

***Teahouse* : The Ritualization of National Identity in Theatre Performance.**

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Abstract: This study analyzes Lao She's *Teahouse* as a representation of the evolving Chinese national identity through ritual and ritualized spaces in theatre performance. The study utilizes Richard Schechner's performance theory to highlight the interaction between cultural rituals, performance components, and identity formation within China's historical and socio-political contexts, effectively demonstrating the resilience and vulnerability of national identity amid social and political transformations. *Teahouse* serves as a symbol of cultural continuity and a center of resistance, where traditional traditions and communal activities illustrate the evolution of national identity throughout time. This study elucidates how modern Chinese drama can reinforce national identity, and navigate historical memory. This study suggests that integrating ritual components into theatre performance can strengthen national identity, create a connection between historical continuity and contemporary culture, and elevate the function of Chinese drama as a vehicle for cultural communication within the "Community of human destiny."

Keywords: Modern Chinese drama, Richard Schechner's performance theory, ritual.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, modern Chinese drama has exerted a diminished influence compared to short videos in cultural education, public discourse, and the formation of collective memory; nonetheless, the emerging medium of short films has not evolved into a genuine vehicle for reflection or transformation (Li, 2020).

Consequently, it is essential to examine how adaptations of the renowned Chinese play *Teahouse* at various periods integrated or opposed these themes. This study will enhance the comprehension of the function of performing arts in shaping and negotiating identities within the framework of Chinese history and culture. *Teahouse* illustrates the social transformations in China across various epochs, portraying the teahouse as a microcosm of Chinese society.

This study employs qualitative research using content analysis. The aim is to analyze the roles of ritual, performance, and national identification as conduits of cultural identity and social change in contemporary performance, as well as their impact on subsequent generations of playwrights and directors.

Modern Chinese drama surpasses mere political viewpoints, incorporates ritualistic storytelling, and emphasizes the authentic experiences of everyday individuals. Theatre performance require innovative content, novel forms, and the aesthetic of a theatrical image that embodies the Chinese populace.

The utilization of theatre performance to emphasize broader socio-political and cultural concerns, particularly through the creation of original content, is crucial for the

evolution of a distinctive and modern national cultural identity in China.

BACKGROUND

Teahouse

Lao She, a pivotal character in modern Chinese literature, possessed a familial background that heightened his awareness of the challenges encountered by common individuals, a theme that recurs throughout *Teahouse* (Mangalagiri, 2023). Since its debut in 1958, *Teahouse* has resonated with numerous audiences who lived through the tumultuous periods illustrated in the play (Chen, 2012).

A *Teahouse* serves as a gathering place for individuals of all faiths, welcoming diverse populations, and a large teahouse functions as a microcosm of society." (Sheng, 2024). *Teahouse* features almost 70 characters, Lao She depicts a variety of characters, including merchants, government officials, revolutionaries, and everyday individuals, utilizing her distinctive Beijing dialect writing style. Through these characters, Lao She offers an insightful look into the lives of the urban underclass, often marginalized in historical narratives (Yan, 2022).

The social ideology of *Teahouse*

Teahouse exemplifies the semi-feudal, semi-colonial China of the early twentieth century, with its three acts set during the Hundred Days' Reform (Late Qing Dynasty), the Warlord Era (New China), and the Kuomintang's governance following the War of Resistance Against Japan, just prior to the establishment of New China (Yang, 2022).

During the 1950s, the predominant theme in most artworks was the glorification of the homeland and the promotion of socialism. The play is situated in the late Qing Dynasty and early Republic of China, illustrating the incompetence and corruption of the ruling class, which exploits the populace for personal gain (Chen, 2012).

The ritual principles of Richard Schechner's performance theory

The examination of rituals commences with the identification of ritual aspects within a performance. Schechner (2013) asserts that rituals are characterized by repetition, symbolism, and social functionality. Ritual analysis considers the role of traditional practices and how they are transformed, altered or maintained in dramatic performance. The notion of liminal states, denoting transformational intermediate phases that facilitate personal or collective development during rituals, originates from Victor Turner's studies on rites of passage (Schechner, 2013, p18).

