

Learning to Be Artistically Creative in Career Development of Traditional Performing Arts Education: A Case Study on Qin Opera

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Abstract

The main purpose of this research is to contribute to the literature related to studies on traditional performing arts education by taking an anthropological approach to shed light on how artistic creativity of performers is enhanced in their career development process: a topic insufficiently explored by previous studies. More specifically, by focusing on the traditional theater of Northwestern China called Qin opera as the main example, which offers abundant data to explore the topic, the research clarifies the relation between educational forms (such as apprenticeship and school education) and the development of artistic creativity. In conclusion, the research formulates a hypothesis that can provide a useful analytical framework for future research in the related field by applying the concept of ‘schoolnization’ that Shimizu and Nishio (2020) proposed before to compare to other cases of performing arts education including merits and demerits of each.

Keywords: Career Development Education, Artistic Creativity, Apprenticeship, School Education, Performing Arts Education

I Introduction

The main purpose of this research, based on previous ones by the author (Shimizu 2015, 2018a, 2018b), is to contribute to the literature related to studies on traditional performing arts education by taking an anthropological approach to shed light on how artistic creativity¹ of performers is enhanced in their career development process: a topic insufficiently explored by previous studies. For every traditional performing arts, passive transmission of tradition across generations is not enough for its survival and prosperity. Artistic creativity is equally important for those purposes because it adds vitality to tradition and helps it evolve further. Moreover, knowing what kind of educational form is related to artistic creativity of performers is also quite essential to better understand and manage the transmission process.

This research thus focuses on the relation between educational forms (such as apprenticeship and school education) and the development of artistic creativity by performers. Here, a traditional theater of Northwestern China called Qin opera is chosen as the main example which offers abundant ethnographic data to explore the topic. Furthermore, by applying the concept of ‘schoolnization’ that Shimizu and Nishio (2020) proposed before, school-based

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education of the opera is compared with other cases of performing arts education to clarify its merits and demerits in relation to artistic creativity. Based on the result, it is then the final objective of this research to formulate a hypothesis that can provide a useful analytical framework for future research in the related field.

II Review of Literature

A number of different disciplines have informed studies on traditional performing arts education to illuminate its basic characteristics.

Based on performance study, Schechner (2006) has elucidated the mechanism of acting training and rehearsal process of performers in relation to stage performance. He has also illuminated the differences between formal and informal training which are loosely related to educational forms such as apprenticeship and schooling. On the whole, his research has gone well beyond the scope of preceding studies of theater anthropology that tended to focus on things like ethnic identity, gender relation, and religious or political reality of local society reflected in particular theatrical works (Beeman 1993: 370-381; Yin 2017 1-2). That is, he has analyzed the internal structures and different genres of performing arts as well to gain better understanding of the nature of performance unlike his predecessors who were more concerned about its connections to local society (cf. Korom 2013; Royce 2004).

Meanwhile, studies on Japanese folk performing arts have taken yet another approach. Being critical to the nostalgic images of folk performing arts as something 'traditional' and 'primitive' in the rapidly modernizing world, researchers have been searching ways to decenter from those discourses since the early 1990's (Hashimoto 2006). One solution that they have come up with is educational analysis which can shed light on secular aspects of the hitherto mystified folk performing arts. Fukushima and others (1995) thus applied Legitimate Peripheral Participation theory (Lave and Wenger 1991) of educational anthropology to illuminate the process of how Kagura and popular theater performers actually acquire occupational skills and identities in different educational contexts. More recently, Sugawara and others (2005) utilized the concept of 'body resource', which consists of use of physical-biological characteristics of body and physical acts for the sake of other members of community (Sugawara 2007: 5), to gain insight into how a folk performing arts called Nishiure Dengaku in Shizuoka is transmitted across generations. They regarded its distributed knowledge among various practitioners as 'distributed cognition' (Hutchins 1996) and analyzed the complicated ways the folk performing arts as 'body resource' has been differentially transmitted (redistributed) in a local community.

