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A film song by Zhou Xuan
Chinese Buddhist music history
Interview with Han Yong
A travelling opera troupe in Shanxi
How to sing nanyin ‘naturally’
Chinese pop and rock terminology

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Front cover: An old cinema advert of actress and singer Zhou Xuan, who rode the waves of the Shanghai film industry in the 1930s and 40s.
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A note on Chime Nos. 14 / 15

The present double issue covers not only the year 1999, but also the year 2000. So far we have published two issues a year, which means that we basically owe our readers another double issue for this period. However, with growing concerns about maintaining quality and establishing a regular publishing pattern, we find it beyond our powers to produce more than one double volume per year. Subscribers who paid for 1999 and 2000 are now entitled to receive, without further charge, another double volume, the one for 2001 (CHIME 16-17), which is expected to go the printer by the end of the year. Others whose subscription runs out after CHIME 14/15 will automatically receive an invoice for CHIME 16-17.
From the Editor

Too close for comfort

Gao Xingjian, who won the 2000 Nobel Prize for literature, is known in music circles as the text writer of Qu Xiaosong’s cantata ‘Cleaving the Coffin’ (Da pi guan, 1987). Many Chinese have expressed joy over the fact that now, finally, a Chinese author has been selected for one of the world’s most prestigious literary prizes. But other Chinese fulminated against the award, complaining that Gao Xingjian is catering to Western tastes, and claiming that his works are not – and never will be – appreciated in his own culture.

Sentiments of this kind sound all too familiar. Chinese film directors, writers, painters, poets and composers who, for whatever reason, earn success in the West are bound to be attacked by a certain segment of the urban Chinese intelligentsia for having ‘surrendered’ to Western tastes or having ‘betrayed’ their own culture. Such views are not easy to deal with as art criticism but, as powerful sentiments that influence Chinese cultural policy-making, they do invite a response.

There is no reason why a Western jury shouldn't be guided by Western criteria, or why Western audiences should not appreciate Chinese music for reasons of their own. But thoughts that such criteria a priori disqualify a Chinese artist for his own native market smack of racism, and the assumption that Chinese music or literature is bound to appeal less to Chinese audiences because it is influenced by contemporary Western art amounts to a (not-so-brilliant) bit of sophistry.

Bearing in mind colonial history, one sympathizes with the uncertainty many Chinese feel in the face of foreign cultural invasions. Yet, how painful to see such uncertainty turned into hard-and-fast rejection, to see Western-influenced art being crucified because it is not in compliance with someone’s precise image of the national heritage.

This very sentiment has caused so much harm in the past, whenever ‘the people’ were assumed to speak with a united voice – the voice of the (far from united) ruling intelligentsia. In practice, most people in China couldn’t care less about nationalism or a hoax like national purity – they wouldn’t know what it meant, their primary alliance not being with the nation but with the local soil on which they live. When composer Lu Pei went to Guangxi and played recordings of his avant-garde music to peasants, they loved it, presumably because it contained snippets of their own folk songs. The link with their own world was explicit enough for them to feel pleased. In many instances, such a link won’t be available, new music will often strike people as an instance of ‘emperor’s new clothes’. What of it? The same goes for Gao Xingjian’s books, which are read and appreciated in China, but presumably by an audience as small and exclusive as that of so many Nobel Prize winners in the West. Does it matter?
Chinese may listen to avant-garde pling-plong in urban concerts, pop or rock on a village radio or their own familiar shawms and drums. They can enjoy or detest it for a broad variety of reasons, but generally they do not lack confidence in the expressive potential of their culture. It's only a small segment of Chinese urban intelligentsia who suffer and struggle with the search for a national taste, a national standard, and who try to define even the very notion of Chineseness in terms of artistic vision and moral integrity. It is the outcome of this struggle on which government officials base their suppression of anything that fails to fit in with established codes.

Why are many traditional theatre groups in the PRC left to die, or pushed underground? Why is it so difficult to find properly documented commercial recordings of many genres of Chinese traditional music in the PRC? Why is the huge and prestigious anthology of Chinese traditional music (an impressive ongoing series of volumes of music notations) not accompanied by even one single CD or video so that we can hear and see the music? Why are so many genres of traditional music made invisible? Why are the media ignoring them except in terms of myth or metaphor? Because those who set cultural policies believe in their own unhappy doctrine - that only this or that is what Chinese culture ought to look like, must be allowed to look like - while the numerous alternatives offered by Chinese all over the country (be they rural performers or urban intelligentsia, singers of folk songs, rock musicians, local puppeteers or urban writers or composers of 'obscure' intellectual art) are summarily rejected. All these individual voices do not fit in with the bogus image of a unified culture - they are too foreign, too remote, too local, or too close for comfort - in any event: threatening.

What is behind the hostility, behind the fear that such declared 'outsider' forms of culture could actually be harmful to Chinese society? Most probably, it is a refusal to distinguish (in art) between aesthetics and morality. Art, so these people think, should portray the good and the beautiful, and this, inevitably, will engender goodness and purity in people's minds, while ugliness or evil or any confused or strange ideas could only debase the audience. The Chinese must be protected from many of their own (quintessentially human) aspirations, and music, poetry and theatre should be controlled to create solely art of the 'good' kind, which will engender the ideal nation, the ideal man - a vision with Platonic and Confucian overtones, but in the case of modern China inherited mainly from Stalinist Russia. Evidently this view is deeply ingrained in Chinese communities, if even a number of Chinese intellectuals who firmly criticize PRC cultural policies can't help but subscribe to it.

A different kind of 'truth' about Chinese culture would be that it is flourishing (and decaying) as never before. More writers, painters, filmmakers, composers and musicians from China - good ones and bad ones - are conquering the world than at any previous moment in history. More transformations are taking place inside Chinese culture today than at any time in the past. Those who believe in the importance of renewal, in the potential of pluralism and the power of commercial and international success - which engender wonderful things along with boundless horrors - might even consider this to be China's finest hour. It is possible to hear Kunqu or Peking opera in New York, in Toronto, in London, in Paris, even if it has become difficult in Peking. More Chinese literature than ever reaches the world in translation, more Chinese films are produced and screened at home and abroad than at any time in the past. Would anyone really wish to protest that the film medium and modern film techniques are 'alien' to the Chinese spirit? Should a Buddhist monk be
allowed to preach on television or drive around in a car, but not to play his hymns on a synthesizer without risking his integrity?

I expect that native intellectual perceptions of Chinese culture will continue to grow more liberal — not the same as ‘democratic’ — and more appreciative of new, alternative forms of art, a process that has flourished in the PRC ever since the late 1970s. ‘New wave’ composers and rock musicians are no longer viewed as threats to the country’s stability, even if their position remains deliberately marginal. The impact of traditional music in China will surely grow, too — never mind the many genres disappearing, local passions and true spirit won’t die so easily.

One indication of where things might still lead was a song contest held recently in Beijing — the Ninth National Youth Singers’ Television Competition (2000). Its final rounds were broadcast live on PRC national television in August. Learned juries judged the talents of amateur and professional singers in three different categories: Western operatic, ‘national singing style’ (minzu changfa) and pop. Everything went smoothly, except in the category ‘national singing’, where one jury member gave embarrassingly low marks to nearly every candidate. People watched the programme with growing amazement. What, a jury with more than one opinion? Viewers had the opportunity — rather unique for mainland Chinese TV — to respond directly to the event, telephone calls being broadcast live and not (in the usual fashion) as pre-recorded censored messages. People inquired massively why this one judge held such poor opinions of nearly all the singers.

He turned out to be the one musicologist on the jury, Tian Qing, of the Beijing Music Research Institute. A well-known expert on Buddhist music, he explained to millions of Chinese viewers that he gave low marks because, in his view, the performers didn’t put their heart into the singing. They just performed tricks, followed the rules of their training mechanically, did not capture in any way the spirit of the music. Less institutionalized devotees of the art (e.g. folk singers) might actually perform this type of songs a lot better, and really move people’s hearts. For that was what minzu (‘folk’ or ‘national’) basically meant to him: something moving and heartfelt. The programme was soon flooded with phone calls from viewers who expressed support: oh yes, how horrible all these plastic voices; Chinese television should give real singers a chance to display their talents. The discussion was carried on in Chinese newspapers after the contest, and eventually led to a decision to experiment with a new structure for next year. In 2001, untrained local folk singers (amongst others) will be allowed to join the competition. The 2001 event will no longer be broadcast on national television, only on the (more adventurous but less widely accessible) Hunan TV, but this shift to the regional media is a telling one. It’s an implicit acknowledgement that China, after all, has more than one type of truth or aesthetic ideal to support, for more than one type of audience — even within the rigid codes and artificial fashions of its television world.

Frank Kouwenhoven
(PART ONE)

The Sinicization of Buddhist Music

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Was early Buddhist music in China an indigenous product or a straight continuation of Indian or Central Asian music traditions? Scholars of Buddhism in China have often claimed the first: the early texts of Chinese Buddhism were translations of Indian and Central Asian Buddhist scriptures, but they were recited to the tunes of Chinese folk music. This article presents a different view: Buddhist music, like the entire religion, must have experienced a gradual process of sinicization. The author re-examines scholarly evidence in connection with the rise of Buddhism in China, and speculates on the development of its musical traditions, from the early hymns of prince Cao Zhi (early 3rd century) to the lyrics – possibly set to Kucheian music – of the monk Kumārajīva (end of 4th century); and from the ceremonial splendour of Emperor Liang Wudi’s court compositions (6th century, already in a Chinese-sounding idiom) to the widespread Buddhist hymn singing and popular sermons of the Tang Dynasty.

Buddhist music is one of the many arts which accompanied the dissemination of the religion from India into China. Understanding the development of Buddhist music in Chinese history is also an intrinsic part of knowing the religion. This essay traces the historical development of Buddhist music in China and its process of sinicization. The essay is in four main sections, of which the first two follow below. The remainder of the text (sections 3 and 4) will be published in Chime 16-17.

The first section considers the state of Buddhist music in India as described in Chinese written sources. This is followed by a discussion of historical references on vocal and instrumental Buddhist music, from which attempts are made to hypothesize how Buddhist music, in its initial period of development in China, showed Indian influence. This is in

1 Translator’s note: I would like to thank the CHIME Foundation, particularly Antoinet Schimmelpenninck and Frank Koevenhoven, for their patience during the drawn-out process of translating this article. I am also grateful to David Hughes for tirelessly reading my manuscripts and offering valuable comments. A general remark about the translation has to be made here. To make this article more suitable for Western readership, additional remarks by the translator are added in square brackets, while trying to avoid altering the author’s intent. Footnotes are by the translator, unless otherwise stated. The division of the article in numbered subsections is an addition by the translator. In quotations, the following abbreviations are used to refer to sources: FYZL = Fayuan Zhulin. GSZ = Gao Seng Zuan. HS = Han Shu. NINZ = Nanhai Jigui Neifa Zuan. SGSZ = Song Gao Seng Zuan. SS = Sai Shu. T = Taisho shinshu daizokyo. XGSZ = Xu Gao Seng Zuan.
contrast to the view of most Chinese musicologists that indigenous Buddhist music was not disseminated with the religion and that Chinese Buddhist music is a product of its adopted land.

In the second section, the writer analyses the contribution of Emperor Liang Wudi (r. 502-549) of the Northern and Southern Dynasties to Buddhist music, and draws attention to the fact that the sinicization of Buddhist music began about that period.

In the third section, numerous historical sources will be cited to show that from the Northern and Southern Dynasties to the early Tang Dynasty (420-ca 618 AD), the emergence of many Han Chinese monks with consummate musical skills formed the basis on which subsequent Chinese Buddhist music was built.

The fourth and final section will discuss three major characteristics of Buddhist music during the Tang dynasty which contributed to its maturity and the completion of the process of sinicization. At the same time, studying the musical structure of some hymns sung today in different regions in China, the author proposes, with further support from historical sources, that Buddhist music of Tang-period origin may still exist.

1. Dissemination of Buddhist Music in China

Buddhist music is a valuable part of the cultural heritage of China, embodying the rich tradition of China’s ethnic groups and their music. Following the dissemination of Buddhism from Central Asia into China, Buddhist music experienced a gradual process of sinicization.2 Studying this process will help us to understand the development of Chinese music and Chinese Buddhism.

1.1. Tianzhu3 Buddhist Music in Chinese Buddhist Sources

The dissemination of Buddhism into the Central Plains of China is often said to have taken place around the first century AD. The evidence of the prevalence of Buddhist music in ancient India can be found in various Chinese sources. The Indian monk and best-known translator of Buddhist sūtras Kumārajiva (344-413) was said to have told his Chinese disciple Huirui:

"The national custom of Tianzhu places much emphasis on arts and culture; the best of its musical forms is instrumental music. When paying respects to the King, His virtues must be expressed. When paying homage to the Buddhas, hymns of praise must be sung. Laudatory hymns and gāthās in the sūtras should be performed thus." (GS2, 1884, vol. 1, juan 2: 10) [T. 2059]

The Tang Dynasty monk Yijing (635-713), describing Buddhist rituals in India4, wrote: "[according to] the custom of worship in the Western Land [i.e. India], hymns of praise are

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2 Author’s note: In general, the word “sinicization” may refer to processes of change by which cultural elements imported from abroad acquire local or regional Chinese characteristics. In the context of this article, the author will only discuss such processes so far as they concern non-Chinese music in the Central Plains, in areas with Han culture. He will use the term in that narrow geographical sense, but it is probable that in non-Han Chinese areas within the sphere of China’s cultural influence, there have been similar processes.

3 Ancient Chinese name for India.

4 A poetic form with fixed prosody of five to seven syllables in a line. Translated as ji in Chinese.


6 Yijing left for India in A.D. 671 and arrived in Eastern India in 673. He was in India from 673 to 687. Before he returned to China in 695, he stayed in Sumatra, known in the early times as the Islands of the Southern Sea. From there, he sent home his work through another Chinese priest who was then returning to
widespread” (NJNZ juan 4, chap 32) [T. 2125, 227b]. Yijing also described several early Indian Buddhist music composers, one of whom was the Esteemed Mātrceta7, [said to have lived about A.D. 450-550]:

“A man of great talent and virtue in the West [i.e. India], and a paragon of all learned men of his age. On seeing the image of Buddha, he wrote hymns in praise of the Buddha’s virtues to the greatest extent of his literary powers. He composed first a hymn consisting of 400 slokas [verses], and afterward another of 150. In these, he extols the Six Pāramitā (Perfection) and expounds all the great virtues of the Buddha, the World-honoured One. It could truly be said that the style and depth of feeling in these are equal in beauty to flowers in heaven, and the dignified principles they contain rival the lofty peaks of the mountains.” (ibid.)

Mātrceta’s place as the great master of Buddhist music was further attested:

“All hymn composers in the West imitated his style and considered him the father of literature. Even the Bodhisattva Asaṅga and Vasubandha (contemporaries of Mātrceta) admired him greatly. Thus throughout India, monks are taught Mātrceta’s two hymns as soon as they can recite the Five and Ten Śila (Precepts). Both the Māhāyāna and Theravāda Schools venerated these hymns” (ibid.).

Emulating Mātrceta, Bodhisattva Gina [about A.D. 550-670] “added one verse before each [of Mātrceta’s one hundred and fifty verses], altogether making three hundred verses, [this was] named zazan [translated as ‘mixed’ hymns by Takakusu, see Takakusu: 158].” Śākyadeva, a celebrated priest at Mrgadāva [Deer Park, the place where Śākyamuni Buddha first preached after attaining Enlightenment] “again added extra verses to Gina’s verses, making a total of four hundred and fifty verses and named rou zazan [‘doubly mixed hymn’]. Many composers of religious poems emulated their style.” (ibid.)

Furthermore, the story of the Bodhisattva Chengyun [‘Cloud-borne’, Sanskrit Gimūtavāhana], who sacrificed himself to a nāga (serpent), was versified by King Siladitya [said to have died sometime between 650-655] who “made it into a song with accompaniment by strings and pipes and with dancing, which remained popular for generations after” (ibid.). A high priest from Eastern India, Yuegong Dashi (lit. ‘Official of the Moon Palace’, Mahāsattva Kandra according to Takakusu), composed a song about Prince Piyu-antala [Visvāntara] to which “people throughout India sang and danced.” (ibid.)

The Honourable Āsvaghosha [c.a. 100 B.C to 50 or 80 A.D.], [first expounder of the Mahayanistic doctrines,] was the author of the Faben xingshi (Sanskrit Buddha-caritakāvyā, also known as Foshuo xingzan jing10). This famous poem on the life of the Buddha was “widely recited throughout the five divisions of India and the countries of the Southern Sea” (ibid.).

Yijing’s records highlight at least three facts. Firstly, the contents of hymns sung in early India were often in praise of the “Buddha’s merits” or “all the virtuous merits of the

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7 Spelled Mārketaka in Takakusu (1896).
8 See Takakusu, p. 164.
9 Sanskrit sources on Āsvaghosha’s dates are extremely lacking while accounts in Chinese and Tibetan sources vary according to different authorities. For an account of this confusion, see Suzuki, Teitaro - Āsvaghosha’s Discourse on the Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyana. Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1900.
10 For an English translation of the Chinese translation, see Beal, 1883.
sagacious Buddhas and the sages who follow”. Written in poetic style, an example of a long narrative song by Aśvaghosha begins with the words “Tathāgata, who came from the Palace and attained enlightenment between the two [śāla] trees...” (ibid.). Songs of this type came to be called Fōben xingshi (Verses on the Life of Śākyamuni Buddha). Secondly, these hymns could be “accompanied by strings and winds” and could also be “with dancing” (ibid.). Thus song, dance and melodic accompaniments were combined. The style and appeal of these hymns rested on “solemnity and elegance”, and their tones and volume required “clarity and vigour” (ibid.).