Schechner's philosophy perceives performance as a ritual (Schechner, 2013, p52). Examining audience engagement, the interplay between performer and audience, and the communal aspect of performance helps elucidate how theatre performance operates as public rituals, foster social cohesiveness or transformation, and enhance identity or metamorphosis (Schechner, 2013, p84).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The primary hurdle hindering the advancement of modern Chinese drama is the deficiency of creative content. The majority are significantly shaped by Western drama or concentrate on adapting traditional Chinese literature, leading to a scarcity of creative content that authentically represents contemporary Chinese life and connects with modern audiences (Wang & Picone, 2023).

Chinese dramas typically require alignment with government ideology and must have approval before production (Lin, 2022, p93). The focus on political storylines frequently eclipses the lived experiences of everyday individuals and constrains the creativity and originality of playwrights and filmmakers. Nonetheless, the rise of digital entertainment presents a significant challenge: the declining interest in conventional theater (Liu et al, 2020). It is essential to reconcile classic theater with contemporary entertainment to rekindle public enthusiasm.

In recent years, China has experienced a surge in commercial theater, resulting in a diminished sense of ritual within the theatrical experience (Lu, 2021). Rituals serve as a conduit between history and contemporary practice, and their integration into theater fosters a sense of continuity and cultural legacy.

It is imperative to reexamine, contemplate, and utilize performances such as *Teahouse* to integrate ritual studies and the formation of national identity. These tactics can enhance theater as an influential instrument for cultural education and the reinforcement of national identity, while simultaneously cultivating a sense of belonging among spectators and promoting both national identification and global comprehension.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theater performance construct's national identity

Studies on identity formation indicate that ritual activities within cultural contexts significantly contribute to the reinforcement of national identity via collective memory (Edensor, 2020, p85). This concept similarly pertains to theater performance like *Teahouse*, wherein the stage serves as a locus for cultural creation and the reinforcement of national sentiment, with the performance acting as a significant vehicle for the formation of national identity.

Teahouse, from its 1958 original to modern avant-garde reinterpretations, illustrates the varying methods through which audiences across different eras have interacted with and redefined their comprehension of national identity (Leonesi, 2023). Directed by Meng Jinghui, *Teahouse* questioned conventional portrayals and incited a discourse regarding the capacity of classic texts to conform to contemporary ideological frameworks (Leonesi, 2023). Examines the reception of artistic polarization in China, the reinterpretation of which signifies a transformation in national identity perceptions, and advocates for transcending historical continuity myths to encourage a more critical analysis of contemporary situations.

A Study of Modern Theatre Theory in Lao She 's Teahouse" underscores the historical background of modern China within the play, highlighting its coverage of a pivotal fifty-year period marked by significant shifts (Xu, 2023). *Teahouse* in the play symbolizes ancient Beijing and the practices that formerly upheld the community, traditions that are evidently deteriorating due to the forces of industrialization and political transformation (Jin, 2020, p112). Lao She's aspiration to attain national identity by safeguarding cultural traditions against swift modernization and political turmoil.

The relationship between ritual and national identity

Richard Schechner's contributions to performance studies and ritual establish a theoretical framework for perceiving theater as a ritual that reinforces cultural identity (Schechner, 2013, p245). Schechner's interpretation of performance as a cultural construct and a transforming experience is essential for comprehending the ritual symbolism and reinforcement of cultural values pertaining to Chinese national identity in *Teahouse*.

The significance of a theatre performance is collaboratively constructed by the audience, whose reactions are vital to the ritualization process (Bakare & Barbieri, 2023). The audience's reception of *Teahouse*, whether viewed as a conventional or innovative work, is shaped by their engagement with the play, which in turn affects the formation of national identity.

The visual aesthetics of *Teahouse* amplify the performance's ritualistic essence, while the stage and narrative elements evoke emotional resonance in the audience, rendering the feeling of national identification more immediate and profound. Theatrical stage design underscores the significance of the aesthetics of both real and fictitious environments in fostering an immersive spectator experience (Akkof & Saleh, 2023).

METHODOLOGY

This research will employ a case study methodology to examine the play *Teahouse*. The case study will provide a comprehensive examination of the social, political, and cultural situations depicted in the play, elucidating the impact of these historical transformations on the lives of ordinary Chinese individuals (Sun et al, 2022). The examination of character development, conversation, and the dynamic setting of *Teahouse* allowed the researcher to comprehend how theatre performance convey national identity through ritualistic elements. This research employs content analysis and video observation.

