New Fourth Army, the customs and habits of the people south of the Yangtse River, and the relationships between the army and the people. Our hatred for the enemy deepened as an old peasant woman told us, through her own experience, of the atrocities committed by the enemy. Later, Comrade Chiang Ching asked us to visit the concentration

camp in Chungking where revolutionaries were cruelly persecuted by American and Chiang Kai-shek's secret police. Such vivid education in class struggle made us understand much better the content of the opera. With the change in ideology and feelings our hatred for the enemy deepened, our love for the Party and Chairman Mao strengthened and our class feeling for the workers, peasants and soldiers was reinforced. Our personal experience convinces us that the teachings of Chairman Mao are most brilliant, correct and great.

* * *

Holding aloft the great red banner of the thought of Mao Tse-tung, Comrade Chiang Ching guided us in breaking through all the obstacles placed by the handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists who were bolstered up by the top capitalist roader in the Party, and in smashing their plots one by one. *Shachiapang*, a model of revolutionary Peking opera, was in May 1965 eventually put on the socialist stage where this new flower of proletarian art has since flourished.

A sharp and zigzag struggle preceded the birth of *Shachiapang*. It was a struggle between the two classes, the two roads and the two lines, and also one between us and the top capitalist roader in the Party. Through this hard struggle we have come to full understanding that the *Talks at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art*, a brilliant and great work of Chairman Mao's, is truly the supreme guide for our every action as proletarian literary and art workers and the fundamental guarantee of our success.

Shachiapang, a prototype of revolutionary Peking opera, is our first shot in the fierce battle against capitalism, feudalism and modern revisionism. We are determined to hold high the great red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought, exert ourselves to carry out the spirit of the *Talks*, stage more and better Peking operas on revolutionary contemporary themes and completely

crush the counter-revolutionary revisionist black line on literature and art and its general manager behind the scenes — the top capitalist roader in the Party. Advancing bravely along Chairman Mao's proletarian line on literature and art, we will truly build our company into a revolutionary model company which is highly militant and proletarian in every way, keeping proletarian flowers of art for ever flourishing on the socialist stage.

RAID ON THE WHITE TIGER REGIMENT — BORN AND MATURED IN STRUGGLE

by the Revolutionary Committee of
the Peking Opera Company of Shantung

Looking back at the birth and growth of the revolutionary modern Peking opera *Raid on the White Tiger Regiment* on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the publication of our most beloved great leader Chairman Mao's *Talks at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art*, we realize ever more deeply the correctness and incomparable strength of this great work. Like an all-illuminating beacon, it lights up the road for proletarian revolutionary literature and art and the road of revolution of Peking opera.

The success of this model revolutionary opera *Raid on the White Tiger Regiment* is an important victory for Chairman Mao's *Talks*. It was Comrade Chiang Ching who, holding high the great red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought, led the revolutionary literary and art workers in producing this opera by overcoming all obstacles and difficulties in the sharp and fierce struggle between the two classes, the two roads and the two lines.

THE INVINCIBLE THOUGHT OF MAO TSE-TUNG IS THE SOUL OF REVOLUTIONARY LITERATURE AND ART

Chairman Mao says: "In the world today all culture, all literature and art belong to definite classes and are geared to definite political lines." Literature and art of every era serve the politics of definite classes and serve the seizure and consolidation of state power. Revolutionary literature and art must serve proletarian politics; they must give prominence to Mao Tse-tung's thought. To propagate or not to propagate Mao Tse-tung's thought is the demarcation line separating revolutionary literature and art from counter-revolutionary literature and art and is also the focal point of the struggle between the two lines on literature and art.

When Comrade Chiang Ching first saw our performance of *Raid on the White Tiger Regiment*, she pointed out that it was a good play on the whole but its generalization was not on a high enough plane. In artistic creations, she said, first place must be given to politics and this opera needed to be strengthened politically. Though busy as ever, Comrade Chiang Ching personally directed its revision. She gave a great deal of thought to every word and sentence, every movement and posture, to intonation as well as lighting, décor, make-up, props, etc., and offered us important suggestions, giving prominence to proletarian politics and the great thought of Mao Tse-tung.