Certainly, these studies are quite inspiring and have been fairly influential in the related field. It must be pointed out, however, that they don't directly analyze about artistic creativity. As one of the few exceptions, Fujita (1995) coined the term 'preservation order' to show how Noh music maintains the precarious balance between tradition and change, yet he did not relate it to educational form. It is, therefore, the main purpose of this research to study this remaining

problem to gain better understanding of conditions for the development of artistic creativity.

III About Qin Opera

Qin opera may be a very unfamiliar example for many. Among researchers of Chinese traditional theater and devoted theater fans, however, it is quite well-known. What kind of an opera is it then?

1. Its History and Basic Characteristics

The opera (called *qinqiang* in Chinese) is a very popular regional theater in the Northwestern China and it is especially influential in Shaanxi and Gansu provinces. In Shaanxi province (see Map 1 for the location), it is one of the ten popular legends of the region (*shidaguan*) because its painted-face role category called *hualian* is known to sing with a roaring voice that is said to be audible for miles around (Zhang ed 2000: 5). It has a long history and it is said to have existed from at least the middle of the Ming Dynasty (or the end of the 16th century). Although the exact origin of it is still wrapped in mystery, some researchers suggest that it is much older than the famous Beijing Opera, which came into being only at the end of the 18th century during the reign of Emperor Qian Long of the Qing Dynasty. Moreover, there is some evidence to suggest that it influenced the formation of the Beijing Opera (Jiao and Yan 2005: 140). Thus, it is a regional theater that has been influential enough to leave illustrious marks on the history of Chinese traditional theater as a whole.

Because the opera is a very complicated theater, it is not possible to sum up its basic characteristics in a few words. However, it certainly has some unique characteristics that differentiate it from the Beijing Opera. For example, its performers use the Shaanxi dialect



Map 1: Location of the Shaanxi Province in China
(Created by the author)

(especially the dialect of the Guanzhong region in Shaanxi) in their songs and speeches. In addition, its sometimes passionate and vigorous music is also quite different from the Beijing

Opera's more elegant and milder music. Interestingly, some fans of the opera claim that its music reflects "the vigorous and audacious nature of the Shaanxi people"² because it is the music created by the people who have witnessed so many dynastic changes and therefore played an active part in the history of ancient China as the citizens of the old capital city Chang'an (present-day Xi'an). Meanwhile, the singing voice of *hualian* (the painted-face role category) is also something that may reflect the so-called "the vigorous and audacious nature of the Shaanxi people". As I have mentioned earlier, *hualian*'s singing voice is fairly energetic and it is quite unlike its counterpart's in the Beijing Opera, which is much more elegant.

Thus, the opera has many unique characteristics of its own that reflect the culture of the Shaanxi region. But it also has some of the basic characteristics of the Chinese traditional theater, such as the traditional patterns of acting called *sigongwufa* and the traditional role categories for performers called *hangdang* (cf. Mackerras 1983; Riley 1997). *Sigongwufa* is based on the four skills of *chang* (singing), *nian* (recitation), *zuo* (acting), and *da* (martial skills) and the five categories of techniques, which are *shou* (hand movement), *yan* (eye movement), *shen* (body movement), *fa* (coordination of hand, eye, body, and foot movement), and *bu* (ways of walking). *Hangdang* is comprised of four main role categories, *sheng* (male), *dan* (female), *jing* (painted face), and *chou* (comic), and their various subcategories³. Just as in any other Chinese traditional theater (including the famous Beijing Opera), the performance of the opera is structured by the *sigongwufa* and the *hangdang*.

What is particularly attractive about the opera? Some people might find its long and mysterious history quite intriguing. Others might respond to its unique music which has a rough liveliness. But what most people find appealing is the performance because of its impressive creativity. The opera is often called "the performing art of performers" due to the central and creative role played by them. They must convey different times and places and create various figures (whether historical or literary) relying almost solely on their own bodies, using the *sigongwufa* and the *hangdang*, since there are very few props (usually just a table and a few chairs) used in many of the traditional programs⁴. In other words, the performers cannot count on the stage set to help them express the characters, the historical setting or a specific place. The skill and creativity required is something that, once appreciated, most people find attractive.