CONTENT ANALYSIS

This study's content analysis examines the dialogues, character development, and cultural symbols of the play to investigate the formation of national identity during historical upheavals.

Flowing national identity

Schechner highlights that the exhibition of communal histories and cultural symbols allows performances to function as venues for identity formation and negotiation, hence influencing the articulation and development of national identities (Schechner, 2013, p309). The many classes embodied by the principal individuals in the teahouse have undergone identity transformations amid historical change.

Through the narration of Wang Lifa, the protagonist of the play, Lao She provides an in-depth analysis of the vulnerability of common individuals' national identification in a swiftly evolving society. This study delineates the evolution of the character role of Wang Lifa, as illustrated in the subsequent table:

Table 1 Common people: National identity development of characters.

Character	Social hierarchy	Time	Identity change
Wang Lifa	Common people (Zeller, 2021).	1898s	Individuals of the common people tried to adapt to the political divisions and economic difficulties of late Qing China.
		1898s-1939s	Secure livelihood and identity using cultural values and rituals that have been passed down from generation to generation of the Chinese people.
		1939s-1948s	The loss of national cohesion and the struggle to find a sense of belonging and identity in a rapidly changing country.

In Lao She's *Teahouse*, Qin Zhongyi symbolizes the socioeconomic class advocating for reform, epitomizing the aspirations of national capitalists to modernize China and consolidate national identity. This study delineates the evolution of the character role of Qin Zhongyi, as illustrated in the subsequent table.

Table 2 Reformist: National identity development of characters.

Character	Social hierarchy	Time	Identity change
Qin Zhongyi.	Reformists (Intellectuals and progressive social classes)	1898s	They want to modernize China's economy and cultivate a new national identity.
		1898s-1939s	The opposition of conventional forces conflicted with the aspiration for reform, causing the notion of national regeneration to falter.

	(Zeller, 2021).	1939s-1948s	The reform effort was undermined by the severe realities of political corruption, foreign interference, and societal disintegration, and it failed to establish a national identity.
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The feudal conservatives have a distinct affiliation with and allegiance to the national culture and traditions of ancient China. This class's concern reflects their contemplation of the nation's fate, articulating their quest for an uncertain destiny and their aspiration to establish a national identity. This study delineates the evolution of the character role of Tang Tiezui and Liu Mazui, as illustrated in the subsequent table.

Table 3 Conservative: National identity development of characters

Character	Social hierarchy	Time	Identity change
Tang Tiezui, Liu Mazi.	Conservative (Feudal traditional values) (Zeller, 2021).	1898s	They rely on feudal superstitions such as fortune-telling and arranged marriages as a means of maintaining their traditional ethnic identity.
		1898s-1939s	They try to hold on to the growing disconnect between the old values of the traditional family structure and the new socio-political environment of identity.
		1939s-1948s	The decline of traditional roles symbolizes the disintegration of the feudal system and the gradual disappearance of the identity of those who defend conservative values in society.

The construction of the national identity among these three groups signifies the spiritual awakening of the Chinese nation during the transition from feudal society. The character crisis presents a chance for the emergence of a new China and a redefined national identity, which should be sought as a unified national identity.

Ritual dialogue awakens national identity

Ritual dialogues frequently serve to contextualize performances, allowing participants to transition between various social realities, and typically involve repetitive activities where performers reiterate culturally significant phrases or language patterns (Schechner, 2013, p71). This study elucidates the correlation among dialogue, ritual, and national identity within the play, as demonstrated through video observation in the following table (Lin, 2005).

Table 4 Act one: Ritual dialogue

No.	Dialogue	Ritual	National identity
1	Qin Zhongyi: "Top big, top big factories! That's how to save the poor, how to boycott that can we resist foreign goods and save the country!"	His address served as a ceremonial summons for transformation, intended to motivate everyone to participate in the construction of a contemporary China.	His statements underscored China's fervent aspiration to align with global modernity and conveyed his deep connection to his national identity.
2	Tang Tiezui: "Mr. Wang! I've come to drink a bowl of tea, but also for here to tell fortunes, fortune-telling, palmistry is presented!" Wang Lifa: "You don't have to sell your business mouth! I'll give you a bowl of tea for nothing, we are all bitter people in the society!"	Wang Lifa's demeanor towards his customers exemplifies martial etiquette, imbuing the dialogue with a feeling of ancient folk ceremony.	The dialogue exposes the despair of a shared destiny and the continuation of the national identity of the underprivileged class.
3	Patron: "What will happen to us now? First the emperor changes his mind, then the officials... We are like leaves in the wind." Wang Lifa: "Don't talk about state!"	"Don't talk about state!" not only adheres to the regulations of the <i>Teahouse</i> but also signifies the dominance of power institutions and the accommodation of reality in public settings.	<i>Teahouse</i> patrons engage in political gossip as a method for individuals to cultivate their sense of identity. National contemplation over the destiny of the nation during the late Qing era.