Thirdly, singing laudatory hymns has six goals for the monastics: “The first is to understand the Buddha’s great and profound virtues; the second to learn how to compose verses; the third to preserve the purity of the tongue; the fourth to cultivate an open mind; the fifth to maintain calmness in a crowd; the sixth to obtain a long and illness-free life” (ibid.). For the lay community, the singing of hymns would cultivate “respect for and believe in the Triple Gem [the Buddha, Dharma, and Monastics]; piety to parents; observance of precepts and refrain from committing sinful deeds; proper choice in friends; purity of mind in resisting temptation; harmony within the family and to have correct values” (ibid.). Apart from the above, Yijing also described ritual practices and hymn-singing he observed in India.11

1.2. A statement by Huijiao

The above-quoted Chinese sources give some evidence concerning Buddhist music practice in early India. But was this music brought into China along with the dissemination of the religion eastward?

The very mention of this question leads one to think of the oft quoted passage by a Chinese monk Huijiao (497-554), compiler of the ‘Biographies of Eminent Monks’ (Gao Seng Zhuan, ca. 530), one of the most important sources on early history of Buddhism in China:

“Since the spread eastward of the Great Religion, the translators of sūtras texts have been numerous but the dissemination of sheng (lit. sound or tone) [its music] was generally sparse. The reason lies in that Sanskrit words are polysyllabic while the Han language is monosyllabic. If Indian melodies were sung to Chinese words, the lyrics would be too sparse for the music; if Chinese melodies were sung to Sanskrit, the lyrics would be too dense for the music. Thus the ‘golden words’ (jinyan) [scriptures] were translated while ‘Brahman sound’ (fanzhang) [Buddhist music] was not passed on. The earliest [composer] was Cao Zhi (192–232 AD), Prince Chensi of the Wei Kingdom (221–265 AD), who loved music deeply and was fond also of jingxin [the tones of the sūtras]. He was not only well versed in Buddhist music12 but was also inspired by the heavenly gods of Mount Yushan.13 He hence edited the Ruiying Benqijing (original title Taizi Ruiying Benqijing14; Stories of the Buddha’s Previous and Present Lives) and set it to music, becoming the great master of all scholars. Transmitted ‘sounds’ (sheng) numbered more than 3000, whilst in qi15 there remained only 42” (GSZ, 1884, vol. 4, juan 15: 7).

Huijiao’s words soon began to be quoted in countless sources, from biographies to historical accounts. A common interpretation of Huijiao’s words is that although Buddhist scriptures

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12 The original words in the text are “the auspicious sounds of Bozhe”, Bozhe Yuxun being the transliterated name of a god of music mentioned in sūtra texts. See also Whitaker 1937 for his interpretation of this passage.
13 A place within present-day Dong-a county in Shandong province.
14 Translated around 222–229 AD by the Indo-scythian layman Zhiqian [ca. 3rd century].
15 See below for author’s critical interpretation of the word.
(the "golden words") were transmitted into China, the corresponding music ("Brahman sounds") did not accompany the infiltration of the religion. Some scholars therefore concluded that "from its inception, Chinese Buddhist music drew materials from local folk music, therefore having the chance to sprout its roots in this land" (Yang, 1981, vol. 1: 159).

However, if we study the historical sources carefully, we will find that the matter is not so simple.

1.3. Cao Zhi and Chinese Buddhist Fanbai

According to Huijian, Cao Zhi was the first composer of Buddhist hymns in China. Yet, there is reason to believe that Buddhist liturgical hymns may have existed before Cao Zhi was said to have composed Buddhist hymns. From a theoretical viewpoint, if monastic communities exist, there must, too, be rituals for paying homage to the Buddha; if there are rituals, there must also exist the need for liturgical hymns. Indeed, Song Dynasty monk Zanning (919-1001) wrote:

"[There were] two monks of Indian origin who were most influential in the Han court. In the north was Zhu Falan [Dharmaratna?, ca. 1st century AD?] who declaimed in a zhi [lit. straight] speech-like manner; in the south was Kang Senghui [?-280] who recited in a tuneful manner" (SGSZ, 1887, vol. 7, juan 25: 19).

Thus Zanning named Zhu Falan and Kang Senghui as the respective forebears of the northern and southern traditions of hymn performance. Zhu Falan [said to be the translator of the Sūtra in Forty-two Section (Sishi'er zhang jing) first Buddhist scripture in China], who arrived in China with Kāśyapa Mātaṅga (She Moteng) in AD 67, was originally from Central India. Zhu's arrival marked the beginning of the dissemination of Buddhism in China. His performance was described as being in a "straight" speech-like manner. This seem to suggest that there was not much music in it. Since the sūtra translation industry was still in its infant stage in China at that time, Zhu’s rendition may have been in the original Indian style.

From the Eastern Han to the Three Kingdoms period (25-220; 220-265 AD), all the known early composers of Buddhist hymns were basically non-Chinese, Cao Zhi being the exception. For example, Zhi Qian [ca. 3rd century] was an Indo-scythian; Kang Senghui [mentioned above] was of Sogdian origin; Bo Śrīmitra [?-d.ca.335-343], [known for his

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16 In China, fanbai refers to the singing of Buddhist hymns. Fan refers to the Sanskrit word Brahman meaning chastity, devotion, praise or any pious expression in worship. In Chinese Buddhist dictionaries (Fouguang daci duo; zongjiao cidian), bai is said to be the transliteration of the Sanskrit bhāṣā, the meaning of which is to eliminate thoughts, desires or praise. Yet in Sanskrit dictionaries (cf. Lamman 1912; Monier-Williams 1899), bhāṣā refers solely to speech or language. In my opinion, if bai is indeed a transliteration of the Sanskrit, it may well be that of path whose meaning includes read aloud, recite, to repeat the name of a god or to invoke. It seems to me that path has a closer correlation to the Chinese context of bai than the word bhāṣā.
17 Zhi Qian was the third generation of an Indo-scythian family who had settled in Luoyang from 168 AD. His dates are uncertain. A lay Buddhist, he went to the southern capital of Jianye (present-day Nanjing) in 229 and was active as a translator of Buddhist scriptures from 220-252 AD. See Zürcher, 1972: 48-51. He was said to have composed "Hymns consisting of correlated phrases sung in praise of the Bodhisattva" (Zan poa lianju fanbai) (GSZ, 1992: 15). See also Hu Yao 1992: 8-9.
18 Kang Senghui was born in Jiaozhi, extreme south of the Chinese empire (near present-day Hanoi). His family had lived in India for generations until his merchant father came to settle at this then important commercial town. He arrived at the southern capital of Jianye in 247. (see Zürcher, p. 51-55) He was said to have transmitted the "Nihuan Hymn" (Nihuan Fanbai), see Hu Yao, p. 9.
19 Śrīmitra was said to have been a Kuchean prince who had given up his throne to become a monk; he was also said to have transmitted "High tone Fanbai" (Gaosheng fanbai) to his disciple Mili. See GSZ 1992: 29-32; see also Hu Yao, p. 9-10.
prowess in chanting spells and magic formulas], was from Central Asia; Zhi Tanyue\textsuperscript{20} [ca. 4th century] was of Indo-scythian origin. It was not possible that hymns composed by these early laymen and monks showed no Indian or Central Asian influences. Even the hymns said to have been composed by Cao Zhi must have been built on the foundation of Indian Buddhist music. Indeed, posing the question:

"If hymn-singing] was supposedly transmitted only by Central Asian monks, how was it possible that Prince Chensi [Cao Zhi] and the Premier of Qi [ie. the ruler of the Qi kingdom (480-502); also known as Prince Xiao Ziliang] were editing sutras to show the monks?",

Zanning supplied his own answer:

"The two princes were already familiar with the music of Tianzhu, hence when hearing the heavenly singing of sūtras and gāthās, it is said they transmitted them" (SGSZ, ibid.).

Although Huijiao stated that the "golden words" were translated but the music was not adopted, he nonetheless implied a link between Cao Zhi’s Buddhist hymns and Indian Buddhist music when he wrote that Cao Zhi was "well versed in the auspicious sounds of Bozhe, the god of Indian Buddhism" who was said to have "used his zither to sing the praises of the virtues of Buddha" (GSZ, op. cit.). In other words, Cao Zhi’s composition of Buddhist hymns was built on the foundation of cognizance of Indian Buddhist music.

The story of Cao Zhi’s hymn composition at Mount Yushan is very widespread.\textsuperscript{21} According to Yiyan, a 15th century collection of tales of marvels [not extant, see reference to this work in Hōbōgirin, s.v. Bombay, p. 96], "Prince Chensi [ie. Cao Zhi] was roaming in the mountains when suddenly he heard the chanting of sutras in the air, distant yet distinct. Being knowledgeable about music, he wrote them down, referring to it as sounds of the gods [shenxian in the text]. It was [later] emulated by Daoists in the sounds for buxu ['pacing the void' in Daoist rituals]." Another source has it that

"Cao Zhi was touring Mount Yushan one day when he suddenly heard the sounds of "Brahman heavens" [fanxian in text], elegant and plaintive. The sounds touched his soul ['heart' xin in text], so he listened for a long time... He then imitated the music and composed Buddhist hymns [fanbai in text]" (FYZL, juan 36: ch. 34) [T. 2122, 576a].

In Chinese historiography, the act of music composition was often referred to as having "heard the music of heaven" (wen tianyue), or being "conferred by gods" (de shenshou). The reason could have come from the early Chinese reverence for music composition, or perhaps the references were deliberate attempts to create a mysterious ambience about the act. At any rate, these two passages give hints of the relationship between Cao Zhi’s Buddhist hymns and Indian Buddhist music. But what exactly is Cao Zhi’s contribution to Chinese Buddhist music? The key to this question lies in the interpretation of Huijiao’s phrase "Transmitted ‘sounds’ numbered more than 3000, while in qi, there remained only 42."

The interpretation of the ancient use of the word qi has been a topic of research since the early part of this century among scholars of the Dunhuang frescoes. This is indeed the crux of the matter; if the word’s ancient usage cannot be determined, it will not be possible to

\textsuperscript{20} Zhi Tanyue popularized a new way of chanting Buddhist verse and composed a number of Buddhist hymns in six-syllable lines (Liuyan fanbai). See GSZ, 1992: 498; see also Hu Yao, p. 10; Zürcher, p. 144.

\textsuperscript{21} See also Whitaker 1957: 585-597, and Zürcher: 56-57 on this subject.
understand what Cao Zhi created. First, let us consider how contemporary Dunhuang scholars including Zhou Yiliang, Guan Dedong and Xiang Da interpret the word *qi*.

Zhou observed that "During the period of the Six Dynasties" [222-589 AD], before a sermon, the *dujiang* [monk who gives the sermon] first recites [zhuandu], "The recitation is divided into a number of *qi*." He thus opines that "*qi* does not seem merely to refer to a section from the sutra but has musical significance, and that each *qi* is different from another" (Zhou 1982: 157-64). On the other hand, Guan explicitly states that "what is referred to as *qi* is in reality a "hymn" (gezan) (Guan 1982: 165-70). Xiang Da’s inference, however, is that *qi* is the transliteration of [the Sanskrit] gāthā, a 'song', and that by extension it refers to 'eulogy in verse'" (Xiang 1982a: 171-77).

In the writer’s opinion, *qi* as a musical noun is indisputable. But if it merely expresses a unit of music, that is, a single composition, this still does not explain why there were 3000 "transmitted sounds" but only 42 "in *qi*’. If *qi* is a unit for music, what then are the 3000 "transmitted sounds"? Are they not music? In fact, the meaning of *qi* could well be "musical score."

Philological study of the word *qi* shows that its original meaning is "to engrave". *Shuowen jiezi* [a book on the etymology of Chinese characters first compiled in the Eastern Han period by Xu Shen (ca. 58-148)] notes that the character includes the radical for "knife", and that *qi* thus originally referred to engraving. In ancient times, [before the invention of paper] the act of writing was carved out on bamboo with a knife until brushes and ink and paper were invented. Writing carved with a knife was more permanent than with a brush. This was probably the reason the word *qi* was later incorporated into the compound *qiyue* (contract). The implication of *qi* is thus "a permanent record". If this is indeed the case, then Huijiao’s words could be translated as "orally transmitted tunes numbered more than 3000, but those which were written down (perhaps still extant during Huijiào’s time) totalled 42 pieces.

Since the original meaning of *qi* is "engraving or writing", what could it refer to here but musical scores? In the passage from *Fayuan Zhulin*, it was expressly stated that Cao Zhi "imitated the music [of Brahman sounds] and composed *fanbai* [liturgical hymns]" (FYZL op. cit.). It is worth noting that what Cao Zhi wrote was music; we can thus rule out the possibility that he merely composed the lyrics of hymns. The passage from *Fayuan* quoted above also affirmed that the hymns were written by a person who was "knowledgeable about music" rather than merely "by a person adept in literary prowess." Thus there is no room for misinterpretation.

1.4. Musical notation?

If Cao Zhi did compose music, what sort of musical notation did he use? In my opinion, it could very likely be the shengquzhe [lit. contorted sounds, i.e. contour notation] mentioned in *The History of the Han dynasty* (Hanshu 1739, juan 30) [1962, vol. 6: 1755]. In it, *shengquzhe* appears in the title of one of two song books, *Henan zhoge shi qipian* (‘Seven poems of the songs of Zhou in Henan’), and *Henan zhoge shengquzhe qipian* (‘Seven shengquzhe of the songs of Zhou in Henan’). Wang Xianqian (1842-1917), the author of

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22 The term six dynasties (liuchao) refers specifically to dynasties in southern China during the following periods: Wu in the Three kingdoms period (222-280); Eastern Jin (317-420); and the four successive southern dynasties in the Northern and Southern dynasties period: Song (420-479), Qi (479-501), Liang (502-557), and Chen (557-589).
Example 1: Gyoshan Shisho in Taisho Shinshu Daizokyo.
Example 2: Sbrul shad notation of the dbyangs melodies of Tibet.

Example 3: Daoist buxu notation in Yuyin Fashi (Daoist Canon).
The Appendix to Hanshu, opined that shengguzhe refers to musical scores (Hanshu Bazhu 1959). In this type of notational method, wavy lines were used to represent melodic contours and undulations of the voice. Although it could not indicate the precise pitch and length of a note, it could still function as an aide-memoire.

A valuable early example of a contour-type notation survives in Japan, which received Buddhism in large part via China from around the sixth century. In the Taisho Tripitaka (Dazheng xinxiu dazang jing) (T.2712 and 2713), two collections of hymns, Gyosan Shomyo Shu and Gyosan Shiso contain musical scores (Ex. 1, see p. 16) The facts that the scores are of a contour notation type and that the titles of the two collections refer to Yushan shows that in the eyes of Japanese monks, there was a connection between Yushan, Cao Zhi, and contour notation. Examples of types of contour notation found in China are the sbrou shad notation of the dbyangs melodies of Tibet (Ex. 2) and the buzi scores in Daoism (Ex. 3). A point worth noting is that the [Japanese] Buddhist contour notation is notated horizontally alongside the words, or slightly slanted above the words. The Daoist buzi notation, however, is written below the words and uses the traditional Chinese method of writing vertically. Which of these notations was invented first? According to Yiyan, it was the Daoists who imitated Cao Zhi. Studying the relationship and the change in the two musical notations would exceed the bounds of this paper, but it would give a wider perspective to the study of the relationship between Buddhism and Daoism.

Certain problems in historical musicology can be resolved by interpreting qi as “musical score”. For example, the word qizhusheng found in qingshang23 music of the Southern Dynasty [of the Northern and Southern Dynasties period 420-589] has long puzzled scholars. The word qi was only known to indicate a section of music without lyrics at the end of the large song-and-dance suites of qingshang music. If qi is indeed as explained by the writer, the problem of qizhusheng in the qingshang suites may be solved. Since the word zhu means to notate, qizhusheng could therefore mean “sound performed as notated in musical scores” — perhaps indicating a purely instrumental postlude or coda.

Another example which could support the theory that qi refers to “musical score” is found in historical records. With reference to the qingshang music of two Southern dynasty kingdoms which was inherited by the Sui dynasty (518-618), the records state:

“[Qingshang] songs [from the Liang and Chen kingdoms] include Yangban, dance pieces include Mingjun, Bingqi” (Sui Shu [SS] 1739, juan 15, zhi 10) [1973, vol. 2: 378].

The last item, Bingqi was marked by the editors as if it were a title of a piece like the item before it. Studies by musicologists, however, have found no further evidence of a musical piece titled Bingqi. It is more likely that these two characters should be read separately as bing (‘and’) qi (“musical score”), thus rendering the meaning “and [its] notation”.

Of course, we have to bear in mind the polysemic nature of language. Over time, meaning of words may be extended, gradually replaced or even forgotten. It would not be surprising for the meaning of qi to be extended to serve as a counter for musical compositions or to refer to a purely instrumental coda-like section of a musical piece.