2. Career Development Education of Performers

How do performers of the opera learn to perform? Here, I present a brief look at the process of their career development education (also see Table 1 for the description of the process). The following data is based on my fieldwork in Xi'an on September in 2019.

To become a Qin opera performer, they must first attend a traditional theater school and learn basic knowledge and skills of acting including *sigongwufa* and *hangdang* previously mentioned. There are a few such schools in Xi'an all of which are institutions of secondary education that train wannabe performers for the period of 5 years (from the age 12 to 18 years old). So, they decide to become a performer upon entrance after they graduate from ordinary elementary school. Most children who apply for such schools don't have any experience in stage

performance, though they can sing better than average. A small percentage of the students are from theater-loving family whose parents have taught them certain basic acting skills.

Let's take one traditional theater school called the Provincial Art School as an example to describe what students learn in details⁵. When I visited the school on September in 2019, there were three classes (each comprised of 15 boys and girls) of Qin opera course. The major goal of the course, in a nutshell, is to produce performers upon completion, so there are many specialized subjects related to performance. For example, there are *changnian* classes for singing and recitation skills, *shenduan* classes for acting skills, *tanzigong* classes for martial skills, and *bazigong* classes to learn the techniques of using wooden swords and spears in performance. These subjects constitute elementary skills associated with *sigongwufa* mentioned previously. Moreover, there is a more advanced subject called *jumu* (or *paixi*) in which particular plays of the opera are rehearsed. This class is based on the fundamental skills learned in the other specialized subjects, and it is regarded as the most important subject of all. Meanwhile, the students also study Chinese, math, and history in courses like those found in ordinary secondary schools. These subjects expand the students' general knowledge and are considered to be as important as the specialized performance courses.

After 5 years of training, students graduate from the school to join Qin opera theatrical companies to start their professional career as performers. There were two patterns of joining a theatrical company at the time of my fieldwork. One way is to enter it as a group with classmates because some theatrical companies want to have a generational change every decade or so. So, when I was there, one whole class of the school had a contract of group employment with a theatrical company in Gansu province that wanted to replace its older performers. Another way of getting a job is by individual application to theatrical companies. This usually takes the form of participating in audition with strong recommendation from the school. On every June, the school holds a graduation performance show and invites scouts from theatrical companies. The event functions as a kind of audition for them to see the performance of recommended students. Because the school is the very prestigious one among Qin opera practitioners, its graduates can find a job as performers in one way or another without much problems.

What happens after that depends on the situation of a theatrical company, but there are at least three general patterns. Some theatrical companies may have a certain period of reeducation to let the new graduates adapt to their working environment (Shimizu 2015: 271-280). Such was the case in the famous Yisushe theatrical company in 2019 which has provided graduates just out of the school with a special OJT for a year to familiarize them with its traditional programs. Some other theatrical companies may financially support them to study at a technical college. For example, the most prestigious Shaanxi Provincial theatrical company has been sending their graduates to a technical college for two years since around the turn of 21st century to learn acting theories of both at home and abroad, Chinese literature and poetry, and Chinese history. They regard additional knowledge in these subjects as useful in better understanding and creating figures in various programs. Meanwhile, yet other theatrical companies may treat new graduates just like old timers and expect them to perform important figures right away. They are usually

small-scale theatrical companies that have limited human resource and don't have the luxury of time to wait for the young performers to grow up slowly. A theatrical company in Zhouzhi region that I visited in 2019 was like that. They had to rely on the young ones to perform figures that require stamina and physical strength because older ones could not do it any longer.