Table 5 Act two: Ritual dialogue

No.	Dialogue	Ritual	National identity
1	Liu Mazi: "People say there's no point in getting married anymore, but traditions keep society together. Arranged marriages bring order when everything else falls apart."	Matchmaking is a ritualistic extension of feudal customs, serving to preserve cultural identity in a progressively polarized society.	Conservatives assert that national identity relies on the preservation of historic customs and the original social order.
2	Chang Si: "I love our country, but who loves me? Emperors, saints, all dead! But to live, you have to eat, and you have to work!"	This scream possesses a profound ritualistic quality, serving not merely as a regret for individual destinies, but also as a contemplation of the nation's fate.	This dialogue illustrates that the national identity of the era had become estranged from the national bourgeoisie.

3	Wang Shufen: " San, our teahouse has been improved, your pigtailed should be cut too, right?" Li San: " Improvement! Improvement! The more we improve, the cooler it gets! I'll keep my pigtailed in case the emperor changes them back!"	During the Qing Dynasty, men used pigtailed as an emblem of feudal propriety, and Li San's reaction demonstrates a certain nostalgia for the past and a steadfast adherence to tradition.	Highlighting the challenges of sustaining a national identity amid persistent political and economic adversities.
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Table 6 Act three: Ritual dialogue

No.	Dialogue	Ritual	National identity
1	Liu Mazi:" I watch the sky at night, the Zi Wei star is shining, soon there will be a true dragon son of heaven."	They seek to confer legitimacy and justification to their actions by establishing a feeling of ritual, which essentially becomes a form of veneration and an aspiration for imperial authority and tradition.	Fortune-tellers exploit national identity and feudal superstition to deceive the populace for their own benefit.
2	Wang Lifa: "We tried everything, but there's no keeping this place alive anymore. What's the point of going on? Everyone is gone, and there's nothing left for us."	His actions and words indicate an attempt to sustain a diminishing lifestyle that is starting to unravel amidst the collective rituals of the broader socio-political environment.	Symbolizes the extensive endeavor of individuals to preserve their cultural legacy to sustain their country identity amid social collapse.
3	Qin Zhongyi:" What's the point of building anything now? We've tried, and every time, we've been turn down."	Represented the departure of the feudal dynasty from the historical narrative, resembling a farewell ceremony.	Identity of this elite, has succumbed to the anguish and strife imposed by feudalism, corrupt ideologies, and the Three Great Mountains.

Video Observation

This study analyzes how *Teahouse* communicates its themes and embodies national identity by concentrating on the ritualistic aspects of performance. Simultaneously, it evaluates the interplay of performance techniques, stage design, and symbolic representation in enhancing the play's themes of societal transformation and national identity.

Ritual elements

Schechner thoroughly examines the components of performance, such as movement, gesture,

clothing, and symbols, and their contribution to the ritualistic essence of performance (Schechner, 2013, p57). He examines how performance rituals can connect cultural traditions with personal expression, employing these components to strengthen cultural continuity and identity.

Teahouse, a conventional cultural establishment, presents traditional artistic forms including Peking Opera and comedy, highlighting the significant significance of traditional culture in revitalizing the national spirit. In the initial act, the function of the "storyteller" as a ritual narrative, encompassing themes such as the struggles of individuals in securing livelihoods, the unsuccessful Hundred Days' Reform, and the prevailing conditions of existence amid social transformation, fosters a sense of collective identity, albeit grounded in shared adversity and cynicism.