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23 Before the 5th and 6th centuries, popular songs collected from among the people were adapted in the Music Bureau of the northern imperial courts into songs, dances and big suites. These were known accordingly as xianghe songs (xianghe ge) or xianghe suites (xianghe qu). From that time onwards, folk music adapted by the court, both in north and south of China, came to be known as qingshang yue (qingshang music). See Yang, 1981: 138-149.
To summarize Cao Zhi’s role in Chinese Buddhist music, let us hypothesize as follows. At the beginning of the 3rd century Cao Zhi, a prince of the Wei Kingdom, talented musician and poet, used or invented a type of contour notation to record a great number of Indian Buddhist hymns. He “edited texts and created the music which was passed on to later generations” (FYZL, ibid.). In the early periods of Buddhism in China, Cao Zhi helped to disseminate Buddhist music from India. It was said that “the manifestation of Brahmanic sounds began” with Cao Zhi’s musical activities on Yushan (ibid.).

1.5. The earliest surviving records of titles of Buddhist pieces

Moving now to a survey of instrumental [Buddhist] music, we can find the earliest records of titles of “Buddhist pieces” (foqu) in the official Sui Shu:

"[The music of] Xiliang [i.e. Liangzhou, in modern-day Gansu] originated from the end of [the Eastern Jin] Emperor Fu Jian’s reign (357-385); [two of his generals] Lu Guang and Zhaqu Mengsun conquered Liangzhou, adapted the music of Qiuzi [Kucha] and renamed it ‘the musical art of the Qin and Han’; pieces included the song Yongshi le [lit. ‘Forever Happy’], instrumental music Wanshi feng [‘Boundless harvest’], and dance music Yutian foqu [Khotan Buddhist music].”

(SS 1739, juan 15, zhi 10) [1973, vol. 2: 378]

The record further confirms: “[The music of] Qiuzi was obtained when Lu Guang conquered Qiuzi.” (ibid.) According to history, Lu Guang conquered Qiuzi in 382 AD, and the end of Fu Jian’s reign was around end of the 4th century. The time span between this and the appearance of Huijiao’s Gao Seng Zhan (51922) was over a hundred years. In other words, long before Huijiao stated that the “golden words” were translated while “Brahman sounds” were not passed on, “Khotan Buddhist music” had already made its appearance in the Central Plains of China.

If “Khotan Buddhist music” was acquired via Kucha, what then is the relationship between Kuche and Buddhist music? Firstly we have to examine the background of the invasion of Kucha by Lu Guang and how he obtained the music.

1.6. The role of Kumārajīva

An interesting point of fact for the motive behind the invasion, it appears, was to capture a monk:

“In the year 383, Emperor Fu Jian sent Generals Lu Guang, Jiang Fei, etc., to lead a 70,000 strong army westward to invade Qiuzi, Qarasahr and other countries nearby. Before their departure, Fu Jian threw a banquet for Lu Guang in the Jianzhang Palace [during which he] said to Lu Guang: “An emperor rules by the decrees of god’s will, and he should love [conquered] people like his own. Would it be for the greed of other land that we invade? The real reason is that there is a saintly person. I hear that in the West, [there is] one Kumārajīva who understands profoundly the [true] Buddha nature, and is adept at [the concepts of] yin and yang. He is the greatest master of all. A great philosopher as such would be the treasure of a nation. When you capture Qiuzi, send [me] Kumārajīva speedily.” (GSZ, vol.1, juan 2) [T. 2059, 331b]

Historical records of other period also attest to this (see Jin Shu, juan 95) [1974, vol. 8: 2500]. Kumārajīva was one of China’s greatest translators of Buddhist texts. Of Indian origin but born in Kucha, he was a precocious younger, who by the age of twelve or

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24 Author’s note: In 384 AD, Yao Chang conquered the north and named himself King of Qin. The next year, Fu Jian was captured by Yao’s army.

25 Zürcher’s date for this work is 530. See Zürcher, 1972: 10.
thirteen, was already preaching Buddhist teachings. He was well known in many parts of Central Asia. It was said that “when he preaches, princes and kings kneel at the side of High Priest’s seat, allowing Kumārajīva to ascend the seat by stepping on their knees” (GSZ, op. cit.). He had a wife and several concubines, did not live in the monks’ quarters, and was well versed in the music of Kucha and India. He once commented on the difference between Indian and Chinese language to his Chinese disciple Huīrī: “In paying respects to the Buddha, sung hymns are the most important; the verses and praises in sūtras are all in this style. But when the Indian language is translated into Chinese, it loses its splendid literary finesse. Although the gist of the meaning may be achieved, the two literary forms are very different. It is like chewing food which has been in someone’s mouth; not only has it lost its flavour but it is revolting” (GSZ, ibid.). Kumārajīva’s reaction to this was to write ten gāthās, the lyrics of one of which is extant.

Kumārajīva’s sentiments on the difficulty of translating from Sanskrit to Chinese were those experienced by a great translator. He gave consideration to the difficulty of achieving both faithfulness to the original text and smooth flow in the target language. He spared no efforts, pursuing perfection relentlessly, until he finally scaled new heights in the history of translation, and gained “general satisfaction and conviction and much admiration from all” (ibid.).

1.7. The impact of Kuchean music

Although we do not know what Kumārajīva’s ten gāthās sounds like, we may speculate that their tunes might well have been adopted from his adopted land of Kucha. Though history records no direct relationship between Kumārajīva and Kuchean music, Lü Guang’s victory over Kucha brought two treasures: one was Kumārajīva, and the other was the music of Kucha. Kumārajīva was said to have over 3000 disciples, so his influence was great and extensive. In turn, Kuchean music came into China with Kumārajīva, becoming very widespread in Chinese society. Such important correlation should not be overlooked.

We should also be aware of the reaction to Kuchean music during the Tang dynasty:

“[Monk] Guling, while on his way to a nearby temple one day, met six to seven people on the road. They were very youthful and well dressed, and in the hands of each were musical instruments like those of Qiuizi. To the passers-by, this was music of Tian [Tianzhu, i.e. India] to their ears.” (SGSZ 1987, juan 25, vol. 2: 638) [T. 2061, 869b]

This same paragraph also states that the music of Tianzhu is Buddhist music. Thus in the eyes [or ears] of the Tang people, the characteristics of Buddhist music were “like those of Qiuizi”; it is possible that this does not refer merely to the use of instruments but may include reference to the music per se. Evidence of instruments from Kucha can be found on the frescoes of Dunhuang, while the reference to music is on a description written on a Dunhuang scroll:

“Together they play the music of heaven, the gongs and [music] of Qiuizi; the beauties’ hands were busy [with instruments], the sounds resounding on the roof.” (Pelliot 3065.)

Dunhuang scholar Xiang Da claimed: “Buddhist music originated from the music of Qiuizi; in particular, the seven modes of pipa [four-string lute] brought over by the Qiuizi musician Suzhipe were the near ancestor of Chinese Buddhist music” (Xiang 1957: 275-93). From the above descriptions, we can deduce that the importation of Kuchean music was the start of the
infiltration of a huge repertoire of Buddhist music into China. In short, with Lü Guang’s victory, instrumental music had already started to spread from Kucha into the courts of China. At the same time, the gradual eastward spread of Buddhist culture had come mostly via Kucha; it was thus reasonable to the Tang people, Kuchean music and Buddhist music were one and the same thing.

1.8. Conclusion
Up to this point, one could tentatively conclude as follows. Huijiao’s statement that the “golden words” were translated but “Brahman sounds” were not passed on has often been interpreted as an indication of the non-dissemination of Indian Buddhist music into China. It has led scholars to believe that, from the very beginning, Chinese Buddhist music was an indigenous product. But this does not accord with historical evidence. On the contrary, early Buddhist music in China must have been of Indian or Central Asian origin.

The sinicization of Buddhist music, like the sinicization of the religion, would have been an inevitable but gradual process, probably culminating around the Tang dynasty. During this time, cultural development was at its peak, the country was at the height of its power and splendour, assimilating elements from the numerous foreign cultures under its sway. From the court to folk society, music was prospering, and was at its peak. During this period too, the Buddhist clergy strove to make the religion more accessible by using popular music, resulting in the rise of sujiang (popular sermon) and the widespread singing of hymns. But even before the Tang period, notable individuals such as Xiao Ziliang, the premier of the Southern Qi kingdom, and emperor Liang Wudi of the Liang kingdom (r. 502-549) were already composing Buddhist music in the Chinese idiom. Their creation of Chinese-style Buddhist music was built on the foundation of qingshang music, the emergence of which established the foundation and paved the way for the sinicization of Buddhist music. We turn to this topic in the section below.

2. Emperor Liang Wudi and Buddhist Music
Xiao Yan (464-549) was the founding emperor of the Southern dynasty’s Liang Kingdom [centred around modern Nanjing]. As Emperor Wudi of Liang Kingdom, he reigned from 502-549 AD. From a very young age, Xiao Yan was well known for his literary prowess. Together with other famous literati of the Southern dynasty, he formed a literary group named as ‘The Eight Friends’. This group established a poetic style which set the foundation for the later standardization of the five-word poetic form. Some members of this group also assisted Xiao Yan in overthrowing the Qi kingdom [ruling kingdom of southern China prior to the Liang] in 502. During his 47-year reign, Xiao Yan exerted a profound influence on Chinese politics and culture. He turned into a key promoter and patron of Buddhism.

2.1. Liang Wudi’s impact on court ceremonies and music
Xiao Yan was originally a Daoist believer, but in the third year of his reign (504) he wrote a vow on Śākyamuni Buddha’s Birthday to be proselytised as a Buddhist. Subsequently, he personally penned several hundred volumes of commentaries and “dialogues” on various sūtras. To promote Buddhism, he spent huge amounts on building grand and ornate monasteries, and he even preached at some monasteries. He also emulated Śākyamuni

26 Author’s note: Historical records cites him as being “young but learned and very capable” (Nan Shi 1975, vol. 1: 167).
Buddha’s example of deserting the throne to become a monk, giving himself up three or four times to become a slave at Tongtai monastery; twice he was redeemed by his court officials through huge ransom payments, thus greatly enriching the finances of the monastery. From then on, Buddhism in China scaled new heights of power and splendour. Buddhist hymns and music in homage to the Buddha were also popular and widely sung.

Xiao Yan was a man of high musical accomplishment. He was described as being “adept in the bells and [musical] temperament” (SS, juan 13) [1973, vol. 2: 288-9) and as “an expert in yueliǔ (music)” (Jiu Wudai Shi, juan 145) [1976, vol. 6: 1940]. After his enthronement, he devoted great efforts to reviving [zheng in the text] yuyue27 [ceremonial court music], revising music temperament [ding yinlu]28, and popularizing Buddhist music, setting a fine precedent for many generations after (SS, juan 13) [1973, vol.2: 287].

Xiao Yan’s efforts to ‘correct’ yuyue was carried out under exceptional circumstances. Shen Yue, a member of the literati once commented:

“Music is important but is not the most urgent of matters: if not for a commendable and creative ruler, music would rarely be mentioned [in historical documents]. From the Han dynasty onward, rulers were not estimable [and] music was not an urgent matter for people and officials of the court; it was thus less spoken of.” (SS juan 13) [1973, vol. 2: 288]

These remarks contain some important insights. After the fall of the Han dynasty [220], wars were rampant. China was divided into three kingdoms, the ‘barbarians’ invaded China, and numerous short-lived local kingdoms rose and fell. Which rulers had the time to promote music? Music heard and played in imperial courts and temples was probably simple, and taken from what was easily available. The emperor of the ephemeral Qi Kingdom (480-502) is reported to have pronounced, on the suggestion by two Ministers that yuyue should be revived, that

“formal etiquette when paying respects to humans [i.e. monarch and officials] should be observed, [but] when paying respects to the gods29, elaborate formalities could be omitted” (SS juan 13) [1973, vol. 2: 291].

He further spoke assuredly of not having the need

“to set up an imperial zhuang, nor [the need] for song-and-dance performances of the Six dynasties [referring to yuyue]. Even if musical instruments are set up to fulfill obligations, it will neither be the imperial zhuang, nor that of Dukes and Princes, nor of high or low officials” (ibid.).30

27 Yuyue is a general term for ceremonial and ritual music used in court. It originated in the ceremonial music of the Zhou dynasty (11c. BC - 771 BC), but during the Qin dynasty (221 BC-207 BC) and Han dynasty (206 BC - 220 AD), war and social disruption led to much of the music being lost. Subsequent dynasties strove to re-establish Zhou dynasty yuyue, an effort usually referred to as making zheng (lit. straight, right, correct).

28 The term ding yinlu (lit. fix the temperament) refers to the determination of the pitch standard of the yellow bell (huangzhong). From Han times onward, emperors of each dynasty treated this as an important matter as it was believed that this act would bring about the stability of the dynasty.

29 Liuyue [ritual music] was established in the Zhou dynasty in 1958 BC. Rites (li) and music (yue) were seen by the rulers of the Zhou dynasty as a form of social and political control; yuyue was a particularly important element of court religious rituals. See Yang 1981: 29-44.

30 From the Zhou dynasty onward, the layout of instruments such as the bronze bells and chimes was considered an important symbol of social and political status. The word zhuang refers to the layout of musical instruments. In gongxiu, the stratum reserved for the emperor, instruments were laid out in the palace hall on all four sides; for dukes and princes, instruments were laid out only on three sides; for high officials, on two sides, and so forth.
The words of the Qi Emperor, if correctly conveyed, would seem to imply a daring break from tradition. But since the Kingdom was short-lived, it is impossible to determine whether the Qi emperor would have tried to break free from tradition or that he simply did not have the capabilities to revive yayue [if he had remained in power].

“...At the beginning of Emperor Liang’s reign, the music [of his court] was inherited from the previous Qi Kingdom.” (ibid.) [p. 287] [Since the state of Qi kingdom music was in a state of disarray as suggested by historical records], Xiao Yan therefore called together his officials, hoping that by group effort, the lack of yayue since the Jin dynasty would be corrected. However, “although seventy five officials of music came forward, most were of mediocre ability; they talked enthusiastically about the need to change the music, [but] not of the methods of changing it” (ibid.) [p. 288]. Evidently the spirit was willing but the flesh was weak. Hence, “as the Emperor is himself adept in music and knowledgeable in history, [Liang Wudi] decided to reformulate yayue himself” (ibid.) [p. 289].

Liang Wudi not only “changed all songs to xianghe”31 songs, he also introduced song-and-dance and circus acts into imperial sacrificial ceremonies”32 (ibid.) [pp. 302-3]. Among Liang Wudi’s 49 musical pieces of the Three dynasties are a few with obvious Buddhist connotations. Item 27 is titled Xumishan ji (“Music of Mount Xumi”). Xumi is the transliteration of the Sanskrit word Sumu, a mythological mountain frequently described in Buddhist sūtras.33 The mountain, said to be 84, 000 yojana [unit of measure in ancient India] high, is crowned as the dishi tian [“the sky of the Supreme Śākyamuni”]. Mount Sumeru is a Buddhist subject, we can therefore suppose that Xumishan ji is a musical piece with some Buddhist connection. The list also includes more pieces having titles related to Buddhist themes, examples include Jinlun zhuang ji (no. 35, “Music of the golden wheels”), Qingzi lu (no. 42, “Green and purple deers”), Baifu (no. 43, “White deer”) (ibid.). Thus, for the first time, Buddhist music entered the ivory tower of China’s feudal government, becoming the imperial yayue of the Liang kingdom.

2.2. Liang Wudi as a Buddhist composer

A point worthy of note is that Liang Wudi could also be considered as one of China’s earliest Buddhist composers. His action was substantiated in the official records:

“The Emperor [Liang] not only piously respected the Buddhist dharma, [but] he also composed [the following] ten pieces: Shanzai (Sanskrit, saddharmatī, stage of the finest discriminatory wisdom), Dale (“Great happiness”), Daohuan (“Great joy”), Tianlao (“Heavenly path”), Xianlao (“Sainthood path”), Shenwang (“King of saints”), Longwang (“Dragon king”), Mie guo’e (“Extinguish past evils”), Chu aishui (“Eliminate desires”), and Duan kunlun (“Terminate the bitter wheel”). [Though] officially deemed zhengyu (lit. ‘correct music’, i.e. yayue), these pieces all have titles describing Buddhist teachings.” (ibid.) [p. 305]

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31 Xianghe ge originally referred to the different types of song genres popular in Han dynasty northern China. Later, it developed into a genre of song with instrumental accompaniment; when dance was added to xianghe song, the genre came to be known as xianghe daqu [xianghe big suites]. The term xianghe ge continued to be used till the 5th or 6th century; after that time, folk song genres, both in the north and south, were given the general term of qingshang music. See Yang 1981: 114-20; 145-48.

32 Author’s note: From the list of 49 pieces said to be from the Three dynasties [ie. Xia, Shang, Zhou dynasties], items from the 21st piece onward are all bore titles indicating song-and dance or acrobatics, examples include “Music for beheading by a wheel” (Chelun the dou ji), and “music for long stilts” (Chang qiao ji), etc. See Sui Shu, juan 13, 1973, vol. 2: 303.

33 Other common themes in Buddhist arts include the sitian wangtian (“four heavens of the heavenly heaven”), the mountains on all four sides of the Sumeru; qixianghai (“seven fragrant seas”), qijinshao (“seven golden mountains”), and xianhui (“salty sea”).
The last sentence in the above quotation reveals the true intention of Liang Wudi: he used the venerated position of an emperor to propagate Buddhist teachings in the name of re-establishing yayue. From the written records, we can also discern the style of Wudi’s Buddhist pieces. This will be discussed below.