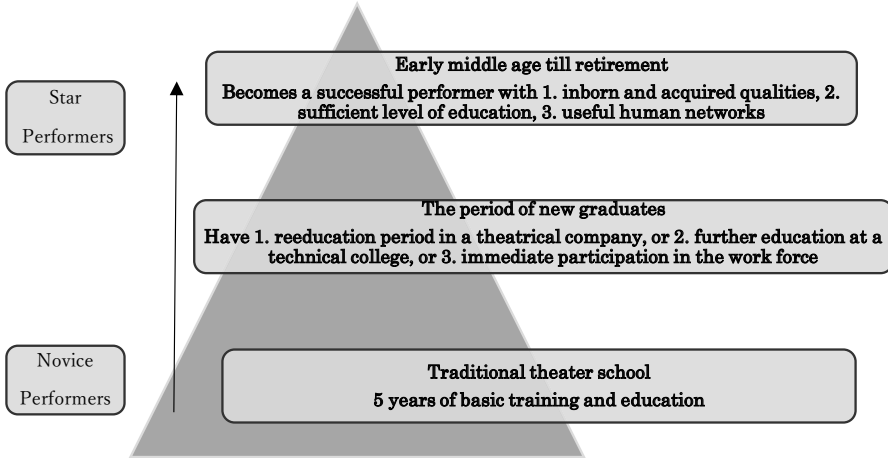


Table 1: The Process of Career Development Education
(Created by the author)

Surprisingly, what happens after this stage in career development is up to each performer and there are no organized stages that follow in the Qin opera industry. However, successful performers seem to share at least three things in common. First, they must have a good singing voice, attractive physical appearance, and sufficient level of acting skills. Some of them are inborn qualities, while others are acquired through hard work. Second, they got to have certain level of education to have wide views to flexibly interpret the role of figures in various programs. If they keep on studying even after graduation from a traditional theater school, they may become educated enough to have new understanding of existing programs. Finally, they need human networks to expand their knowledge and gain precious opportunities. For example, if they know right people at the right moment, they may be able to acquaint with prominent masters and/or influential theatrical company managers who can teach them new programs and give them opportunities to perform those on stage. Official retirement age of Qin opera is 60 for male and 55 for female, so they need to satisfy the above three conditions by then if they want to have a successful career.

IV Conditions for Artistic Creativity

How artistic creativity is related to the process of career development education? To put it simply, during 5 years of training in a traditional theater school, students are discouraged to be creative because they are supposed to be learning basic knowledge and skills of acting including *sigongwufa* and *hangdang* at this stage. They understand that without the basic training they lack the necessary 'building blocks' upon which they can add something original later in their career. That's why they spend day and night learning about them by imitation and repetition of teachers' performance (cf. DeCoker 1998).

The school, however, is not just a place for basic education. It also prepares students to be artistically creative in at least following two ways. First, it educates them to have basic literacy and knowledge in Chinese history and literature necessary to read play scripts with certain level of understanding. This is one of the most important contributions of school education because many performers could not read and write before the foundation of People's Republic of China in 1949 when they did not have traditional theater schools yet. For example, the famous Qin opera actress Yu Qiaoyun, who had learned to perform through apprenticeship, was illiterate until in her early 20's when she finally had a chance to go to school after 1949 (Gou 2007: 347). This is one of the many episodes of performers who were poor and uneducated because the occupation of Qin opera actors/actresses was socially discriminated against until the Communist takeover of China.

As for today's school, it employs various teaching methods to improve students' understanding of play scripts. Shimizu (2018b: 152) shows how plays of the opera are taught in three steps in the Provincial Art School depending on their grade and level of understanding. In short, when students are in second grade, teachers only make them imitate and repeat their performance because they are believed to be too young to understand complicated plots. But when they are in fourth or fifth grade, teachers let them analyze play scripts and have discussion about them. They believe that students are mature enough by then to understand play scripts more deeply. Moreover, they may apply Stanislavski's acting theory (Benedetti 1998) to stimulate their thought and teach them something about the role creation. Although students are not allowed to be freely creative while in school, they are taught to be analytical when reading play scripts and performing figures by a teaching method like the above. Surely, this prepares students to be artistically creative later in their career.

Another way the school prepares them to be creative performers in the future is by helping them build human networks that may become useful in time. I know a young male performer, for example, who got accepted to master degree program of National Academy of Chinese Theatre Arts in Beijing with effective recommendations from the traditional theater school in Shaanxi Provincial theatrical company. His case shows the fact that the school can help some performers to have higher (more creative) education through its networks. Meanwhile, I know a female teacher in the upper management of the Provincial Art School who often introduces famous performers and influential theatrical company leaders to her students with her strong connections to many theatrical companies. Thanks to her, many students were able to join the

famous Yisushe theatrical company in Xi'an as professional performers. Her case shows that the school can help performers find a job through its connections. Therefore, the school can bridge students to a more creative professional life through its human networks. If students want, the school can also introduce famous masters of certain level to them to learn new programs.