The storyteller concludes his presentation and turns to enter the large screen, revealing a vibrant teahouse to the audience. Transitional tactics in Peking Opera encompass the notion of "Turning" where in the actor seamlessly shifts between various situations or emotional states. "Turning" is a fundamental component of the stylized motions in Peking Opera, signifying the transition between various segments of the narrative, and its artistic role preserves the distinctive rhythmic and aesthetic continuity characteristic of Peking Opera (Xiang, 2020). This performance method shifts the audience's focus from objective reality to a formal observation of the play, aligning closely with the ritualistic essence of traditional Chinese culture.

In act two, the cadence of the storyteller's motions and gestures diminishes, and the garments appear increasingly tattered. The dialogue of the characters increasingly adopts a cynical tone, mirroring the public's disappointment and fury during the age of warlordism.

In the third act, the character's motions and speech exhibit a more lethargic pace, accompanied by a weakened voice. The clothing deteriorates, and the dialogue reflects a regret for bygone eras, signifying the profound disillusionment of the populace and the erosion of national identity.

The essence of "storytelling" adapts to the shifting socio-political landscape, serving as both a reflection of and a ritualized reaction to the collective experiences of the populace. The director adeptly employs this character to illustrate the difficulties, resistance, and final capitulation of the Chinese populace in their quest for a unified national identity amid significant turmoil.

The drama illustrates the ritual grandeur of the Qing Dynasty and the hierarchy of ancient Chinese society as representations of the feudal principles inherent in the social structure of that era. For instance, members of the royal family engaged in a kneeling or bowing posture, which was emblematic of Qing etiquette.

This interest was particularly in venerating authoritative individuals or elders. This stance required lowering the body towards the ground, demonstrating humility and submission. Kneeling, leaning forward, or bending down signifies not only submission but also authentic acknowledgment of social hierarchy, representing stability and order, which are

fundamental aspects of Chinese social identity. Through these rituals, characters affirm their identities within a society that prioritizes hierarchy and order.

The ceremonial components of the clothing in the performance are noteworthy and exemplify conventional Qing Dynasty attire. This is due to their status as cultural emblems of allegiance and compliance with Qing conventions.

The actor on the left dons a robe adorned with intricate flower embroidery, signifying elevated social rank. The intricate flower designs on the robes signify affluence or official rank, representing a more subdued status associated with individuals of authority or influence during the Qing Dynasty. Officials don caps characteristic of the Qing court, while characters have long braids, emblematic of subservience to the Qing dynasty; the inclusion of braids in the play serves to remind audiences of the historical socio-political dynamics, so fostering a feeling of national identity beyond time.

The desperation and tenacity of the three elderly men in conducting a memorial ceremony for themselves on their deathbeds underscores a commitment to national identity and dignity, with each utterance and gesture serving as a tacit ritual to convey nostalgia for the past and despair for the future. In an era marked by concern regarding the future and a quest for national unity, this rite may adopt a more satirical or forceful character, mirroring a significant shift in societal attitudes towards authority and tradition.

Ritualized Performance Space

Teahouse serves as both a key ceremonial site and a reflection of contemporary society. Every scene of *Teahouse* is carefully orchestrated, with the settings serving as ritualized representations of profound symbolic significance rather than mere physical copies.

The vibrancy and diversity of the Yutai teahouse in the initial scene represent the intricacies of late Qing society and the interplay of disparate ideas and civilizations. The red statement "Don't talk about state" is a significant component of the ritualized area. It represents not just social constraint and the curtailment of speech but also a form of veneration for national identity during a particular historical epoch.

Brightness space represents hope and opportunity, signifying an era when individuals retained faith in the potential for reform and transformation. Calligraphy scrolls, wall hangings, and traditional wooden pane windows suggest cultural authenticity and historical depth.

The customs of serving patrons in the teahouse, including tea consumption, food ordering, and expressions of reverence, underscore the significance of community, hospitality, and cultural preservation. These gestures indicate involvement and excitement, implying that individuals are actively pursuing methods to comprehend and shape national identity.

In act two, Flags from several nations, notably Japan and Britain, were prominently displayed at the center of the stage. The crimson banner indicates that political propaganda has permeated ordinary areas, serving as a ritual reminder of the influence exerted by various power factions.

The lights in the performance venue gradually dimmed, mirroring the bleak and dismal ambiance of economic adversity and social unrest of the era. The alterations to the teahouse and the rituals conducted within it offer a profound commentary on the difficulties encountered by common individuals during this turbulent era in Chinese history, emphasizing their resilience and the concessions necessitated by a shifting socio-political landscape.