Besides having composed Buddhist music, Liang Wudi was also the first to establish several Buddhist rituals, [some of which served as the precursor of rituals still performed today], including the wuzhe [lit. 'uncovered'] dahui (Wuzhe Grand ritual), and Yulan penhui (Avalambahana ritual, now commonly known as the Ghost Festival). These provided extremely good breeding ground for the performance and dissemination of Buddhist music.

Wuzhe (Sanskrit pañcavārśikaparipāsā) ritual is a ceremony of offerings in which the equality of all, saints or mortals, clergy or laymen, noble or lowly, rich or poor, is ratified. In this ceremony, anyone and everyone can come and partake in the vegetable feast provided, and donations are given freely to the poor. In India, King Siladitya [see p. 3 above] was said to have "held a wuzhe ritual every five years, [at which he] emptied the official granary to benefit all" (Datang Xiyujj) [T. 2087]. These rituals usually lasted for seventy five days. In China, a Buddhist record shows that

"In the year 529, Emperor [Liang] laid a vegetarian feast at the Chongyun Palace for his subjects, [and] personally prayed for them. At the Tongtai monastery, [he then] commanded a wuzhe grand ritual for the four categories [of the monastic community]. The Emperor provided a grand feast for clerics and folk alike, [the total number of people who attended] numbering 50, 000." (Fozu Tongji) [T. 2035, 350b]

Greater details of wuzhe rituals commanded by Liang Wudi revealed that he “removed his imperial garb, put on a monk’s robe, and held a pure and grand donation [of alms]” (Nan Shi op. cit). The emperor put on a grand feast, and tens of thousands of people attended. Naturally there was a motive behind Liang Wudi’s grand offerings: those who came to attend the feast had to pay a price. What was the price? They had to listen to preaching by monks and to listen to their singing of Buddhist hymns. In order to promote Buddhism, Emperor Liang spent huge amounts, contributing greatly to the development of Buddhist music.

In addition, Liang Wudi also created a form of hymn singing by children: “There was also Fayue tongzi ji (“Buddhist music for children’s voices”), [a musical piece] using children’s voices to accompany fanbei. The wuzhe grand ritual was established for [presenting] this” (SS juan 13) [p. 305].

2.3. Liang Wudi and qingshang music
Did the Buddhist music we had mentioned above come from India? Did Emperor Liang’s Buddhist compositions contain any traces of Indian music? Evidences showed the opposite. The Buddhist music and hymns by Liang Wudi were to a large degree “sinicized”. This hypothesis is not a presumptuous one. Firstly, we must not forget Liang Wudi’s cultural

34 According to the Buddhist hybrid Sanskrit grammar and dictionary, pañcavārśika refers to the festival gathering of the Buddhist order every five years. See Edgerton 1953.
35 The four categories of the monastic community include bhikṣu (ordained monk), bhikṣuni (nun), śrāmāruṇa (male novice) and śrāmapurī (female novice).  
36 Author's note: A mistake was made by the editors of the 1973 edition of Sui Shu. In this edition, Fayue tongzi ji was not marked as the title of a piece (i.e. a wavy or straight line next to the name). The lack of proper marking would mislead readers into thinking that Fayue tongzi ji refers to a form of singing, the explanation of which was added immediately after the title by the words "tongzi yige fanbei".
background. For an imperial ruler, his cultivation in Chinese traditional culture was one of the most extensive. It was said that:

“although [Liang Wudi] had much duties to take care of, he always had a book in his hand. He was well read in both Buddhist scriptures and Chinese classics, frequently reading well into the morning. The Book of Rites, The Ancient Classics, The Book of Zhou, The Spring and Autumn Annals, The Sayings of Zhanzi, The Sayings of Laozi, The Analects of Confucius, etc – in areas where the philosophy had not been clearly expounded – he knew then well enough to [write] critical interpretations.” (XGSZ) [T.2060]

Moreover, he also

“compiled 600 volumes of Tongshi (“General History”), 30 volumes of Jinghai (“The Golden Sea”); he wrote Zhixiao jingyi (“An argumentation of the Classic on filial piety”), Zhouyi jiangshu (“A critical edition of the Zhou Book of Changes”), and many others; [he was also known to be] adept in the six arts37, an expert in chess, [and in the principles of] yin yang, astrology, divination practice, epistolary art – all of which he was good at” (Nan Shi juan 7, 1975, vol. 1: 222-3).

Although he converted from Daoism to Buddhism, intrinsically he was an extremely eccentric, willful and self-centred Confucian scholar. Nonetheless, for our purposes he was most importantly a composer of qing[shang] [see footnote 23] music. Evidence of this is found in Yuefu Shiji, [a 100-volume compendium of the lyrics of poetic songs of the Music Bureau from the Han, Wei, Tang and Five dynasties era compiled in the Song dynasty by Guo Maoqian]:

“In the winter of the 11th year of Emperor Liang’s reign [513 AD], he adapted folk songs and composed 14 pieces collectively [collectively] titled Jiangnan shangyunyue [“Music of the clouds over Jiangnan”], seven pieces collectively titled Jiangnan nong, which was also the title of the first piece; the rest of the six pieces were individually titled Longdi qu [“Song of the dragon flute”], Cailian qu [“Song of picking lotus”], Fengdi qu [“Song of the windpipe”], Cailing qu [“Song of picking water calltrip”], Youwu qu [“Song of the wandering maiden”], Zhaoyun qu [“Song of the morning clouds”], (Yuefu shiji, juan 50, 51, 1979)

These were the stereotype of qingshang music.

Xiao Yan [Liang Wudi] also composed a song in the style of qingshang music titled Yang ban’er. Historical records showed that, nine years after the first Sui emperor eliminated the Chen kingdom [557-589, the kingdom following that of the Liang], among the qingshang music surviving from the Liang and Chen kingdoms was a song Yangban (SS, juan 13). This same piece, [recorded as being composed by Liang Wudi,] is found also in Yuefu Shiji (ibid. juan 49). This latter record thus proves that the song Yangban named in Sui Shu is a legacy of Liang Wudi’s music.

Returning for a moment to the collection of yayue composed by Liang Wudi, some of which carried titles suggesting Buddhist content, there is reason to believe that those pieces with Buddhist connotations were not only composed for use in Buddhist context but were, in character, qingshang music for use in court banquets.

Guo Maoqian, Song dynasty editor of poetic songs, attested to the fact that qingshang music was a fusion of ya (court) and su (folk) music, used at banquets in the imperial court. In his compendium, Guo stated that

37 The six arts as prescribed by Confucius for the education of a gentleman were rites, music, archery, riding, calligraphy and maths.
2.4. Qingshang – the "proper sounds of Huaxia"

The concept of qingshang yue has various possible referents. In its narrowest sense, its basic content comprises "the musical legacy of nine dynasties; its precursor being the xianghe sandiao38 [see also footnote 31], which combines the ancient music from the Han and Wei dynasties onward (not forgetting the wu songs from Jiangnan, and xisheng of Hubei, etc.)" (SS juan 15, zhi 10) [1973, vol.2: 377]. In a broader perspective, it represented the "proper sounds of Huaxia [i.e. China]", in opposition to the ku [barbarian] music, the latter of which was inundating China at that time. To historians and music scholars, Liang Wudi's collection of yayue – which includes musical pieces with Buddhist titles – is indeed the representative of the indigenous sounds of China. Soon after the establishment of the Sui dynasty [in 581], when it came to considering the establishment of music in the court, Gaozu, the first emperor of the Sui dynasty (581-601), rejected the suggestion of an official to "refer to the old ways [i.e. adopt the music] of the Liang kingdom", deeming it as "the sounds of a collapsed kingdom" (SS juan 14, zhi 9) [1973, vol.2: 345]. However, in 589, the emperor finally acknowledged the old music of Liang as "the proper sounds of Huaxia" decreeing that it be "used as a model to establish the court music of the Sui dynasty" (ibid.) [p. 378]

Proof that the Buddhist music composed by Liang Wudi was of the southern qingshang music style is attested not only in official historical records but also in Buddhist writings. Monk Daoxuan [compiler of the Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks (XGSZ)] described Buddhist music during the time of the Sui and Tang dynasties: "As the lands are divided, the sounds are just as diverse. Thus in Shenzhou [the poetic name for China], musical genres are also different" (XGSZ juan 30) [T.2060, 706b]. Daoxuan also pointed out the differences in the style of northern and southern Buddhist music:

"The customs of Wu and Yue [Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces, and implying areas south of the Yangtze] favour frivolous and rich ornamentation, so the music is very refined and undulating; [whereas] in Qin, Rong, Yong and Ji [Shaanxi, Shanxi and Hebei provinces, and areas north of the Yangtze], the music and literature are grand and robust in character. This style is thus thought best for Buddhist music" (ibid.)

Daoxuan further noted the relative abundance of compositions in southern Buddhist music:

"In the areas between Jiang and Huai [i.e. between the Yangtze and the river Huai in Jiangsu], there is much emphasis on this [Buddhist music], its elaboration and ornamentation being very rich; no matter which page one turns to in the sutra, [passages] could be sung instantaneously. However, this music is too highly ornamented that the contents of the texts are obscured." (ibid.)

Daoxuan's descriptions of the style of southern Buddhist music befit those by Emperor Liang Wudi: "The cultural relics of the Southern dynasty were reputed to be the most prosperous; [as for] the country's musical customs, new sounds were introduced" (Yuefu Shiji juan 44, vol. 2: 1182). This was the time when the southern kingdoms were at their peak; indeed, the ornamented style in various realms of Chinese culture was popularized by

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38 Xianghe sandiao refers to the three most important modes – qing, ping and se – used in xianghe songs and qingshang music.
Liang Wudi and the literati of the Southern dynasty. It would be reasonable, therefore, to interpret Daoxuan’s description of the style of Buddhist music as corresponding to that of the southern dynasty and of Liang Wudi’s sinicized Buddhist music.

2.5. Conclusion
The extraordinary combination of roles seen in Liang Wudi – that of emperor, accomplished scholar of Chinese classics, and religious fanatic – made him indisputably the key figure in the sinicization of Buddhist music, and also the first significant composer of Chinese Buddhist music known to us. We should thus not underestimate Liang Wudi’s impact on Chinese music history. The shaping of qingshang music occurred approximately around the time of his 47-year reign. The form of sinicized Buddhist music also began to peek through during his time. While the emperor of the Northern dynasties were using “the sounds of the barbarians”, Liang Wudi insisted that “Liang and Chen [kingdoms] use the sounds of Wu [Jiangsu, Zhejiang] and Chu [Hebei and Hunan].” In contrast to this, the emperors of the Northern dynasties, though they “acquired musical instruments of the Jin dynasty (317-420), abandoned them, not appreciating their use…” [Since the rulers of the north] had no music of their own, [they] borrowed songs like Boluo huige [title suggesting that it originated from the Muslim minority] (SS juan 14, zhi 9) [1973, vol.2: 313], and use the sounds of the hu [non-Chinese tribes] in their yayue” (ibid.) [p. 345]. Under the patronage of Liang Wudi, Buddhism gained a stronghold in the Southern dynasty. Liang Wudi used his own compositions to bring about the sinicization of Buddhist music, at the same time also facilitating the sinicization of the religion itself. His promotion of qingshang music also allowed the music of the Han Chinese to maintain a mainstream position for a time until the syncretic amalgamation of foreign cultures took over in the Tang dynasty.

Naturally the creation of history did not result solely from the actions of emperors. Liang Wudi alone could not have completed the sinicization process of Buddhist music. During the turbulent periods from 222 to 589 AD, eminent monks came forth in large numbers, among whom many were musically accomplished. Their contributions to Buddhist music, and thus to Chinese music, should not be overlooked. This will be discussed in the sections following (in Chime 16-17).

Abbreviations used

FYZL  Fayuan Zhuolin
GSZ   Gao Seng Zhiuan
HS    Han Shu
NJNZ  Nanhai Jigai Neifa Zhiuan
SGSZ  Song Gao Seng Zhiuan
SS    Sui Shu
T     Taisho shinshu daizokyo
XGSZ  Xu Gao Seng Zhiuan

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Tian Qing: The sinicization of Buddhist Music (Part I)


### SELECTED GLOSSARY

#### Names of people:
- Cao Zhi 曹植
- Fu Jian 荀誕
- Guan Dedong 魁德禮
- Guo Maoqian 郭茂倩
- Huirui 鎮睿
- Liang Wudi 梁武帝
- Li Guang 呂光
- Kang Senghui 康僧會
- She Moteng 葉摩騰
- Shen Yue 沈約
- Suzhipo 蘇紹婆
- Wang Xianqian 王先謙
- Xiang Da 向達
- Xiao Yan 蕭衍
- Xiao Ziliang 蕭子良
- Xu Shen 許慎
- Yijing 義淨
- Zanning 賛寧
- Zhi Qian 支謙
- Zhi Tanyue 支檀育
- Zhou Yiliang 周一良
- Zhu Falan 竺法蘭

#### Other terms:
- Bokao huige 鼎鬱回歌
- Bozhe 般遮
- Buxu 步虛
- Datang xiuyuji 大唐西域記
- Dujiang 都講
- Fanbai 梵呗
- Fayuan Zhulin 法苑珠林
- Fayue tongzi ji 法樂童子伎
- Foben xingshi 佛本行詩
- Foshuo xiangzan jing 佛說行詣經
- Fozu tongji 佛祖統紀
- Gaoseng Zhuan 高僧傳
- Gongxuan 宮懸
- Huaxia 華夏
- Hu 湖
- Mingjun bingqi 明君兵契
- Qi 契
- Qing, ping, se 清, 平, 勝
- Qingshang yue 清商樂
- Qiuqi 龜兹
- Qishuha sheng 契注聲
- Shangben yi ji 鑲應本起經
- Shengquhe 神曲
- Shenzhou 神州
Sishi'er zhang jing
Shuo wen jiezi
Su
Tianzhu
Wuge
Wuhe dahui
xiangge ge
xisheng
xuan

四十二章經
說文解字
俗
天竺
吳歌
無頤大會
相和歌
西聲
越

Ya
Yangban
Yiyuan
Yuefu shiji
Yulan penhui
Yushan
Yutian
Zazan
Zhuandu

韓
陽弁
藝苑
樂府詩集
孟郊詩會
滄山
子觀
雜賛
轉讀
‘Sōran Bushi’: the many lives of a Japanese folk song

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This paper traces a single Japanese folk song, the herring-fishing song ‘Sōran Bushi’, as it survives the loss of its original function to flourish in versions suited to a number of different contexts and musical genres. No longer a functioning work song, it can instead be found: in nearly its traditional unaccompanied form as performed by ‘preservation societies’; in professional folk song stage arrangements with traditional instruments added; in versions accompanied by Western instruments, whether jazz, rock or classical; in quotations in the enka genre of popular song as a symbol of traditional lifeways; and in yet other guises.

With modernization, the folk songs of the world have often moved out of their original contexts to provide material for other musical genres—often indeed surviving only in such new forms and contexts. In China, shan’ge ‘mountain songs’, the folk songs of Shaanxi and many others have served as grist for composers and arrangers in Chinese and Western classical modes, for pop singers such as Cui Jian, for government ideologues who felt the need to ‘improve’ the songs and their messages, for professional quasi-traditional stage arrangements, and so forth. In the English-speaking world, parallel phenomena link names as diverse as Cecil Sharp, Vaughan Williams, Pete Seeger, Bob Dylan, Steeleye Span and the Pogues. Many folk songs have made their way to other countries as well: Scotland’s ‘Auld Lang Syne’, with new lyrics, was at one time the Korean national anthem and is still one of Japan’s best-loved songs (thought to be of native origin by many Japanese).

Not all such manifestations would merit the designation ‘folk song’ in scholars’ eyes, of course, but this is not the place to rehash on-going struggles to define that term. Suffice to say that, in most countries that have adopted a version of the original German term and concept Volkslied, it has come in general usage to embrace not only the mostly anonymous, orally transmitted, amateur, continually varied songs of rural life but a whole range of phenomena derived from this starting point.1 Because the evolution of rural song into such new forms was rarely abrupt, in many cases the original designation ‘folk song’ (translated, of course) is still employed to refer to these derived products, albeit sometimes with a qualifying word such as ‘new’ or ‘classical’.

This phenomenon itself is very well known, but examining it in action in a given culture can throw into relief various social and musical trends. This paper traces the developmental path followed by one particularly well-known and widely loved folk song in Japan. From the late 19th century, Japan went from highly rural to frighteningly urban and from isolationist to international in a few dizzying decades. At the same time, the European Romantic concept of ‘folk song’ took hold and gradually spread, directly translated as min’yō. Hereafter I use the English word ‘folk song’ simply to translate that Japanese term, applying it as most Japanese would, rather than in a narrow scholarly sense.

These changes had relatively predictable impacts on local song. Rural songs often became by definition urban as the host community urbanized; many songs lost their workplace function as mechanization replaced manual labour; advances in transportation brought live performances of local songs to new audiences; the birth of the recording and broadcast industries led to familiar results; importation of foreign musical styles provided models for adaptation; and – perhaps less predictably – the professional folk singer (min’yō kashu) was born, along with other features implied by professionalization, including a formal, certificate-based teaching system. The global era of World Music has simply added impetus to most of these trends but occasionally resisted them.

In the 1970s, 44% of Japanese claimed to enjoy listening to min’yō, with 24% naming it as their favourite genre of music (Hughes in prep.: ch. 4). Only the hybrid popular song genre enka (discussed below) ranked higher; Western-style popular and classical musics lagged far behind. But taste was and is sensitive to variables such as age, residence, education and income. Today’s young urban Japanese have a vastly lower appreciation of folk song in any of its forms, but as we shall see, there are some forms that appeal to them more than others.