Backed by the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road, the counter-revolutionary revisionists Lu Ting-yi, Chou Yang and Lin Mo-han madly opposed Chairman Mao's line on literature and art and did their utmost to oppose giving prominence to Mao Tse-tung's thought in *Raid on the White Tiger Regiment*. They talked such nonsense as: "The play lacked Peking opera flavour" and "it can only be counted as a half-acrobatic type

of play". They tried hard to obstruct the revision of the script, shrieking, "Don't revise it any more, or nobody will want to see it!"

In 1964, on the eve of the National Festival of Peking Opera on Contemporary Themes, the handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists in the former Shantung Provincial Party Committee pretended to prepare to stage *Raid on the White Tiger Regiment* while assigning the principal actors to play in the bad opera *New Wang Pao-chuan*, which extolled capitulation to the enemy. When they failed in this, they hatched another plot. In choosing operas produced in the province of Shantung to be staged in the festival they boosted *Chiao Lung-piao* which glorified a bandit. They violently attacked *Raid on the White Tiger Regiment* in a vain attempt to prevent its taking part in the National Festival and thus to oppose the presentation of operas on revolutionary contemporary themes.

In May 1964, when another top capitalist roader in the Party, together with Peng Chen, chieftain of the counter-revolutionary revisionist clique of the former Peking Municipal Party Committee, came to Shantung on an "inspection tour", we enthusiastically offered to perform *Raid on the White Tiger Regiment* for them. What infuriated us was that half an hour before the performance they ordered to have the programme changed. Instead of the revolutionary opera on a contemporary theme they wanted to see the poisonous Shantung *Lu chu* operas *Bride in Her Sister's Place* and *The Change of Cave-house*. How obviously these counter-revolutionary revisionists showed their love and hate! This fully revealed the criminal features of the handful of top capitalist roaders in the Party who hated and resisted the revolution of Peking opera and obstinately used feudal and bourgeois art to serve their scheme for a counter-revolutionary restoration.

Comrade Chiang Ching persistently and enthusiastically encouraged us and demanded that this opera must be up to a high

standard both politically and artistically. As regards certain people's attempt to negate its ideological content by finding fault with its artistry, she said, "You must stand up to them and carry the revolution through to the end. You must be worthy of the cause of the proletariat and live up to the expectations of Chairman Mao." These instructions strengthened our confidence and determination to devote our whole lives to the revolution of Peking opera.

The most unforgettable event took place on August 10, 1964 when Chairman Mao, the red sun that shines most brightly in our hearts, came to see our performance. After the performance, he came on to the stage to shake hands and have photographs taken with us. In addition, he gave extremely important directives. In this Chairman Mao showed his greatest confidence and encouragement and profound solicitude for us as well as all revolutionary literary and art workers throughout the country. This also represents his generous attention and support to the revolution of Peking opera. We pledged to the great leader Chairman Mao to make a successful revision of the opera and repulse the unbridled attacks of the enemy by holding high the great red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought and resolutely working under the leadership of Comrade Chiang Ching.

In accordance with Chairman Mao's instructions, Comrade Chiang Ching drew up a concrete plan for the revision. But the handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists in the former Shantung Provincial Party Committee resorted to all sorts of tricks to oppose and obstruct our work. Backed by the top capitalist roader in the Party, they arbitrarily ordered us to stage the so-called traditional opera *Man Chiang Hung*, alleging, "Operas on contemporary themes don't show the quality of your company." Thus, they openly opposed the great revolution of Peking opera, for which Chairman Mao has shown his concern and support. Faithfully following Chairman Mao's teachings, all revolutionary

comrades in our company refused to revive the ghosts of emperors, princes, generals and ministers and refused to stage that bad opera, and so the revisionists' plot fell through.