The alterations in the performance area of the *Teahouse* in act three signify the disillusionment and deterioration encountered by Chinese society post-World War II.

The interior of the teahouse exhibits noticeable deterioration and neglect, with minimal evidence of care. Several pieces of the remaining furniture exhibit signs of wear or disarray, particularly in the door and window regions, which possess a somber and constricted ambiance. The characters are distanced from one another, resulting in a diminished community contact.

The teahouse, serving as a performance venue, embodies a profound sense of decline, disillusionment, and fragmentation in post-war China. Its performance space and associated rituals symbolize the disintegration of national governance and the absence of substantial social cohesion

during this era. It depicts the diminishing national identification of individuals, reflecting the social and economic hardships encountered by the populace.

Utilizing the teahouse as the focal point of the stage space serves as a conduit between history and futurity, as well as tradition and contemporary practices. *Teahouse*, once emblematic of cultural continuity and resistance, today signifies a wider social collapse and the challenge of preserving identity and purpose amid pervasive cynicism. Each dialogue and dispute within the teahouse become a ceremonial investigation of national and ethnic identity.

FINDINGS

This study examines Richard Schechner's performance theory to demonstrate how the rituals in the play *Teahouse*, as recurring cultural practices, either reinforce or contest societal norms, thereby contributing to the discourse on national identity within Chinese drama studies.

The playwrights, without intentionally invoking ideology in their modern works, have encouraged the audience to juxtapose living during tranquil periods with socio-political turmoil, prompting deeper reflection on their own identities.

The *Teahouse*'s ritualized performances illustrate the intricate interplay between cultural continuity, resilience, and the socio-political challenges that have influenced China's modern history. The shift from optimistic rituals to hollow, automated activities signify the gradual deterioration of ritual performances and underscores the challenge of sustaining a cohesive national identity in a swiftly evolving socio-political landscape.

Teahouse serves as both a venue for ritual performances and a genuine public space for individuals to confirm their identities. Although there was an endeavor to seek collective memory and cultural representations of national identity through traditional rites, retaining

this identity in China amid tumultuous periods proved challenging. This conclusively demonstrates that rituals have shaped Chinese national identity throughout the development of the social milieu.

CONCLUSION

Teahouse quietly depicts the progression of political beliefs and societal values through ceremonial performances. The play's conversations and narratives eschew strong emotional expression, rendering it a cultural artifact that chronicles the Chinese people's identity over several historical periods.

This demonstrates that theatre performance can surpass political discourse and employ ritualized approaches to strengthen the audience's national identification and cultural memory, therefore fostering larger cultural exchanges and boosting mutual understanding and tolerance among individuals. Theatre should foster a community of shared human destiny that surpasses national borders, highlighting the universal idea of unity rather than division. This change in perspective enables Chinese drama, culture, and arts policymakers to critically assess theatrical arts and establish pertinent censorship frameworks, which positively influences the future advancement of ritual performances in theater and larger cultural evolution.

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This dissertation has been prepared with a morally neutral perspective, devoid of conflicts related to economic interests or political and social ideologies, as a scholar of modern Chinese drama. The examination of ancient rituals and national identity in *Teahouse* integrates personal and national narratives to elucidate how theatre performance mirror and influence China's cultural, social, and historical development, while advancing national cultural propaganda that "Telling Chinese stories."

I extend my gratitude to Dr. Marlenny for her invaluable assistance in my research on performance, leveraging her expertise in theater, which enabled me to uncover the illuminating significance of Schechner's performance theory in this study. She offered essential reference recommendations for the segments of this study that examine and enhance the ritual performance of *Teahouse*, the theme of national identity, the literature review, and the discussion.

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Notes

Teahouse is denoted in italics to signify the title of the play, while the teahouse in regular type

refers to the geographical space.

The tables include citations in the headings that predominantly reference scholars' notions of historical time and socio-historical events.

The character dialogues in the table are derived from BiliBili, China's preeminent video platform, while Teahouse is disseminated by Xinhua News Agency, the official media outlet of China, which documented the public platform release, affording theatre aficionados the chance to revisit the classic play.

The notions of "Community of human destiny" and "Telling Chinese stories" are interrelated concepts that collectively represent China's cultural propaganda philosophy.

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