‘Sōran Bushi’ as a work song

‘Sōran Bushi’ is one of the few folk songs familiar to virtually all Japanese. Most can sing its chorus, perhaps one verse as well, possibly tell you that it comes from the large northern island Hokkaidō, that it is connected with herring fishing. But few people will have heard ‘Sōran Bushi’ in its original context: by 1945 at the latest, the song had been rendered redundant by mechanization.

Until then, for nearly a century herring fishing had brought thousands of migrant workers to Hokkaidō’s west coast each spring. (Information in this section derives largely from a September 1988 interview with Fujiya Kisaburō of Gokatte village, Esashi (b. 1909), who worked the boats for four years from 1925 and whose father was a crew captain, and from NHK 1980: 511ff.) A team of 25 to 30 men worked several specialized boats and nets together. The first weeks of March were spent in onshore preparation. The herring would arrive suddenly in late March or early April, coming inshore to spawn; as they would vanish in less than two weeks, labour was most intensive during this period. Processing the catch followed until mid-May. Then the workers moved on to other migrant jobs, or returned home to do farm work.

Most herring come into the nets in the evening, so the crews would go out in late afternoon and work for several hours – all night long if the nets were particularly full.

2 On Japanese folk song in general, see Koizumi and Hughes 2000, works by Hughes in the Bibliography, or the notes to recording D5. All trends and topics discussed are treated in detail in Hughes (in prep.).
Singing would continue throughout (in contrast to many Japanese ‘work songs’ actually sung during interludes in the labour).

There were specific songs for each stage of the process: rowing, hauling up the large set net, dumping the fish from this net into another one attached to a large sea-going boat, transferring the catch from that net to smaller taxi-boats for rowing to shore, beating the fish roe off the nets, and so forth. Some songs consisted primarily of vocables. Although the choice of song for each stage was largely fixed, the lyrics could be selected, altered or improvised freely. True improvisation of full verses was a rarity, however. Lyrics of the various songs were sometimes chosen or created for specific functions. Thus when the herring seemed disinclined to enter the nets, a verse would be sung which called on numerous deities for help. And bawdy and comical verses were particularly valuable for keeping men awake and alert when they had to work through the night.

‘Sōran Bushi’ was sung while transferring the herring to the smaller boats using what looked like giant butterfly nets. Each net (ōtamo) was over a metre across and much greater in depth. Two or three men would deal with a single net whose handle could be up to 6 metres long. ‘Sōran Bushi’ originated in a song for loading freight onto boats in Noheji, eastern Aomori in the north of Japan’s main island. The netting technology was developed there as well and passed to Hokkaidō in the year 1850; the migrant workers who taught Hokkaidō fishermen how to use the nets must have also introduced that song, ‘Niage Kiyari’, for the similar function of loading fish into a boat (NHK 1980: 514). Over time the melody and lyrics evolved into a distinct Hokkaidō style though with many local variants. Example 1 (p. 34) shows five verses from three different performances, by groups including members with workplace experience, which are intended to capture the style of the originals. (No recordings exist of the song being sung during the actual work.)

The name ‘Sōran Bushi’ comes from the song’s primary repeated vocable, sōran; bushi means ‘melody’ and is found in many folk song titles. An alternative title drawn from the song’s original function is ‘Okiage Ondo’, ‘rhythmic song (ondo) for lifting [the fish] out of the sea’. Both naming patterns are common in Japanese folk songs.

The metre is a steady duple. Verse structure is as follows, with minor local variation in vocables: 1) solo vocable introduction: (ē) yāren sōran sōran sōran sōran (with fewer sōran in some cases), ending with a shouted unison hai hai(-do); 2) solo meaningful verse in the most common folk poetic metre, 26 syllables in 4 lines (7-7-7-5); 3) unison vocable refrain: yasa ōn ya(n) sa (no) dokkoisho; 4) non-melodic (shouted) unison vocable refrain: ā dokkoisho dokkoisho.

As one man sang the vocable introduction, the netmen would swing the ōtamo back and forth to scoop up fish from the larger net; the steady rhythm helped them coordinate their movements. (The initial ē on the upbeat of most versions helps prepare for the start of the coordinated net-swinging (Sasaki Motoharu, pers. comm. 9/88).) During the meaningful lyrics, they might rest a bit or continue swishing. At the start of the vocable refrain, they began to haul up their load. On the final shouted dokkoisho dokkoisho, they raised the ōtamo in two final motions to dump the fish into the smaller boat, repeating the shout until the nets were empty. The workers took turns at this strenuous labour; those not working did most of the singing and kept the rhythm by pounding the gunwales with sticks. The song’s happy feeling reflects its partly celebratory nature: if there are fish to scoop, the evening’s catch has been a success.
Example 1. Verses from three versions of ‘Sōran Bushi’ by local amateurs (D6, ‘Hokkaidō II’, tracks 10, 12, 13). M1 is from Mikani, T1 and 3 from Tairo, Fl and 2 from Furuhira. Verse lyrics are omitted. Originals were sung a minor 7th to a major 9th lower.
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Fujiya recalls that once when he and other veterans sang ‘Sōran Bushi’ on national television, the announcer exclaimed, ‘Here’s the seichō [the correct, authentic tune] sung by real herring fishers. But Fujiya stressed that there was no ‘authentic tune’ because ‘everyone sang it differently’. Moreover, anyone could start the next verse, choosing from pre-existing lyrics or improvising a new text. The variations shown in Example 1 are not strictly speaking local: similar differences can occur within one group, as Fujiya confirmed. The tune can begin high or low, as can the second half of the texted melody.

Typical verses (the less bawdy ones!), starting with the best-known: ‘If you ask the seagull, “Have the herring come?”’, [he replies] “I’m just a migrating bird; ask the waves”. // Yoichi’s a fine place – come and visit sometime: flames of gold [i.e., the herring] shot up from the waves. // Tonight, for one night I sleep on a damask pillow; tomorrow, on shipboard, the waves are my pillow. // That girl is pretty, like an apple blossom. Every night I think of her more. // What seems to be there, then doesn’t, seems to be but isn’t, is the bone in a penis. // Even a Buddhist priest withdrawn from lay life, seeing the slit in a fish-gong, remembers.’

‘Sōran Bushi’ had a relatively short life as a functioning Hokkaidō work song. But just as its life did not begin in the herring fisheries, neither did it end there.

**Preservation Society versions**

Fading aspects of traditional culture are sometimes kept alive by groups of primarily older Japanese, often adopting the name Preservation Society (hōzonkai; Hughes in prep.: section 5.4). Especially since the 1950s, such societies (with or without the name) have emerged to preserve certain cherished local songs, for reasons ranging from nostalgia to education to competition with nearby villages to the desire to retain control of the song in the face of its alteration by professional singers. With the death of the manual version of the herring industry, local groups formed to preserve the entire suite of fishery songs. Thus there is the Esashi [Town] Okiage Ondo Preservation Society (to which Fujiya belonged), while Mikuni Town has the Herring Fishery Ondo Preservation Society (Nishinba Ondo Hozonkai).

Though no extant recordings were made ‘on the job’, it is clear that performances by such hozonkai are musically close to the originals, eschewing accompaniment except by rhythm sticks to replicate the gunwale-pounding. But Fujiya opined in 1988 that since only two of the fifteen members of his group had done manual fishing, ‘the feeling wasn’t there’ (kanji ga denē) in their singing. My experience with other work song examples suggests that the main changes might be a tendency to sing more quietly and at a lower pitch. Other changes relate to the new physical context, usually a stage with an audience: order of singers is fixed; the shouted dokkoisho is sung exactly two times; bawdy verses are suppressed; and the songs that precede and follow ‘Sōran Bushi’ in the sequence, though originally separated from it by time and space, are run together with it. Occasionally a group might try to imitate parts of the work movements, but this is obviously difficult given the varied range of tasks.

Scholars debate the value and challenge the authenticity of hozonkai performances, but to their members these organizations are important and self-affirming. And their versions are certainly closer to the originals, in music and ethos, than the professional ones described next.
Professional stage versions
In 1934, when a group including Fujiya’s brother rendered ‘Sōran Bushi’ at a scholarly folkloric concert in Tokyo, they were told by the other performers (from various parts of Japan) that this was the first time they had heard the song. It was soon to become much more widely known, though, in arrangements with instrumental accompaniment.

Various developments (recording industry by 1910, radio in 1926, railroads easing domestic travel, etc.) helped spawn the professional folk singer and the travelling troupes that performed what are now called sutēji (stage) min’yō. Formerly unaccompanied local songs would be sung with various combinations of traditional instruments, primarily shamisen three-stringed lute, shakuhachi end-blown bamboo flute, shinobue transverse bamboo flute, taiko stick drums and other percussion. This continues to be the primary, ‘classic’ mode of min’yō performance today.

Hokkaidō’s Ofune Shigesaburō made the first commercial recording of ‘Sōran Bushi’ around 1930 (re-issued on D2, whose notes provide the following information). Since it had no fixed title then, he called it ‘Nishin no Okiage Uta’ – ‘Herring-netting Song’. It differed from the original(s) in various ways: sung solo (which meant that the shouted hai hai was omitted, as was yasa – presumably to allow him to catch a breath), in a rather smoother voice, accompanied by shakuhachi, and with no rhythmic gunwale-pounding. He did include one bawdy final verse, in the spirit of the fisheries: ‘From between the clouds, a woman sticks out her bottom and shakes the world below with a fart.’ But from about this time on, even such mildly licentious lyrics were almost never recorded or sung in public, as professional singers strove hard to overcome their reputation as wastrels. (Talk of farts is otherwise rife in public Japan.) Ofune also kept some of the flexibility of the originals; thus on different verses he sang sōran either three or four times, a license that today’s folk singers would never take. But Ofune’s version made little impact.

Imai Kōzan (1902–83), some time after 1935, brought ‘Sōran Bushi’ to a form closer to the modern standard version (see Ex. 2a and Fujikura 2000: ch. 5). He called his version ‘Hokkai Sōran Bushi’, to specify that it was from Hokkaidō; he added the same prefix to his ‘stage’ arrangements of several other little-known local songs. As min’yō became a specific commercial genre in the 20th century, with local songs becoming known countrywide, it

Example 2a/b. Stage versions of ‘Sōran Bushi’: a) Imai’s version as shown in NHK 1980: 462, sung a major 6th lower; b) modern standard version based on author’s experience, modified slightly from D5, track 7. Verse lyrics are omitted, as are details of ornamentation.
proved necessary to add such place-name prefixes to titles to distinguish variants (and assert local 'ownership'). Thus ‘Oyadomari Okesa’ and ‘Ogi Okesa’ are different local versions of a song which within each community was just called ‘Okesa’. But in our case, later singers have reverted to the name ‘Sōran Bushi’, presumably because no similarly titled song existed outside of Hokkaidō, and whatever variation occurs within that island is not local per se.

Imai showed no desire to 'preserve' the original style or mood of ‘Sōran Bushi’, telling one friend in 1977, ‘I’m the one who brought that sea song onto dry land’ (Fujikura 2000: 187). He added accompaniment on shamisen, whose sharp plucked attack facilitated a bit of vocal syncopation that seems at odds with the song’s original rhythm-keeping function (Ex. 2a, bars 2–3).

Still, it was only after 1951, during a postwar min’yō ‘boom’, and ironically only after its original function had lapsed, that ‘Sōran Bushi’ became widely popular (Fujikura 200: 183f.). It is now so much a part of every professional’s repertoire that Dezaki Tayo II (b. 1915) sang me this verse reflecting its stage function: ‘I learned “Sōran Bushi” for fun, but now it puts rice in my mouth.’ Dezaki is a woman, which points up another difference between fishery and stage versions: women would never have been allowed on the herring boats.

Various other musical steps take us to the modern standard stage version as heard on D5, track 7 (Ex. 2b). Comparing with the fishery versions as a whole, we find today: omission of the initial ê; a preference for beginning with the high variant (though the low one still is heard) and drawing out the first syllable (which would have disrupted the rhythm on the fishing grounds); exactly five sōran; restricting syncopation to the third sōran; a female chorus, again in violation of the fisheries ethos; accompaniment on shamisen, shakuhachi, taiko and hand gong; a shamisen interlude punctuated by two shouts of ā dokko; and use of the low-starting variant of the second half of the verse (bar 13) for variety, a choice also made in stage versions of many other folk songs. (Our song may also be followed in a medley by an arrangement of ‘Iyasaka Ondo’, the song for knocking fish roe from the nets, though at the fisheries this song and task occurred at a different time and place.) Watching a stage performance today – carefully controlled, with elegant costumes and rigid etiquette – one would get no sense of the mood of the fisheries.

This standard version has become so ingrained that a student to whom I had taught one of the fishery versions was told at a Hokkaidō folk song bar that his version was simply wrong. Most Japanese today are familiar (at best) only with the highly arranged stage versions of min’yō – the ones which some observers would prefer to call koten (classical) min’yō or not min’yō at all.3

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3 Sasaki Motoharu, tradition-conscious Hokkaidō singer, recorded a track called ‘Okiage Sōran Bushi’ (D3, track 18) which antiques the stage version somewhat. It starts with unaccompanied vocables suitable for rowing, and adds a few more likely vocables between ‘Sōran Bushi’ and ‘Iyasaka Ondo’. On D16, track 1, he sings ‘Sōran Bushi’ with the initial ê, omits the syncopation on the third sōran and chooses a melodic variant closer to the fisheries than the stage. But the chorus on both CDs is sung by women as well as men, and the instrumental accompaniment is as usual.
latter is often thought to hold greater appeal for an increasingly Westernized audience. But continuing developments in Japanese musical tastes have led to further initiatives in the past twenty years. One fairly unique approach has been taken by Itō Takio, who performs under his given name only – Takio.

Born in Hokkaidō in 1950, he was exposed to folk song before he could walk, particularly via his father. In the notes to his 1988 ‘crossover’ album, Takio (D11), he explained: ‘When I was small, the first song I sang, I am told, was “Sōran Bushi”, familiar from my dad’s chorus of sōran sōran sōran ... When dad drank, the first thing to come out was this “Sōran Bushi”’ (p. 4). By 1970 Takio had begun a career as a typical min’yō singer. But as with most Japanese of his generation, he had also absorbed a taste for ‘modern’, ‘Western’ music, both pop and jazz. In the mid-1980s he organised the Takio Band to provide versions of min’yō that could draw together the disparate parts of his – and modern young Japan’s – musical world. His 1988 album came emblazoned with the following slogan: ‘exciting the blood of the [Japanese] nation/race, that’s TAKIO!’ (minzoku no chi no sawagi, kore go TAKIO da!). The nine tracks on the album are all traditional folk songs. And yet, in World Music parlance, this would be a ‘roots’ album, not a ‘traditional’ one. In his 4-page statement of philosophy, he states: ‘On this album, I have tried to confront head-on (butsukeri), without reserve, the songs I’ve hitherto been singing in the environment in which I was born (ima made umareta kankō no naka de utatte kita).’

‘Hitherto’ is a key word here: he now wants to bring these songs into new environments and interpret them afresh. In many ways Takio has hewn fairly close to traditional style on this album: he sings in a standard min’yō voice, the modes and ornaments are traditional, Western harmony is not employed, and accompaniments use the standard instruments of modern ‘stage’ min’yō. However, his singing explores dynamic extremes, including a unique near-whispering style,4 whereas a traditional min’yō is sung throughout at one dynamic level. And the arrangement is not quite as ‘standard’ as the list of instruments would suggest: the primary shamisen used are a pair of vigorous, powerful Tsugaru-jamisen, which sometimes play independently of each other; two shakuhachi sometimes also seem to improvise independently of one another, which is never done traditionally; and the percussion is primarily of the wadaiko style popularized by the group Kodō, using gigantic deep-voiced barrel drums not heard in the standard min’yō ensemble, and with an occasional Western ride cymbal. Some accompanying parts also violate traditional modality briefly. Finally, some tracks also employ electronic drum-pads or keyboards. The result is a thickening of texture and volume, an extension of the range, a couple of unusual rhythms in the accompaniment, overall a hard-driving, up-tempo sound – but in the final analysis no major deviation from the timbres and forms of traditional folk song.

All of this is true of his 1988 version of ‘Sōran Bushi’. However, he does tamper further in various ways. He begins very slowly, quietly, almost wistfully, for several minutes, somehow making me think of his father relaxing with his sake in the bath. He also sings much of the melody on a single note – unheard-of in traditional min’yō. Then we suddenly explode into a hard-driving, wailing version that fully evokes the chaos and energy of the herring fisheries. A particularly clever addition is a long section of yell-and-response between Takio and his chorus: a dokkoisho dokkoisho (a dokkoisho dokkoisho) a sōran sōran (sōran sōran), repeated ad infinitum.

4 His 1987 album Takio Jinc (CBS Sony 32DHS44) had him singing throughout in a remarkably expressive near-whisper, accompanied solely by sparse jazz piano and percussion.
Over the years, ‘Sōran Bushi’ has become Takio’s only ‘hit’. In 1997, on Ondo (D7; also on D13), he renamed it ‘Takio’s Sōran Bushi’. To his 1988 ensemble he now added an entire rock band, and he dropped the long, slow introductory section. The lyrics contain innovations relating to this version’s intended dance function and to the singer himself. (Likewise, on track 7, ‘Yagi Bushi’, he replaced the traditional lyrics with the tale of his own career: childhood in a snowy Hokkaidō fishing village, to Tokyo in pursuit of a folk song career, success followed by disillusionment with the professional min’yō world.)