What happens then during the period of new graduates right after graduation? The development of artistic creativity at that time depends really on what kind of theatrical company they join. As I mentioned earlier, there are three patterns for the period of new graduates (see Table 1). If they end up in the prestigious and well-funded municipal or provincial theatrical companies like Yisushe and Shaanxi Provincial theatrical company, they can get abundant opportunities to learn more about acting theories in their reeducation programs or at affiliated technical colleges. This is definitely a big advantage for them to develop artistic creativity. Compared to those, smaller scale regional theatrical companies located in a prefecture like Zhouzhi mentioned before can only offer new graduates with stage experiences on tours. Such theatrical companies are busy with their survival with limited budget, so they are obliged to go on tours all the time to make money, leaving little time for getting involved in creating new programs and studying acting theories. What's more, unlike the more prestigious and well-funded counterparts, they can attract much fewer number of famous performers and influential theatrical company leaders, so new graduates are quite likely to have much less chances of building broad human networks that can be useful for developing artistic creativity.

So far, this research has focused on young performers. But, the period between early middle age till retirement is the time when many performers, if they satisfy the three conditions in Table 1, become most creative because they come to have enough stage experience by then. Some may become so creative in terms of their singing, acting, and dancing that they might establish their unique performance styles with students wanting to learn. Again, if they belong to the prestigious and well-funded municipal or provincial theatrical companies, their chance of becoming that successful may be much better. For example, the famous Qin opera actress Li Juan got the most prestigious Plum Blossom prize (*Meihua jiang*) in her early 30's by performing a female warrior in the traditional program *Yang qiniang* (Li, J 2007: 520-522). She is now quite well-known as the actress who has added new elements in singing, acting, and dancing to the traditional figure of female warrior. It is no coincidence that her achievement was supported by brilliant teachers and theater directors of her workplace Shaanxi Provincial theatrical company. Likewise, the famous Qin opera actor Li Dongqiao also got the Plum Blossom prize when he was 31 by performing first Qin Emperor in the newly edited historical program *Qianguyidi* (Li, D 2007: 477-478). Advised by brilliant teachers and theater directors of Shaanxi Provincial theatrical company where he belongs, he created the Emperor figure by blending characteristics of several different role subcategories such as *xusheng*, *xiaosheng*, and *hualian*. Another reason why he was able to create such an original figure was because he has read many books about the Emperor and carefully analyzed the person by having discussions with those who supported him. The above two examples thus show that performers at this stage in their career can be artistically creative if they are surrounded by stimulating people and make sufficient effort of their own.

V Comparative Analysis

As illuminated above, career development of the Qin opera depends heavily on school education. The main reason why it has become the central part of the opera's human resource development has a lot to do with the Chinese government's reform policy. After the foundation of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the government has implemented the theater reform (*xigai*) to transform previously dominant apprenticeship into modern school as part of educational modernization. Because of the opera's political standing as a propaganda performing arts, performers have been expected to convey political messages to people (especially to those illiterate ones who couldn't learn about Chinese Communist Party's ideology by newspapers and books) through their performance. That is why traditional theater schools were established to replace feudalistic apprenticeship and mass-produce performers who are trained enough to carry out the political assignment (Shimizu 2018a: 8-11).

School education, however, is not perfect especially in relation to the development of artistic creativity. Its demerits become clear when it is compared to other educational forms such as apprenticeship or Iemoto system. For example, the famous Qin opera actress Wang Xiaoling, who was trained through apprenticeship, was able to become a very popular performer at the age of 9 with unique singing techniques (Wang 2007: 265-267). In fact, she was so popular that many theatrical companies in Gansu province in early 1940's wanted her to perform for them. Unfortunately, traditional theater schools today can't produce a performer like this because they only admit students who have graduated elementary school and reached the age of 12. Furthermore, unlike apprenticeship which relied on learning through performing on stage⁶, they do not offer enough chance for stage experience for students because their primary objective is to teach basic acting skills and theater related knowledge. That's why the schools cannot possibly produce the famous actor like Li Zhengmin who had at least 10 years long stage experience and became a star performer so quickly in his theatrical company at the age of 18 (Jing 2007: 116-117).