The class enemy was not reconciled to his defeat. When we actively studied ways to improve the play under the leadership of Comrade Chiang Ching in accordance with Chairman Mao's teachings that literature and art must serve the workers, peasants and soldiers and proletarian politics, the handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists did all they could to obstruct our efforts. With boundless respect and veneration for the great leader Chairman Mao we proposed to add quotations from Chairman Mao to the script and shout the slogan "Long live Chairman Mao!" at the end of the opera. They went off into hysterics and howled, "This is pragmatism, vulgarization and metaphysics! It will make a mess of the thing." They vainly attempted to resist Mao Tse-tung's thought and prevent it from occupying the stage. On top of this, they played a more vicious trick by filming the opera *Raid on the White Tiger Regiment* without Comrade Chiang Ching's permission, intending to standardize the version before it had been properly improved. In the film script they substituted narrow nationalism and the bourgeois theory of "human nature" for revolutionary heroism and internationalism of the proletarian fighters and used a revisionist criterion of "artistic value" to negate the proletarian revolutionary spirit. They declared that stress must be laid on "novelty". In their sinister hands the opera for a time became low-keyed and depressing and almost turned into a poisonous revisionist work, filled with bourgeois "human interest". As soon as she saw the scenes already shot, Comrade Chiang Ching ordered the filming to be stopped until the script was satisfactorily improved. Once again the opera was saved.

Comrade Chiang Ching instructed us to adopt the creative method of having the leadership, the masses and professional artists work together — "the three-way combination" — and

to have the "rule by the voices of the many" instead of the "rule by the voice of one". She asked us to do a good job of revising the script by collective efforts as in a people's war. However, the handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists in the former Shantung Provincial Party Committee would have nothing to do with the mass line or the "three-way combination". They distorted Comrade Chiang Ching's instructions and time and again asked advice from "well-known professors" and "well-known experts" so as to turn *Raid on the White Tiger Regiment* into a bad opera paving the way for a capitalist restoration.

However, the new-born forces always vanquish the decadent ones in the end. Holding high the great red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought, Comrade Chiang Ching led us in the fight and made *Raid on the White Tiger Regiment* shine ever more brightly with the brilliance of Mao Tse-tung's thought.

LET HEROES NURTURED BY MAO TSE-TUNG'S THOUGHT STAND PROUDLY FOR EVER ON THE SOCIALIST STAGE

Chairman Mao says: "This question of 'for whom?' is fundamental; it is a question of principle." Again he says:

All our literature and art are for the masses of the people, and in the first place for the workers, peasants and soldiers; they are created for the workers, peasants and soldiers and are for their use.

From the very beginning Comrade Chiang Ching pointed out clearly that in this opera we must make a good portrayal of the proletarian hero Yang Wei-tsai, a reconnaissance platoon leader of the Chinese People's Volunteers. She said that we must devote a whole scene to him, bring out the class root of his heroic

deeds and the process of his growth into an internationalist and Communist fighter nurtured by Mao Tse-tung's thought, and his wisdom, his courage and the nobility of his mind. A song cycle of uplifted, stirring melodies must be used to characterize the hero and give expression to his lofty aspirations. Western musical instruments with a strong tone might be used as accompaniment in producing the desired atmosphere. Lighting, décor, make-up and stage props must also serve the portrayal of the hero. Following Comrade Chiang Ching's instructions, we were determined to project with our collective efforts heroic figures on the socialist stage and enable the workers, peasants and soldiers to occupy the fortresses of literature and art.

The handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists in the old Propaganda Department of the Party's Central Committee, the old Ministry of Culture and the former Shantung Provincial Party Committee did their utmost to resist and distort Comrade Chiang Ching's instructions. They depicted Yang Wei-tsai as a bourgeois "hero" wallowing in the mire of sentimentality. Using the usual counter-revolutionary double-faced tactics, they asserted, "It is difficult to make eight dishes of food in one pot; it is difficult to sing two operas in a one-act play." They added, "There is no need to devote a whole scene to a single character in every opera." As for the singing part composed at the request of Comrade Chiang Ching, they feigned agreement in her presence but behind her back they went on with their own composition.