In 1998–9 many of my professional min’yō friends felt that Takio’s impact on the min’yō world had been minimal, with few people being drawn into (or away from) the world of folk song through his recordings. This may be true. When I took one popular music scholar on his first-ever visit to a min’yō sakaba – a bar/restaurant where customers and staff perform live ‘stage’ min’yō – he announced to the assembled aficionados that he knew min’yō only through his beloved Takio CDs. This priming, as my friends had predicted, did not trigger a sudden lust for traditional min’yō upon this exposure to live neo-traditional performance. It is fair to say that Takio’s arrangements suit Takio’s fans. In major Japanese record stores, his CDs are as likely to appear in the World Music section as the min’yō one. Indeed, ‘Takio’s Sōran Bushi’ is the only Japanese min’yō included on the CD The Rough Guide to the music of Japan (D13). The distance from min’yō to World Music is still considerable in Japan.

Folk-rock versions

This distance is reflected, in a way, in the two different equivalents of the English term ‘folk song’ in Japanese: min’yō and fōku songu. The ‘folk boom’ of the 1950s and after in the United States impacted on Japan as well, generating the genre called fōku songu. At first this involved singing in English to the accompaniment of guitars, banjos and so forth, but eventually new songs were written in Japanese but in a similar, Western style. Thus the English term ‘folk song’ is rendered by both the direct translation min’yō, referring to traditional Japanese song and its spin-offs, and the transliterated loan word fōku songu to indicate modern Western-style folk song (Hughes in prep.: section 1.7). Surprisingly, these two genres have had remarkably little impact on one another: they tend to appeal to people from very different backgrounds. But the occasional min’yō manages to attract the interest of the fōku crowd.

Japan’s rock and folk musicians, generally those of the ‘alternative’ or ‘indie’ persuasion, may draw on folk material for a variety of reasons: a belated search for their lost Japanese identity; novelty; ‘orientalism’; the impact of the World Music phenomenon and outside interest, often related to their self-perception as members of the global community. (The more dominant teen-oriented pop tradition ignores min’yō altogether.)

Kina Shōkichi (b. 1948; known in the West as Shoukichi Kina) is from Okinawa, Japan’s southernmost prefecture, whose islands harbour a culture and a music tradition related to but distinct from that of the main islands to the north. Son of a traditional Okinawan min’yō performer, from the 1970s he gained fame among younger Okinawans for his hippie life style and his adding of Western-style rock accompaniment to Okinawan-style songs. His band, Champloose, combines rock instruments with the Okinawan ‘national instrument’, the sanshin lute (ancestor of the shamisen).

Many of his songs express his keen empathy with the occasional oppression and prejudice suffered by the Okinawans and Japan’s other cultural minorities, such as the
indigenous Ainu to the far north or the Korean immigrants of the early 20th century; he also shares musical and political platforms with Tibetans, Native Americans, Taiwanese aborigines and others.

Kina’s version of ‘Sōran Bushi’ first appeared on the 1993 album Rainbow Movement (D8; re-issued on D12). He kept the original melody (the version with the low-pitch beginning) but re-fashioned the lyrics into a protest song against the modern, mono-ethnic image of Japan. His accompaniment is a typical rock band but including the sanshin.

His choice of this particular song was doubtless triggered by various factors: it is both well known and vigorous; it comes from Hokkaidō, home of the Ainu; and there is a felicitous homophony between its title and a word meaning ‘chaos’. Writing the title with the characters for the latter, he makes this the ‘Chaos Song’.

The lyrics as printed show the last sōran of the chorus as changing to sođan, ‘consult, converse, agree’; the two words are virtually homophonous in Okinawa where r and d are often not distinguished. By adding a verb to the end of the chorus, he converted its meaning to a plea for worldwide harmony: ‘Let’s talk/agree’.5

All but a few words are in standard Japanese. Of numerous verses recorded or performed by Kina, these recur most often:

(chorus:) yaren sōran sōran sōran let’s talk together [sođan]

1. Ainu to the north, Okinawa to the south – well, where’s the dead centre?
   Yasa ên yâ, it’s worthless rubbish. [pun on name of ancient Korean state of Paekche]

2. China to the west, America to the east – where is Japan going?
   Yasa ên yâ, I haven’t got a clue ...

3. Yayoi Ondo, Jōmon Ondo – well, let’s dance together in good spirits ! ...

Yayoi and Jōmon (verse 3) are two early archaeological cultures in Japan. He explained this verse (pers. comm. 9/00) as reflecting his belief that all the peoples of the Japanese islands today are united in these early cultures. Thus the song is a plea for mutual understanding within Japan leading to a secure sense of identity. The pun in verse 1 recognizes that Korea and Japan were closely linked in the days of the Paekche state; this reads as a plea for mutual tolerance and understanding today as well.

These messages have nothing to do with the original ‘Sōran Bushi’; a felicitous pun on the title, plus a love for the song’s driving rhythm and energy, were enough to trigger Kina’s creativity. The song’s message and rock arrangement has garnered it followers elsewhere in Japan’s leftist rock community, for example the Osaka band Soul Flower Union (D9).

‘Sōran Bushi’ also caught the attention of Japan’s ’god of folk’, Okabayashi Nobuyasu (b.1946), a Western-style guitar-plucking folk singer.6 On overseas concert tours in the mid-1980s, he was challenged by members of the Korean neo-traditional percussion ensemble Samulsori and various musicians in England to produce something more Japanese. He decided the answer must lie in min ’yō, which had never interested him until then.

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5 Recording D9 has a stirring rendition by the socially conscious Osaka-based rock-cum-folk band Soul Flower Union, who also perform Ainu, Korean and even Irish revolutionary songs.

He thought of two widely-known work songs that should brim with the requisite energy: ‘Sōran Bushi’ and the boat-rowing song ‘Saitara Bushi’. But mechanization meant that the original work rhythms survived, barely, only in versions by preservation societies, which were however ‘old-fashioned’ (mukashi no mon): he was seeking the living rhythms of today’s daily life. He rejected the idea of singing ‘Sōran Bushi’ as it was: since it is not used now for catching herring, ‘we’ (bokutachi) are unable to ‘put our hearts’ (kokoro o komete) into singing or dancing such music.

So he decided to try to compose ‘music for now’ (ima no ongaku) using tradition as a base. He created a style of fōku songu he called ‘En’yadotto’ after the vocable of ‘Saitara Bushi’ originally chanted by the rowers. These were strongly rhythmic folk-rock tunes which often had a chorus of min’yō-like vocables. But he never quoted passages of music or text directly from existing min’yō. To me, it is difficult to see how the rhythms of his own songs are linked to ‘today’s daily life’ any more than are those of ‘Sōran Bushi’, but never mind. To him, ‘Sōran Bushi’ was a dead song.

**Enka versions**

Unlike Western folk songs in general, each Japanese min’yō tends to be very closely identified with its home community, its furusato. As noted above, this is usually expressed by using a place name as the first word of the title. It is ironic that, although it is among the minority of well-known min’yō that do not so identify their homes, ‘Sōran Bushi’ is nonetheless particularly strongly linked with Hokkaidō in the popular mind, and often with the lonely, frontier image that adheres to that island. This makes it suitable for referencing in the popular song genre enka, which in many ways parallels early Country and Western: songs of and for urban migrants lonely in the big city, songs of saké, women, Mother, loneliness, homesickness, travelling on. Many enka take advantage of various min’yō to evoke particular places and the moods associated with them.

Here are only three of the many examples of enka that reference ‘Sōran Bushi’. These are sung as solos throughout (as standard in enka), accompanied by a Western dance band.

**‘Sōran Wataridori’ (‘Sōran Migratory Bird’)**

(ca. 1965; lyrics: Ishimoto Miyuki; music: Endō Minoru)

1. I’ve crossed the Tsugaru Straits,
   An orphaned swallow without a roost.
   I love Esashi, I love the herring fisheries;
   When the shumisen plays, I join in with feeling:
   CH.: Yōren sōran sōran sōran, singing ‘Sōran’; oh, I’m a migrating bird.

2. Although I miss my home harbour,
   My dreams can’t reach that far, to the northern skies.
   I hide my suffering behind a winsome smile.
   How many mountains and rivers have I crossed in this world? (CH.)

Here ‘Sōran Bushi’ evokes and symbolizes the singer’s beloved, distant home, Hokkaidō, which is not actually mentioned. The first line of the chorus is an abbreviated version of the low-starting variant of the original melody. The song is sung in the ‘pentatonic major’ (see Hughes 1991), a version of the traditional yō mode (in which ‘Sōran Bushi’ and a majority

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7 On enka, see Fujie 2000 and her bibliography.
of min'yō are sung) with the tonic re-positioned to allow Western-style major harmonization. The choice of a major tonality indicates that the protagonist is resigned to, indeed happily wedded to, his endless travels and his homesickness; the pentatonicism is one of the neo-traditional features (along with vocal ornamentation and others) that help enka serve as a bridge between past and present, city and country.

'Sōran Jingi' (‘Sōran Self-Introduction’)
(1964; lyrics: Handa Kōkichi; music: Narita Takeo)

1. I was born in Hokkaidō,
   Famous as the home of ‘Sōran Bushi’,
   Strolling past the bars on the back streets,
   In this man’s self-introduction are imbued
   Pride and stubbornness, hard work and suffering...

3. I was born and raised in the fisheries,
   Salt spray in my face, among the silver scales of the herring.
   That woman I loved, surely she won’t have waited for me—
   Rumour has it she’s married another man.
   Right, I’ll forget her and get on with my life.

Kitajima Saburō’s original version of ‘Sōran Jingi’ from 1964–5 is re-issued on recording D4. Notice that Hokkaidō is made famous only by ‘Sōran Bushi’, recalling again the importance of folk songs in symbolizing locality. ‘Sōran Bushi’ also has the ability to evoke instantly the herring fisheries and the migrant workers who find their way to them, then vanish to who knows where. One can imagine the protagonist having to leave his Hokkaidō home as the fisheries collapsed, to seek work elsewhere. He can’t go home to his furusato: surely his woman hasn’t waited for him. Those who could not find work might fall into gambling or join a yakuza gang in desperation. A jingi is a stylized self-introduction, a personal history which one gambler or yakuza performs before another on first meeting. Unlike the previous song, this one does not quote the melody of the original folk song. But it too uses the pentatonic major, and for similar reasons: ‘pride and stubbornness’ require a macho heartiness (hence the major mode) in the face of suffering. Although Kitajima does include a few min’yō in his repertoire, there is no trace of folk song melody or style in his performance of this song.

'Sōran Koiuta' (‘Sōran Love Song’)
(1996; lyrics: Sakai Tomoo; music: Yamaguchi Hiroshi)

1. The coastal train line stretches northward;
   Through the train’s window, the fishing fires [to attract fish for night fishing],
   Distant, sad, along the way;
   A face is reflected [in the window], then is gone.
   As if to cut off the lingering flame of love,
   Breaking the waves, heard from afar:
   Yuren sōrun yaren sōrun sōrun,
   The seagull’s lonely journey.

2. The lonely steam whistle pierces my body,
   At the desolate harbour I step down from the train.
   Today I’ll stroll along the seashore
   And let the wind blow me clean.
   Nameless fishing boats here and there,
Chasing a vanished past, a destiny:
Yaren sōran yaren sōran sōran,
The seagull’s tearful journey.

‘Sōran Koiuta’ (D10) quotes the lyrics to the chorus of ‘Sōran Bushi’, but not the melody, nor is the song itself directly referred to, nor even any specific places. The seagull recalls the most famous verse of ‘Sōran Bushi’ (see above). This elusive, impressionistic lyric uses its min’yō connection to call up certain motifs: nostalgia for fading rural lifeways, the furusato — anyone’s furusato — as a comforting place to go to nurse a broken heart. The singer who popularized this song, Kagawa Noriko, is also a skilled min’yō singer.

Thus a well-known folk song can trigger images of place or mood via even the slightest reference: the title, a snatch of melody, a few words of the chorus. ‘Sōran Bushi’ is among the most frequent of many min’yō that are evoked in enka.

The Yosakoi Sōran Festival
If a min’yō can take us instantly to a particular furusato, then what are we to make of ‘Yosakoi Sōran Rock’ by the pop trio Konatsu & Hyottoko? ‘Yosakoi Bushi’ is a well-known folk song from Kōchi Prefecture on the island of Shikoku in western Japan, far from Hokkaidō. How has it got mixed up with ‘Sōran Bushi’?

Since the 1980s Kōchi has held a Yosakoi Festival (Matsuri) each August, whose main feature is the competition among hundreds of teams of young dancers. One of the few rules is that all dancers must carry the wooden clappers called naruko used in the local folk dance ‘Yosakoi Naruko Odori’; otherwise each team is free to create its own costumes, choreography and music.

The event captures the liberation and license of earlier matsuri, often toned down in modern versions. This was so appealing to young Japan that over 40 clones have sprung up around the country. In June 1993 the Yosakoi Sōran Matsuri began in Sapporo, Hokkaidō’s main city.8 The idea came from a few local students, who hit upon ‘Sōran Bushi’ as the most instantly identifiable musical symbol of Hokkaidō. By 2000, 380 teams and 38,000 performers were taking part, including many from outside Hokkaidō and guest teams from the Yosakoi Festival. The main rule here is that each team’s music must include the vocable sōran. At the festival’s end, professional folk singers perform the standard ‘Sōran Bushi’.

Many teams devise their own musical accompaniments, which tend to feature a synthesized disco feel, with plenty of min’yō-like shouts from the dancers (ten examples on recording D15). Other teams will choose from suitable pre-existing recordings, which is where Konatsu & Hyottoko come in. In 1997 the trio released their CD Utaeru! Odor eru! Min’yō rokk! (You can sing! You can dance! Min’yō rock!) (D14), containing rock versions of ten min’yō suitable for lively dancing. Two tracks — ‘Yosakoi Sōran Rock’ and ‘Konatsu’s Sōran Bushi’ — are versions of our song. A synthesizer provides imitations of Tsugaru-jamisen, shinobue bamboo flute and Japanese drums, as well as the usual disco sound. Konatsu sings lead, and the two lads who are Hyottoko act as her chorus, adding simple harmonies at times. (The group appeared as guests at the 1998 festival.)

Musically, both songs are clearly derived from Takio’s arrangement. His distinctive shouted call-and-response chorus is repeated frequently in both: dokkoisho dokkoisho (dokkoisho dokkoisho) sōran sōran (sōran sōran). Otherwise, both are melodically and

8 Details from Mori 1999 and from Fukazawa Yuri, pers. comm. 12/99.
structurally identical to the stage version that Takio also followed, with the usual vocables at both ends of each verse: yāren sōran etc. But Konatsu has written new lyrics for the two songs. ‘Yosakoi Sōran Rock’, as its name reveals, is specifically linked to the Festival, and its lyrics touch all the key images that make this so popular with young Japanese: festival, youth, groups of friends, vigour. An injection of English – ‘dance to dance dance’ [sic] – adds to the attraction for today’s MTV generation. But we are also reminded that ‘It’s a northern festival’: place still has some residual importance to the young folks who flock to Sapporo from far and wide.

1. Come on, rise up for ‘Yosakoi Sōran’,
   It’s a northern festival, [in English:] dance to dance dance.

2. Everyone get together, ‘Yosakoi Sōran’,
   Bursting with youth, [in English:] dance dance dance dance.

3. Particularly when times are tough, ‘Yosakoi Sōran’,
   With your friends, [in English:] dance to dance dance.

4. Everyone keep trying, ‘Yosakoi Sōran’,
   With sweat and skill, [in English:] dance dance dance dance.

‘Konatsu no Sōran Bushi’, though musically nearly identical, is more on a par with the other tracks on the album in that it is not specifically linked to any event, but suitable for frenetic dancing by youth craving a blend of their Japanese and Western identities. The lyrics mix two traditional verses with two new but traditional-flavoured ones.

So does this festival represent a breakdown of regional identity, merging Kōchi and Hokkaidō with gay abandon, or a musical assertion of it through the requirement of the inclusion of part of ‘Sōran Bushi’? Or is it simply post-modern Japan at full speed? Space does not allow further analysis. But these days most sizeable urban-based local festivals include elements from all over: even Iwate’s Michinoku Geinō Matsuri (Northern Japan Performing Arts Festival), founded in the 1970s as a gathering of traditional folk dance groups from all over northern Japan, has been starting its opening parade with a Tokyo-based Brazilian samba team.

Conclusion
As one of Japan’s best-known folk songs, ‘Sōran Bushi’ will continue to be heard in various forms, appealing to Japanese from a wide spectrum of musical and social backgrounds who then often bend it to their musical will.

