Henry Purcell Vs Chinese Zaju Opera
by Josh Glussman
The Chinese have seen over a thousand years of growth and development in both land and culture. The Chinese have had nearly 26 different kingdoms/dynasties. The dynasty system was the system of rule until the communist movements in the early 20th century.

The Chinese were generally always the leading power in cultural advancements and scientific advancements until the Renaissance; many essential historical items were created in China, including Gunpowder. The advancement of literature and art was also part of Chinese history and from these advancements came the Zaju, deriving from the Northern Song Dynasty and popularized by the Yuan Dynasty (the Mongol ruling dynasty in China).
The current population of China today is 1,373,541,278 people, with a population growth of 0.43%.

**Ethnic Groups**
1. Han Chinese 91.6%
2. Zhuang 1.3%
3. Other (includes Hui, Manchu, Uighur, Miao, Yi, Tujia, Tibetan, Mongol, Dong, Buyei, Yao, Bai, Korean, Hani, Li, Kazakh, Dai and other nationalities) 7.1%

**Religious Groups**
1. Buddhist 18.2%
2. Christian 5.1%
3. Muslim 1.8%
4. Folk religion 21.9%
5. Hindu < 0.1%
6. Jewish < 0.1%
7. Other 0.7% (includes Daoist (Taoist))
8. Unaffiliated 52.2%; officially atheist

Generally a undiverse country. The Chinese throughout history have been considered xenophobic.
La n d m a ss o f  C h i n a

- 3.125 Million Square Miles
- Split into 23 different provinces
- Has parts of Mongolia and Tibet on the border
- Areas of SAR include Macau and Hong Kong
- Capital of China is Beijing
The Zaju was influenced by many things of the time period including:
- The change from Dynasty to Dynasty
- Wars
- Cultural and Artistic Contributions
The Zaju was developed further and popularized in the Yuan dynasty, it can be referred to as the Yuan Zaju.
The Zaju, in many cases, shows a strong theme of loyalty and heroics.
Music of Zaju

The Zaju is also known as the Chinese Opera. It has similar elements to the western Opera's, which will be explored later.

There are many different elements to the Zaju which include:

- Four acts; Alternating dialogue and singing (Usually)
- Acts are distinctive in their musical rhythm and mode
- Included poetry, gymnastics, orchestral music, and set design
- Consisted of many solo sections or Arias
Specific Culture- Chinese and Mongol

The Zaju came from the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1276 AD) from years of arts, music and poetry combined. The Northern Song Dynasty was the predecessor dynasty to the Mongol Yuan Dynasty. The Song Dynasty period of rule is seen as a period of technological advancement. The economy was booming, agriculture was advancing and printing became prominent. That advancement is mirrored by the development of Zaju.
**Instruments of the Zaju**

Guzheng - Chinese form of the Zither. Part of the Zither family. Plucked string instrument, with 16 strings in the Song era and today has 23 strings.

Pipa - Plucked 4 string wooden bodied instrument. Considered the Chinese lute.

Drum - Various percussion instruments used.

Gong - Large metal symbol that makes a bass-like sound when hit.

Flute - Wooden, wind instrument that produces a higher pitched octave of notes.
Musical Excerpt of Zaju

Romance of the Western Chamber (Xixiangji (The Story of the Western Wing), by Wang Shifu)

Only around 200 zaju survive to this day; most have been lost to time.

This piece includes:

-Orchestral Music
- Drama/acting
-Aria/solo music

https://youtu.be/T5ydDLQYMgE?t=3m32s
https://youtu.be/T5ydDLQYMgE?t=7m24s
Henry Purcell is considered the greatest English composer until recent history. According to sources, not much is known of his life. Though his works have defined English opera for centuries. He wrote the first English opera.

He was born in London, England in 1659 in place known as Devil's Acre. He was originally working at the Chapel Royal and even sang at the coronation of King Charles the Second of England. It's thought that he had composed since the age of nine and attended the Westminster School. After some time, his voice broke and he became an organ builder for the King. Dido and Aeneas is considered one of the first operas in England and led to him writing many more.
Influences

Since little is known about his life, one can assume the church and royalty in England at the time are his major influences.
Prominent Works

Dido and Aeneas
King Arthur
The Fairy Queen
You can see the different orchestral movements and different types of song presented by Purcell that both compare and contrast Zaju.

https://youtu.be/BZt7iBv2sak?t=4m29s
Musical Analysis

F Major key

Italian Style Recitative - Fast, slow, fast

Ground Bass (realized)

Orchestral Accompaniment
## Compare and CONTRAST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zaju</th>
<th>Comparisons</th>
<th>Purcell Music</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uses early forms of percussion; Not really seen in Western music</td>
<td>Aria's and solo singing</td>
<td>Piano and keyboard type instruments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modal progression</td>
<td>Orchestral background</td>
<td>Recitative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Musical Links

Secondary Link:
Orchestral Accompaniment
✦ Strings and bass

Primary Link:
Solo singing and use of Arias
✦ Solo Sections
Sources/ Citations

http://www.indexmundi.com/china/demographics_profile.html

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zaju

https://www.britannica.com/art/zaju

http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/song/

https://books.google.com/books?id=8qMTPAPFGXUC&pg=PA200&lpg=PA200&dq=Zaju&source=bl&ots=uM_IY7isUg&sig=XCBD1eRvJoYP3wmjpdTfw26FcQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwih6-Tr4rLQAhWogVQKHaeBBMA4ChDoAQg3MAAc#v=onepage&q=Zaju&f=false

http://www.philmultic.com/guzheng/

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pipa

http://www.classicfm.com/composers/purcell/

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Purcell