Thus, early start in career development and sufficient stage experience are something the schools cannot offer. And the same two points stand out as demerits of school education when it is compared to Iemoto system of such performing arts as Noh. It has been using the system for more than 650 years long. Its performers start their career as small children because it has many programs that require child figures. They usually start their career so early by being induced by their father or close relatives who are Noh performers themselves. Moreover, they have had a lifelong stages of career development based on age since Zeami (son of the Noh founder Kanami) suggested in his book more than 650 years ago (Nishio 2015). According to Nishio (2016: 31-33), performers today have five distinct stages with different performance objectives and sufficient stage experiences. Unlike school education which puts priority on basic training, the Iemoto system structured by the five stages emphasizes the importance of learning through performing on stage. Although it is true that Noh performers also need to learn basic acting skills first, they can pursue artistic creativity more flexibly once they have learned them because they are

guaranteed to have stage experience to try something new. At each stage, they can engage in trial and error as well as creative experiment with different level of programs (Nishio 2019).

School education, on the other hand, has its merits as well in relation to the development of artistic creativity. As described in the last chapter, establishment of traditional theater schools has effectively improved Qin opera performers' basic literacy and knowledge in Chinese history and literature necessary to interpret play scripts much more flexibly than apprenticeship education. Moreover, it has improved social status of the performers, who used to be at the bottom of the society, with school diploma (cf. Fu 2002). This is quite contrary to apprenticeship which is said to have exploitative and unreasonable aspects such as underpaid labor and uncivilized learning environment (cf. Ainley and Rainbird 1999; Goody 1989; Singleton ed 1998). Apprenticeship of the Qin opera was no exception with its uneducated masters and cheap labor. For example, the famous comic role category actor Zhong Xinmin was beaten up terribly by his barbaric masters who treated him like a slave when he missed a performance show because of his father's funeral (Jing 2007: 217). Unlike school education, it is easily imaginable that performers could not have concentrated well on developing artistic creativity under such a harsh circumstance.

Noh's Iemoto system seems better than apprenticeship on this point. There are no reports of exploitation of young performers as underpaid labor by unreasonable masters (Nishio 2016; 2019). Noh performers are relatively more educated as well since they have been passing down teachings of Zeami in written forms (not by oral transmission like the Qin opera performers during apprenticeship period) and they have had audience with certain level of education (not uneducated illiterate farmers like the opera). The fact that Noh had been protected by the high-ranking Samurai class during Edo period and have been appreciated by intellectuals after that shows something about its more civilized nature. However, Noh performers don't learn basic acting skills and knowledge of performance in organized manner with national curriculum and formal tests like their counterparts in the Qin opera traditional theater schools which operate on national education policies. Their learning plans and stages, including the strategies for developing artistic creativity, are much more individualistic. Although it is true that personal effort on the part of performers is also quite important for developing artistic creativity, having the national support for it can make a big difference especially financially.

VI Conclusion

How can we capture the relation between educational forms and the development of artistic creativity then? Since there are many different types of apprenticeship and school education (Shimizu 2015: 10-14), using the simple dichotomy to analyze the relation may not produce a fruitful result. Instead, this research recognizes the concept of 'schoolnization' that Shimizu and Nishio (2020) proposed as a more useful analytical tool.

In short, 'schoolnization' can be defined as the processes of educational transformation from non-school-based educational forms like feudal apprenticeship to modern schools to improve

literacy rate and disseminate national culture (cf. Boli, Ramirez, and Meyer 1985). It is usually most conspicuous when educational modernization was taking place rapidly such as in mid-19th century England and late 19th century France where highly institutionalized modern schools eventually evolved from less sophisticated educational forms (Ariès 1960; Yanagi 2005). Needless to say, concrete situation of ‘schoolnization’ varies depending on the countries. And it shows yet unique characteristics in the more specific context of performing arts. In the Qin opera case, it certainly means educational modernization from apprenticeship to modern schools, but it specifically involved at least three interrelated processes (transformation of master-apprentice relationship, teaching methods and educational theories, and relation between learning and working) which took place simultaneously (Shimizu 2018a: 11-16).