In Okinawa, at the opposite end of Japan, ‘Sōran Bushi’ is well known and appreciated not only in Kina Shōkichi’s ‘chaos’ version but more or less in its original guise. The Ayame Band, one of the many groups now combining Okinawan folk song style with Western rock, have included our song on a 1994 CD (D1), in an unjustified medley with another familiar Japanese folk song, ‘Kiso Bushi’. (The rest of the album is totally Okinawan in lyrics content.) They seem to have taken as their model the standard stage version rather than either Kina’s or Takio’s re-workings or the Hozonkai style. The rock-band accompaniment, otherwise reminiscent of The Doors, includes also the Okinawan sanshin lute as well as the distinctive Okinawan kakegoe shouts (ha! ha! ...). There is some attempt, it appears, to sing in a mainland folk vocal style rather than an Okinawan one.
Western-style classical composers may also draw on it as fodder for inspiration. Less creatively, often the standard stage version is arranged to be played by a Western-style orchestra or concert band, with or without a singer, possibly with a traditional instrument or two thrown in; Western-style harmonies will be added. A relatively imaginative version is ‘Sōran Rhumba’, a jaunty piece from around 1950 by the King [Records] Orchestra (78rpm, King 332). The melody is passed from instrument to instrument. Finally a vocal chorus adds the first line of the original song, in two-part harmony, with one traditional-sounding ornament thrown in, and with the word yären replaced by yet another sōran. No further lyrics are attempted. Modulation is rife. Jazz renditions of min’yō are not uncommon.

There are those in Japan who claim that all the ‘real’ min’yō — by which they often mean the work songs in particular — are dead, that a Hozonkai or professional stage or rock or jazz performance is not a folk song in any meaningful sense. But such people are in the minority. In any case, ‘Sōran Bushi’ has shown an impressive ability to adapt or be adapted to any Japanese taste and to move with the changes in Japanese culture. From functioning work song, to preserved one, to stage min’yō, to symbol of traditional lifeways when quoted in popular song, to disco favourite — whatever we call it, whatever guises it takes, let’s finish on an upbeat note: ‘Sōran Bushi’ will never die.⁹

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⁹ Aside from those named above, I owe special thanks to Nagai Yoshikazu, Gerry McGoldrick and Flurina Simeon. The Japan Foundation funded my fieldwork in Hokkaidō in 1988 and elsewhere in 2000, and the Japan Foundation Endowment Committee supported relevant fieldwork in 1999.


**DISCOGRAPHY**


### SELECTED GLOSSARY

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FROM SHAMANIC RITUAL TO KARAOKE:

The (trans)migrations of a Chinese folksong

Rachel Harris
(School for Oriental and African Studies, London)

This paper traces the successive incarnations of a ritual song from Çabçal in Xinjiang in twentieth century China. At one point in the past it featured in spectacular shamanic exorcism ceremonies of the Sibe-Manchu. Shamanism did not completely die out in Çabçal, and villagers can still remember the ritual music of their youth, but the song is no longer performed in a shamanic context. It embarked on a new career as a Maoist propaganda song during the Cultural Revolution, and eventually re-emerged as a Chinese disco tune (in praise of Mao) in the early 1990s. How did these changes come about? The author offers an account of the song’s migrations and reflects on relationships between folk music, state and economy in Chinese culture.

In the introduction to his book on the popular music of Jewish immigrants in America, Mark Slobin recounts a Yiddish story ‘A gilgul fun a nign’, The (trans)migrations of a song. The story traces the life-cycle of a ritual song, which is successively reincarnated as a dance tune, a beggar’s chant, and finally re-sacralised by a travelling holy man (Slobin 1996:1-2). In this paper I have borrowed the concept of musical migrations or transmigrations in order to trace the successive incarnations of a ritual song from Xinjiang as it moves across time and space within twentieth century China. Through an account of the migrations of this song I raise issues of changing musical contexts and audiences in China, and the relationship between folk music, the Chinese state and the market economy.

The Sibe-Manchu
The Sibe-Manchu1 are descendents of a Qing dynasty military garrison, Manchu bannermen who in 1684 made a long three-year march from Northeast China across today’s Mongolia to the newly pacified ‘Western Regions’ (xiyu), today’s Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. They were one of a number of military units dispatched by the Qing to maintain imperial control over the Mongol and Turkic peoples of the region after the defeat of the Öirat Zunghar federation. The Sibe garrison and their families settled on the banks of the Ili river

1 The scholars of Manchu literature, Giovanni Stary (1985, 1992) and Tatjana Pang (1992, 1993, 1994) use the name Sibe-Manchu (He & Tong 1995). It is a terminology about which some Sibe intellectuals have expressed reservations. Hereafter I have followed indigenous scholars in using the simpler form Sibe (pronounced roughly ‘shivay’) which is also romanised as Xibo (from the Mandarin Xibozh) or Siibo.
near the present border with Kazakhstan, and built eight fortified villages which today are recognised as the Sibe Autonomous County of Çabçal.

The Sibe maintained their military role throughout the Qing dynasty (1644-1912). They were active in campaigns in southern Xinjiang in the nineteenth century, and were prominent in military and governmental roles in Xinjiang well into the twentieth century. They nurtured a conservative reputation for loyalty to the empire and adherence to Confucian values. The Sibe are recognised under the People’s Republic of China as a distinct ethnic minority nationality living in the Northeast and in Xinjiang. Whereas the more numerous Sibe of the Northeast have largely assimilated into the wider Han Chinese-dominated culture of that region, the Sibe of Xinjiang have maintained a discrete identity and culture. The Sibe villages in Xinjiang are known as the last place in China which retain a form of Manchu as a living language. Sibe musical traditions – folksong genres, narrative songs, folk opera – are still practised in the villages, at least among the older generation. They are prized as the remnants of the ancient culture of the Sibe, brought with them from the northeast. In fact Sibe music culture, like their ritual practice, is richly syncretic and shows the influence of the Mongol, Turkic, Hui and Han Chinese peoples who surround them in Xinjiang.

Ritual life in Çabçal
Village life in Çabçal prior to liberation was one of multiple ritual choices. A variety of overlapping belief systems co-existed and competed, represented by numerous ritual
practitioners with separate but overlapping functions. Rituals in Çabçal can be broadly divided into three types: temple rituals, public outdoor rituals, and home rituals. A Lama Buddhist temple and monastery served the whole community, and conducted the calendric rituals of Lama Buddhism common to Inner Mongolia and Northern China as well as some unique local rituals. Guan Gong temples in every village promoted this cult of loyalty and empire and offered protection in battle. Each village also held a temple to Mafumama, the spirit who gave protection against smallpox. Public outdoor rituals of exorcism or expulsion were conducted by shamanic ritualists and by Lama Buddhist monks. These spectacular public rituals were an important part of communal life in the villages. The more intimate and numerous home rituals included those conducted within the family, primarily worship of the family ancestors at an ancestral altar; funeral rituals presided over by Lama Buddhist monks, and healing rituals conducted by shamanic ritual specialists.

Of the shamanic ritualists, saman were the most prestigious; their skills were validated in a spectacular initiation ceremony involving ascent of a knife ladder, and their healing rituals involved what is usually termed possession trance, where the saman incorporated a familiar spirit into his or her body in the course of ritual drumming and dancing. In addition to the saman, a number of other named shamanic practitioners were active in Çabçal before Liberation. They were the elcin who dealt with disease amongst children, mainly measles and smallpox, and officiated at the rituals of the Mafumama temples; the dooci who exorcised malign spirits (ibagani); and the siyangtiun who dealt with minor children’s illnesses which were understood as soul-loss. All these shamanic ritual specialists had access to ancestral spirits whom they called down by means of song, but unlike the saman, they did not resort to trance in their healing rituals.

The song with which this paper is concerned starts its journey, for my purposes, within the public, spectacular rituals of the dooci, as they were practised before liberation. This is my starting point because my knowledge of the song’s migrations begins with Sibe villagers’ memories of the rituals of their youth. This is not to suggest that the song was then rooted in some timeless, static tradition (as is often assumed of shamanic ritual). In fact dooci songs bear many points of resemblance to the ritual songs of the Eleuth Mongols of Xinjiang, and may well be the comparatively recent fruit of cultural contact between these peoples.

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Dooci rituals and songs

The name dooci has been thought to be derived from the Han Chinese word dou, meaning 'to fight, struggle' and also linked with the Mongol word duu, meaning 'song' (Qi 1997). The ibagan whom the dooci fought were outsider spirits, thought to dwell in the mountains and marshes outside the village, and they caused what psychiatrists might term hysterical or nervous disorders. Ibagan possesses were mainly women while the dooci was male. Through his songs he called on ancestral spirits to exorcise the ibagan. The Sibe musicologist Tacintai described for me a dooci ritual which he attended in his youth:

'I saw one dooci ritual in our village when I was young. Everyone had come out to see the fun. There was a great crowd in their family courtyard, standing around a cart which was lying on its side. The cart had big wheels, and sitting on the top wheel there were ten young men, all playing the mokna [Jew's harp]. That was the small circle, and around it was the big circle of the crowd. In between there was a space, where the dooci and the madwoman were. The dooci had a whip, he cracked it on the ground and the woman began to run around the cart. Her hair was loose and she was wearing a long loose gown. Her arms were flapping up and down as she ran, she looked completely crazy. Then the dooci sang Uyala’iye, the boys on the wheel and everyone in the crowd sang the refrains.'

Fig. 1 Uyala’iye. Recorded by Zhong Lu, singer unknown. Source: Music Research Institute archive recordings (1959), J = 114.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{dooci:} & \quad \text{I have taken on this task} \\
& \quad \text{I have come to this place} \\
& \quad \text{There are the mountains} \\
& \quad \text{I am going to send you there} \\
\text{alim gai fie iye} & \quad \text{dorsh hunga bie iye} \\
\text{dorsh changi da iye} & \quad \text{i shiep ke iyai}
\end{align*}
\]

I am going to tie you up and throw you in a lake
I have learnt the ancient wisdom of Zhuge Liang
I know all the new ways of the dooci for fighting bad spirits
Sing loudly, everyone, and I will invite you to eat at a Hui restaurant
Stupid wicked spirit! I will fight you with the help of my brothers
Sorghum grows tall in the sunlight
I defeat evil spirits by the power of my ritual objects
I plait a hempen rope into a whip to beat the bad spirit away
At Jiamenguan I cured the general’s wife
As she sat on silken cushions
In Suyanguan I cured the princess Subuwa³
She sat upon a silken eiderdown
You, I fight on a bare kang [brick bed]

³ Subject of a popular Sibe ballad; Subuwa was taken as wife by a Turki ruler in the 1870s and intervened with him to protect the Sibe villagers (See Harris 1998 for a fuller account).
Another description of a *dooci* ritual was recorded by the Russian observer N. Krotkov, who made a study of Sibe culture at the end of the nineteenth century:

After usual prayers and chanting, the shaman orders that a wheel from a carriage be placed in the middle of the yard of the house where the sick woman lives, at a fixed time of night. The relatives of the patient and spectators, who in this case are numerous, stand around the wheel at a certain distance. The sick person is made to go around the wheel. She is followed by a man called *dooci*, who is holding a whip. Using phrases learned from the shaman and his own invented words which do not exist in the Manchu vocabulary, the *dooci* improvises poetry incomprehensible to the people. According to the Sibe, its aim is 'to shame the woman and humiliate the demons'. The spectators like the words of the *dooci* very much. They listen to them eagerly, and when the *dooci* pauses to take breath, they pick up where he left off and loudly shout out his last words. After making several circles around the wheel, the *dooci* beats the air with a whip, and the frightened woman starts running. Running into the people, who do not let her get away, she is forced to run around the wheel. After reciting new verses, the *dooci* raises his whip, and once again the sick woman runs away from him. When she falls down, she is raised up and again forced to go around the wheel. This is repeated several times. If during the first night it is not possible to cure the sick woman from the 'devil's illness', then the above-described methods of expelling the evil spirit are repeated for several nights. (Krotkov 1912:131-132, translated in Pang 1993)

**Wildness and control**

The ritual was imbued with violence; its physical performance expressed the twin themes of wildness and control. Uncooperative possessee might refuse to run, and might even attack the circle of onlookers. They were termed 'hard', and might be beaten until blood flowed with a thorn bush or long hemp whip. Villagers described *ibagan* victims as possessed of unnatural strength, able to break iron chains. Some recounted cases when the possessee was beaten to death. The *ibagan* is simultaneously attacked by the whip, by the *dooci*'s words and by the sound of the *mokna* which is considered to be fearsome to invading spirits. The insistent thrumming of the *mokna* and the threat of the whip act physically on the possessee, reducing her to a state of nervous tension and exhaustion. She tries to escape, the outsider spirit attempts to flee the circle, but she is pushed back and forced to run inside the circle until physically exhausted. The *dooci* and the victim are literally contained within the circle of the village clan and surrounded by its power whose communal power is audibly expressed by the refrains of the ritual songs.

In *dooci* rituals everyone present sings these refrains, which consist of 'vocables' or words whose meaning is unknown, joining their voices to that of the shaman.4 Mircea Eliade notes that such refrains are commonly found in Altaic shamanic songs, often in the form of mimicry of animal cries. He suggests that they represent a debased form of shamanic secret language used to communicate with the spirits (Eliade 1964). Amongst the Sibe, these vocables are invested with power and meaning, drawing the strength of the audience into the ritual, combining the power of the group behind the shaman through musical sound, blurring the boundaries between ritual participant and audience. The refrains form an audible bond, not only between the clan members present at the ritual, but also stretching back vertically through time to link the living with the ancestors who are called down through the shaman’s

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4 These refrains are usually termed by Chinese scholars ‘padding syllables’ (*chenzi*). Western scholars have tended to refer to such non-lexical song texts as ‘meaningless words’, reflecting the Western expectation of lexical meaning in song texts. Bonnie Wade has argued in favour of the term ‘vocables’ pointing out that they are a common feature of non-Western musics, especially Indian music, and carry meanings other than directly lexical: auspicious, representation of other sounds, etc. (Wade 1993:8).
song to aid in the exorcism.\(^5\) The songs of dooci rituals provide a counter-theme to the physical violence of the rituals. The Sibe distinguish between fierce songs that attack the ibagan, and beautiful pleading songs that call down the ancestral spirits (Tacintai 1996:4). The melodies are widely considered to be the 'best' of Sibe music, the most beautiful and expressive, and many texts and melodies have been preserved by Sibe scholars (He, Tong & Tong 1995; Tacintai 1996). They are the most popular among older villagers who remember the rituals of the 1930s and 1940s, and who still re-sing the songs as they tell stories about the famous shamans of this period.

The birth of a revolutionary shaman song
After Liberation shamanic rituals were officially discouraged as representative of the 'old society'. Shamanic rituals as practised among the Sibe were counted by the Communist party amongst the non-organised folk religious practices, known collectively as 'feudal superstition' (fengjian mixin). As Gates and Weller argue, such practices have historically been considered a potential counter-hegemonic threat to the rule of the Chinese state (Gates & Weller 1987:14-5). The Communist party has been well aware of the historical tendency in China for religious cults to lie at the heart of large-scale rebellions, and its continuing mistrust is well demonstrated by the recent troubles of the Falungong movement. While healing rituals in Çabgal continued to some extent behind locked doors after 1949, the spectacular public rituals of the saman, elcin and dooci were quickly discontinued. Nonetheless, the Sibe villagers’ attachment to their ritual songs remained. Older villagers remember that the songs were sung during labour in the fields in the 1950s, and at the height of the Cultural Revolution one of the dooci melodies was taken out of the closet, dusted down and transformed into a revolutionary folksong in praise of Chairman Mao.

As I belatedly realised, this song Rejoice in Chairman Mao’s Kindness Throughout the Ages (Shishi Daidai Mingji Mao Zhuxide Enqing) was my first introduction to Sibe music in 1991, several years before I even became aware of the existence of the Sibe nationality. The writer of its lyrics, the Sibe intellectual Shetukun, now a lecturer in Chinese literature at Gulja (Yining) College, told me about its inception in the year 1971:

Some people started to say, 'All the other minorities have their own revolutionary song, why not us? Why should we listen to their songs over our loudspeakers? Our cultural level is high!’ So I was given the job. It took a year and a half ... it was difficult ..., all the words praising Mao had been pretty much used up.

Another Sibe intellectual Zhu Hengqian took these words, and set them to a worked version of the dooci melody Uyala’iye. To make the tune a more suitable vehicle for the revolutionary message, and candidate for the national stage, its rhythm was regularised, squeezing the original irregular pattern of stresses into a four-square beat. The melody was adapted to comply with the Western major scale and Western-style harmonisation, complete with final perfect cadence. An extra section was added, using melodic material from the original transposed up a fifth, a device typical of other types of Sibe folksong melody. An instrumental climax gives a suitably rousing revolutionary ending to the song.

\(^5\) Caroline Humphrey has noted that in Daur shamanic rituals the refrains (iro) of vocabularies have an active function: they are sung by all present and are considered ‘essential to raise the shaman’s soul energy’ (Humphrey 1996:234). In contemporary Uyghur shamanic exorcism rituals, all present at the ritual sing in chorus accompanied by several drummers (Lang 1994:265).
Fig. 2 Rejoice in Chairman Mao’s Kindness (Shishi Daidai Mingji Mao Zhuxide Enqing). Lyrics by Shetaken. J = 151. (Source: Tacintai 1984:23).

Who broke our chains? Who saved us from the flames?
Who led us through happiness pass?
The sun in the sky, light in our hearts,
Chairman Mao, the Communist Party.

Why are the grassland flowers so red?
Why are the faces of the liberated Sibe people wreathed with smiles?
The rain moistens the soil, the sun lights up the earth,
The great thoughts of Chairman Mao illumine our hearts.

These strategies of reworking and ordering (jiagong zhengli) folk melody are familiar from Isobel Wong’s discussion of the treatment of folksongs by cultural workers in the Communist base at Yan’an (Wong 1984). Zhu Hengqian combines a typically Western framework with the incorporation of types of indigenous treatment of melody drawn from other parts of the Sibe musical tradition. No strangers to this kind of work, Sibe intellectuals have in fact been reworking folk melodies to produce new political or educational songs since the 1930s when they first came into contact with modern reformist trends, which came to Çabçal both from central China and from the neighbouring Soviet Union.

