

## Movie-Drama

In China, drama is not only a mass amusement as a display of art before the audience, but also is a sort of social education in a sense. May be the traditional Chinese drama has been derived from dance, because it is always consonant with music. As it includes singing, address-to-the-audience, action and facial expression, we can say that it is a mixture of different arts such as singing, dance, music and poetry. Today's Peiping Opera is one instance. History tells us that the art of the Chinese drama was handed down from the Pa Shi of Han Dynasty and the Li Yuan of Tang Dynasty. But it was not perfect until Song Dynasty. It went through Yuan Dynasty and Ming Dynasty. During Tsing Dynasty, it was at its zenith. But it does not fade even today.

It is a history of one thousand and five hundred years that the first local play made its appearance in China. But now the so-called local plays can be found everywhere to represent the mass art of the respective localities. So far as the province of Taiwan is concerned, there are thirty-seven sorts of local plays to tallying 321 troupes except the Peiping Opera which is regarded as the National Drama. In addition, there are marionettes, puppet shows, shadow plays, etc., totalling 204 units. The statistics show that 552 theaters scatter all over the province for the presentation of various kinds of plays. Sometimes, temporary stages are to be built for their presentation of plays.

Modern plays and motion pictures are the products of the new stage. They aim at exposing social evils or reflecting the public opinion to help carry out the social education and coincide with the policy of the Government.

Different branches of plays have different aims, different organizations, different techniques and different activities, but they have a common festival. At first, the "Double Tenth" was regarded as their festival observed in 1938 and the following years. In 1943, the Second of March turned out to be the festival. At last, the Executive Yuan approved that the Third of February be the Drama Festival of China, effective in 1943. It is because February of the Solar year falls on the defunct Chinese New Year which turns out to be what is called the Spring Festival today and every profession has its holidays. At that time, people can of course have plenty of time to enjoy drama. That is why the Chinese Drama Festival should be in the month of February.

Except those players-to-be who are trained in the National Taiwan Arts Academy, the private Fu-shing Opera School and the Da-Peng Troupes' Training Class all of which are to train qualified players, there are about 5000 student-players in the theatrical teams of various schools conducted by 187 teacher-directors, now and then presenting their respective plays as planned.

The Movie-Drama Association of China is a nation-wide organization, while the Taiwan Provincial Drama-Arts Association and the Taiwan Provincial Local Drama Association are the provincial organizations. These three comparatively large civilian organizations are the very places for the professionals to foster friendship, to exchange views and to improve techniques.

In the Arts Center, the motion pictures and the various branches of drama are presented and performed regularly. It is noted that 428 showings of motion pictures (113 days) and 109 performances of various branches of drama (30 Peiping Opera performances, 56 modern-play performances and 23 local operas) were made last year, totalling 222 days. The percentage of working days was 65% of the whole year. Besides, 120 Peiping opera facial masks in color were painted for exhibition in 1950. So far, a number of these facial masks have been produced. This year, we plan to design 120 sorts of Peiping Opera Costumes, 50 of which have been completed.