This research goes even further to define ‘schoolnization’ as the spectrum of educational forms with varying degree of educational transformation from non-school-based educational forms (apprenticeship included) to modern schools since many traditional performing arts have been experiencing educational transformation of this sort one way or another. This definition thus avoids the controversial dichotomy between apprenticeship and school education. It also emphasizes continuity and close interrelation between different educational forms that are apart from one another by varying degree of educational transformation. According to this concept then, the stereotype of apprenticeship and school learning, regarded as diametrically opposed processes with or without learning in doing in previous studies (Shimizu 2015: 10-14), are located at the both end of the spectrum as extreme cases. All the other educational forms can be located somewhere on the spectrum. For example, a Qin opera traditional theater school can be located on the point of the spectrum closer to school learning than apprenticeship in terms of its emphasis on basic literacy and theoretical knowledge with national curriculum and tests. Strictly speaking, however, it is not equal to ordinary school learning because of its educational continuity to trainings in theatrical companies because it trains wannabe performers.

Viewing the result of the comparative analysis above by this concept, it is clear that every educational form has its merits and demerits in relation to the development of artistic creativity. Furthermore, it is not possible to say that easily whether apprenticeship or school education is more effective: so many different types for each category and every educational form exists somewhere between the two stereotypes. Yet, it can be assumed that the ideal educational form for the development of artistic creativity should at least offer performers (1) enough stage experience by learning through performing, (2) national support in terms of funding as well as organized strategies and meticulous plans, and (3) civilized learning environment with intellectually stimulating networks of teachers and theater directors. This means to combine a merit (1) of the Qin opera’s apprenticeship in the past and the Iemoto system with merits (2) and (3) of the Qin opera traditional theater school: no one existing educational form is perfect in that sense. In other words, the ideal educational form must be characterized by highly ‘schoolnized’ aspects of (2) and (3), while retaining the more apprenticeship-like (less ‘schoolnized’) aspect of (1).

Of course, more examples of educational forms must be analyzed to formulate a more

complete theory. The above hypothesis based on the concept, however, helps us clarify the relation between educational forms and the development of artistic creativity more than the long-debated dichotomy. It also shows that the processes of ‘schoolnization’ observable everywhere in the world (cf. Nishio 2012; Sasaki 1993) does not automatically guarantee the emergence of an ideal educational form for the development of artistic creativity: it must be designed by fusing merits of different educational forms together. Thus, for now, it is a useful starting point for future research in the related field, especially in studies on traditional performing arts education, which has been lacking the focus on the topic.

【付記】

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¹ Some researchers point out that creativity is something measurable (Sekimoto and Watada 2012), but it is defined as alternation based on tradition in this research. To be more specific, it is things like altered ways of singing, acting, and dancing that are accepted among practitioners as something new (original interpretations of the old) and are not completely detached from tradition since the research focuses on traditional performing arts which respect connections to the past.

² The expression was repeatedly used by many fans of the opera that I met in Xi’an (cf. Wang 2003: 1). See Shimizu (2015: 30-40) for more information on the opera.

³ There are, for example, subcategories of *sheng* (male) such as *xusheng* (middle-aged male), *xiaosheng* (handsome young male), and *wusheng* (a male role that mainly uses martial skills). Surely, there are subcategories of *dan* (female) as well. Every performer must choose one of these subcategories, based on his/her physical appearance and abilities, and train to perform that subcategory exclusively. In other words, they are not free to perform any role they want in the opera because their choices are determined by such physical factors. Of course, there are some performers who are capable enough to perform more than one subcategory.

⁴ When newly edited historical programs (*xinbian lishixi*) or modern programs (*xiandaixi*) are performed, however, gorgeous props are often used in the opera.

⁵ See Shimizu (2018a, 2018b) for more information on this school.

⁶ See Shimizu (2015: 9-21) for more information on the basic characteristics of apprenticeship in the past.

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