When Comrade Chiang Ching suggested that we create the heroic image of the Chinese People's Volunteers as a group, they debased them by presenting them as simple-minded toughs having no sense of organization or discipline.

When Comrade Chiang Ching pointed out that the other characters should not be allowed to steal the spotlight from the hero Yang Wei-tsai, they deliberately distorted him by isolating him, turning him into a "peony without leaves", a "hero" divorced from the

masses. They opposed projecting this heroic image and tried to denigrate the Chinese People's Volunteers because they were against singing the praises of the workers, peasants and soldiers. Their criminal aim was to strangle proletarian revolutionary literature and art. How vicious they were! Under Comrade Chiang Ching's guidance, we finally frustrated all sorts of plots hatched by this handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists. Now Yang Wei-tsai, the heroic image of the proletarian fighter nurtured by Mao Tse-tung's thought, stands proudly on our socialist stage.

STRIVE TO BE SUCCESSORS TO THE REVOLUTIONARY CAUSE OF THE PROLETARIAT

Chairman Mao teaches us:

In order to guarantee that our Party and country do not change their colour, we must not only have a correct line and correct policies but must train and bring up millions of successors who will carry on the cause of proletarian revolution.

The struggle between the two classes and between the two lines is very sharp and complicated in the revolution of Peking opera and the struggle to win over the younger generation, too, is most intense.

Comrade Chiang Ching has been most solicitous about our development. She instructed us in the thought of Mao Tse-tung and presented the young players in our company with the *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* and asked us to study hard and apply the invincible thought of Mao Tse-tung so as to become worthy successors to the cause of revolution and carry the revolution of Peking opera through to the end. She said that to act in a revolu-

tionary opera, one must first be a revolutionary. She told us to temper and test ourselves in the storm of class struggle, go among the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers, learn from them and remould our ideology.

The counter-revolutionary revisionists, however, tried hard to obstruct and oppose our study of Chairman Mao's works. They said, "Don't let it take away your time for rest. . . ." While assigning work, they often left us no time for the study of Chairman Mao's works, in an attempt to prevent us from arming our minds with Mao Tse-tung's thought. They devised for us the motto: "Eat well, sleep well, act well and have a good time!" What was more vicious was that they used all sorts of pretexts to prevent us from going up to the mountains, to the countryside or to factories to integrate ourselves with the workers and peasants. They forbade us to go to the army units to learn from the People's Liberation Army. They used material incentives and their counter-revolutionary revisionist inducement: the policy of "three famous" (famous writers, famous directors and famous actors) and "three highs" (high salaries, high royalties and high awards), in a futile attempt to win over and corrupt the younger generation and make us successors to revisionist literature and art and their tools for restoring capitalism. But they will never succeed! We will be literary and art fighters for ever loyal to the Party, to Chairman Mao and to the thought of Mao Tse-tung and we will be successors to the cause of proletarian revolutionary literature and art.

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The birth and growth of *Raid on the White Tiger Regiment* is a paean of victory to the thought of Mao Tse-tung, a paean that soars to the skies. It is the result of our valiant struggle and hard work, led by Comrade Chiang Ching who holds high the great red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought. We are determined to follow the

great leader Chairman Mao's teachings and, together with the broad masses of workers, peasants and soldiers, make an even better revision of this play. We will hold high the great banner of revolutionary criticism, settle accounts thoroughly with the handful of top capitalist roaders in the Party for their towering crimes, liquidate the pernicious influence of the counter-revolutionary revisionist black line on literature and art and carry the great proletarian cultural revolution through to the end. We will always advance in the direction pointed out by Chairman Mao. May the great thought of Mao Tse-tung shine for ever on the stage of socialist literature and art!

谈京剧革命

江青著

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外文出版社出版(北京)

1968年第一版

编号: (英)10050-662

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10-E-870P