Invoking the efficacy of Chairman Mao
Rejoice in Chairman Mao’s Kindness was approved by the Çabçal Cultural Committee, and it was handed over to the Çabçal cultural troupe for rehearsal. Apparently the ‘feudal’ associations of its former context did not cling to this doocí melody in its new incarnation. Rejoice in Chairman Mao’s Kindness was subsequently published in 1973 by Zhandi Xin’ge

6 Shetaken employs the traditional Sibe poetic device of parallel metaphors. Most clearly seen in the last couplet of this song, it is a device commonly used in contemporary improvised folksong (cf. Harris 1998, Chapter 4).
(New Songs of the Battlefield), the prestigious national magazine for new revolutionary songs. In this way its success was assured; it was sung by the National Military Choir, and broadcast on Central Television. It had become, in effect, part of the official musical canon of the revolution. That year it was one of only two songs to be accepted from Xinjiang, Shetukken told me, his pride still evident even at this remove of 25 years. 'Today the song is still played on television at every anniversary', he assured me, 'it will endure with the fame of Chairman Mao'.

Through this process of reworking, approval, movement up the bureaucratic ladder, further approval, and dissemination via the media across the whole country, the Sibe and their shamanic ritual song became inextricably linked to the name and the power of Chairman Mao, and were audibly included in the process of revolution. Previously the song, sung by the villagers themselves, served to bond the vertical community of the clan and linked the living to the ancestral spirits. Now, mediated by technology and broadcast into the fields and factory workshops across China, it served as a symbolic link between the huge horizontal community of the nation state, conceived as one unit moving forward in time towards the goal of socialism. However the reasoning of the Sibe intellectuals involved in this process, who felt that the Sibe must be seen or rather heard to take their place in this horizontal community, clearly had much more to do with local or ethnic pride than revolutionary fervour.

If it is not too fanciful to suggest an echo of the song's former shamanic function, whereas previously the doocî had used this same melody to call on the power of the ancestral spirits, now the song invoked the efficacy of Chairman Mao. From flexible, unwritten form, vehicle for improvised lyrics to fit the needs of each ritual performance, the song was transformed into fixed, written form. Indeed, as accounts of Cultural Revolution campaigns in Çabçal attest, the wrong performance of its lyrics might be construed as a grave political offence. From feudal superstition to revolutionary folksong, arguably the normative function of the song, underpinned by violence, remained a constant.

A revolutionary shaman song on the market economy with Chinese characteristics

Philip Bohlman has remarked on the tendency for radical change in the social basis of folk music under the modern state, which he sees as led primarily by increasingly mobile populations (Bohlman 1988). Martin Stokes' study of Turkish Arabesque serves as an example of this type of musical change, where a genre formerly associated with Sufi ritual was transformed into a popular style, disseminated in cassette form, and became linked to the migrant worker communities in Istanbul and expressive of this urban underclass (Stokes 1992). In revolutionary China in contrast, human immobility was coupled with great mobility of actual musical material which was passed up and down the lines of bureaucratic power, from the periphery of the state to the centre of power and back down again. As Vivienne Shue asserts, the great majority of the population of China during the revolutionary period was effectively immobilised and confined in the village. With the banning of county fairs, prime sites of association and exchange of knowledge prior to the revolution, and limitations on individual movement, the revolutionary Chinese village's only links with the outside world were through the state-controlled lines of communication to the centre. Horizontal ties to the outside world were severed while the vertical links between isolated village and centre of power were greatly strengthened (Shue 1988:69). These conditions effectively gave rise to a bifurcation of the musical repertoire, where certain selected elements
became highly mobile and were subject to radical change at the hands of the state cultural machine, while other elements were frozen, isolated and rarely performed for over two decades. Moving into the post-1979 reform era, characterised by an increasingly mobile population, the conditions for Bohlman’s model began to be fulfilled. New social groups thrown up by social turbulence, gathering primarily in urban areas, created markets for new and recycled forms of music.

Rejoice in Chairman Mao’s Kindness underwent a further transformation in the early 1990s when it appeared on Red Sun (Hong Taiyang), a collection of revolutionary folksongs sung to a disco beat, released by China Record company in 1992 on cassette, CD and karaoke video. Rejoice in Chairman Mao’s Kindness appears on Red Sun, with an ‘oompa’ synthesiser backing, sung by a female choir in two-part harmony. The rendition has a childlike quality about it, suggestive of the often paternalistic relationship between the minorities and the Han ‘big brother’ in Party ideology.

A Sibe song for consumers of karaoke

Soon after the Tian’anmen massacre of 1989 a curious phenomenon was visible in China’s big cities, which was dubbed the Mao craze (Mao Zedong re). Taxi drivers in Beijing sported pictures of Mao hanging from their windscreens and the synthesised beats of disco versions of the old revolutionary songs pumped from the shops and market stalls. The market for these cassettes was primarily a new class of people, the sent-down youth of the Cultural Revolution era. These were not the former Red Guards but their younger brothers and sisters who were born into the turmoil of the 1960s. Known as the lost generation, they had been deprived of formal schooling and regular employment but intensely educated in revolution. They were as a group politically informed and cynical. It was this group who were quickest to take advantage of Deng Xiaoping’s economic reforms of the 1980s and attempt to make a living independent of the state system. Many set up small businesses (getihu), many worked independently, notably as taxi drivers. Geremie Barmé (1999:231) describes their relationship with the revolutionary culture of the 1960s and 1970s:

For the children of the Cultural Revolution ... the operas and the bizarre culture they represented were imbibed along with their mother’s milk. What for their parents and grandparents were the shrill sounds of terror are for [them] the surroundings of nostalgia and childhood innocence.
The China into which the new incarnation of the Sibe dooci song was launched was very different to that of 1971. 1991 was dubbed the year of the karaoke craze (kalo OK re), the year when 107 new karaoke bars opened in Beijing alone. The great majority of songs sung in these karaoke bars were the soft pop songs of Taiwan and Hong Kong, and their popularity was the cause of increasing anxiety to the Party which regarded them as a source of ideological and spiritual pollution. In answer in 1991 the central propaganda department hit on the strategy of repackaging revolutionary folk songs for karaoke. Everybody Sing Along: Karaoke Song Treasury was the first of these releases; approved by the cultural chief Li Ruiluan it was promoted nightly on national TV; as Geremie Barmé says, the Party’s own top of the pops (Barmé 1999:116). Gregory Lee has suggested that the Party was using releases like Red Sun as new vehicles for propaganda aimed at the urban youth market, just as they had aimed their revised folksongs at the Shaanxi countryside in the 1940s (Lee 1995). Furthermore, as Barmé argues, the revolutionary disco phenomenon was indicative of the updated ideological tactics of the Party propagandists, the advent of soft sell. It demonstrated the Party’s willingness to compete in the market place, to emulate, manipulate and co-opt the images and sounds of the consumer market. Barmé also draws attention to the commercial aspect of ventures like Red Sun. This, he suggests, was a struggle not only for the hearts and minds of the masses but also for their purse strings (Barmé 1999:118).

Frequently in the Beijing street markets in 1993, I came across a stall holder singing along to disco renditions of songs from Red Sun: The Communist Party has Come, Bitter has Turned to Sweet (Gongchandang Laile, Kubian Tian), or perhaps Beijing has a Golden Sun (Beijing Youge Jintaiyang). Again the transformation of context was radical. From mass sound pumped through the loudspeakers to the obedient ears of the masses, new technology now put the song at the service of the individual. Moreover the karaoke singer now sang for himself alone in a solitary narcissistic ritual, for who ever really listens to someone else singing karaoke? But this was hardly musical individualism in the mould of Jacques Attali’s vision of ‘composition’ as freedom of creativity and self-expression (Attali 1985). This was the individual as consumer, targetted as niche market by Party and commercial recording companies.

Coming to grips with the past
There were varied interpretations of the political significance of the Mao craze. Many agreed that it sprang from a nostalgia for the simplicity of the revolutionary era, before cynicism and commercialism came to China. As Gregory Lee points out, both the new capitalists and the Party were quick to exploit the commercial and propaganda potential of this nostalgia (Lee 1995). It was also suggested to me by young Beijingers that the Mao craze implied an oblique criticism of Deng in the wake of the Tian’anmen massacre, comparing him unfavourably to Mao. My impression at the time was that musical taste in the cities had become greatly more sophisticated in this period, and that listeners were indulging in an ironic appreciation of the kitsch aesthetic of revolutionary art. It is perhaps too far-fetched to suggest a further echo of shamanic ritual: that through the reclaimed and modernised versions of these revolutionary songs, the purchasers of Red Sun were exorcising the demons of their Cultural Revolution experiences.

As the Sibe revolutionary ritual song was reincarnated as a commodity which sold rather successfully on the open market, it ran the risk of encountering the issues of ownership and copyright which have exercised ethnomusicologists in recent years (Feld 1996, Zemp 1996).
Such issues have already been raised in relation to revolutionary folksongs in China by the Australia-based musicologist Yang Mu. Yang Mu cites an example of one Chinese composer who attempted to sue the publishers of several nationally-distributed collections for financial recompense for some of his compositions which were published in the collections as ‘indigenous Taiwanese folksongs’ (Yang 1994:311). I raised the question of copyright with Shetuken. Had he had any returns from the large amounts of money made by Red Sun? Did he feel himself entitled to a share? Shetuken was resigned. When he wrote the lyrics he got a 20 yuan fee, and was given one record and one book. Later when it won a prize, he was given 250 yuan. In those days, he said, they had no idea of money or copyright.

Back to Çabçal: completing the cycle?
The Red Sun cassette could be found on sale during the early 1990s in independent outlets in cities and towns around China. Helen Rees found the cassette on sale in the Naxi town of Lijiang, Yunnan in 1993 (Rees 1995:81). In the county town of Çabçal in 1995, I found copies still displayed alongside cassettes of Michael Jackson, Madonna, the rock singer Cui Jian as well as numerous mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwan pop singers. Having been appropriated and adapted to the changing demands of the centre, the Sibe revolutionary song had returned to the periphery. But in order to match the model of transmigration suggested by Mark Slobin we must return not just to the cassette stalls of the county town but to the ritual context of the original dooci melody. The problem of the impact of professional reworkings and pop music on contemporary folk music practice has been of some interest to musicologists working in China (Jones 1999). A question mark hangs over the contemporary practice of ritual song in Çabçal.

Although the public, large-scale rituals of the pre-liberation era have died out in Çabçal, the ritual songs have not been lost from the villages. When I visited Çabçal in 1995 and 1996 in the company of Sibe researchers, many villagers sang for us the ritual songs which they remembered from their youth. What also became clear through these visits was the scale of the ritual revival in Çabçal during the 1980s and 1990s. We found over forty Sibe shamanic ritualists who termed themselves saman, dooci or elcin conducting healing rituals in the villages of Çabçal. However the rituals which we attended were very different in form from the spectacular rituals of the pre-Liberation era. Largely home-
based, involving the expulsion of spirits through animal sacrifice and the burning of ritual paper cuts, they were conducted in silence without the use of ritual song. While shamanic healing never died out in Çabçal, the rituals were driven underground during the revolutionary period, and the transmission of shamanic ritual knowledge from one generation to the next has been partial and incomplete. However, no doubt partly impelled by our interest, some ritualists have expressed interest in reincorporating the ritual songs into their repertoire. One respected saman Yin Xinmei said that she thought that ritual songs would increase the efficacy of her rituals. She asked me for a copy of a 1950s recording of Sibe ritual songs which has been preserved in the Beijing Music Research Institute. This I gave her without too many reservations. The Sibe musicologist Agebai reported that another saman had told him that recently the shaman ancestors had been trying to teach him their songs in his dreams. He had not been able to learn them properly as yet, he said, he'd been too busy with his healing rituals. What melodies might they teach him, in a village soundscape which encompasses the sounds of Hong Kong pop, professional Chinese folk music, Uyghur popular music as well as Sibe traditions preserved by the older villagers; in a village where one shamanic ritual which I attended was conducted to the background of a Puccini opera being shown on TV? The question awaits further fieldwork.

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REPORT FROM A CHINESE VILLAGE

A travelling theatre group in rural Shanxi

Christina Nygren
(Stockholm)

What does it mean to earn your living as an opera actor in rural China? What are the daily realities of an itinerant opera troupe? How are tours organized, payments arranged, members recruited? How do performers overcome the many problems in their profession, from hassles with authorities to severe cold (winter being the main season for touring the villages)? The author of this report, a sinologist from Sweden, visited a travelling opera theatre in rural Shanxi, as part of her ongoing fieldwork on difangxi (local theatre), and interviewed its members about their struggle for survival.

Leaving behind me the dull theatre environment of Beijing, where not even jingju – ‘Peking opera’, for those who prefer the Western term – seems to be alive any more, I’m on my way to meet a travelling theatre troupe in southern Shanxi. Jingju is now rarely performed for commoners in the capital. The same is true for pingju, although it is a local theatre form which is actually specific to the Beijing area. At present these genres are only regularly shown on television or in especially arranged theatre programmes for foreign tourists. The decline of urban Chinese theatre is alarming, and I’m eager to learn more about how local theatre has fared in the small towns and villages of China’s countryside.

In former years, while I was doing research in China, the authorities often told me that private travelling troupes no longer existed in the country, but with a bit of pressing, I was able to meet several such troupes. I heard about hundreds more of them once I started my research project on ‘popular theatre in context’, a few years ago. In the course of my search for evidence of a continuing vibrant popular theatre tradition in the countryside, I received a lot of help from friends and colleagues. The present report refers to fieldwork carried out in Shanxi in 1997.

My visit started with the usual collecting of written materials from the area, and with a few days of waiting in Taiyuan, the province’s capital, before I had a chance to meet with a theatre group which performed in a remote rural part of Shanxi.

One can distinguish three different types of Chinese theatre groups: state-supported groups (guoying), theatre collectives (jiiti) and private troupes (getii). My specific aim was to find one of the low-prestige private groups who travel between small villages, who are highly appreciated by the villagers but no more than tolerated by government officials. What I came to witness in southern Shanxi was a moving example of performers who lead tough lives, and persevere in their vocation thanks only to their skills and indefatigable optimism.
The phone rings in my hotel room in Taiyuan: an enthusiastic and friendly voice tells me that the proper arrangements have now been made. The government has attempted to limit my experience with Shanxi theatre to modern and urban forms of entertainment, but thanks to the help of friends I’m now being offered a chance to go to Shanxi’s southeast, an area which foreigners are normally not allowed to visit, and watch a village theatre performance. The genre I will get to see is called *shangdang bangzi*.1

Some days later I find myself right in the heart of the performance. The play starts with songs, music-making, dialogues, dancing and acrobatics, performed in colourful outfits and with the artists wearing heavy, mask-like make-up. As always in traditional Chinese theatre, it’s the very combination of all these components which makes for the special nature and attractiveness of the performance.

The music of *shangdang bangzi* is very intense. The rhythms of the leading wooden clapper are reinforced by other percussion instruments to underline special activities in the story. The piercing singing style raises the dramatic expression and conveys an atmosphere of tense excitement and beauty. The stories are usually sad, sometimes bittersweet. Tonight’s play is an episode from the long warrior drama ‘The Women Generals of the Yang Family’ (*Yangmen nü jiang*).2

**Outdoors in the cold**

People crowd together in front of the stage, their hands stuffed inside the arms of their coats, and follow the play attentively. Everyone produces little puffs of white smoke due to the freezing temperatures. At times one can see a few spectators leaving because of the severe cold, shaking their heads. Many others stay on. When a part of the stage set falls to the floor, there is a murmur among the audience, but nobody expects realism on the stage; after everything is put back in place the incident is soon forgotten.

Just before midnight the performance ends abruptly, without a clear ending or a round of applause. Spectators rush home silently in the dark. Meanwhile, the actors run about the set to clean up and take off their costumes. After a while they move backstage, shivering from the cold. Some wait for a free bowl of hot water from thermos flasks to wash off their oily make-up. Costumes are folded, quickly and efficiently, shoes put back in their places, hats and caps stored on the right shelves. With stiff hands the musicians pack their instruments into wooden boxes. Within a few minutes the stage and the spectator’s area in front of it have become totally empty and quiet, almost ghost-like. Set design, curtains and backdrop are fixed with wires or tied together to prevent the wind – entering front stage and through glassless windows and doorless exits – from causing damage during the night.

The members of the troupe are in a hurry to find the places where they are expected to spend the night. The company’s leader will sleep in a villager’s kitchen, while his wife is assigned a small space in an entrance hall nearby. One actress who fell ill is offered a

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1 *Shangdang bangzi* is a local theatre form (*difangxi*) which prevails in a limited area in the southeast of Shanxi Province. Contemporary performance styles originate in part from the variety theatre *zaaju* that was popular in northern regions of the country some thousand years ago, and in part they are influenced by local theatre forms which emerged in later times and by *jingju*.

2 *Yangmen nü jiang* is an excerpt from the Ming dynasty classical novel *Yang jia jiang yangyi*, a historical romance compiled by Xiong Danu, and situated in the 10th and 11th centuries. It deals with the wars of that period between the Northern Song dynasty and its northern neighbours; it focuses in particular on the heroic deeds of the Yang clan, a family of generals. Marketplace storytellers and dramatists have drawn heavily on this source; through the ages, the stories have become very popular with theatre audiences.
gatekeeper’s tiny room at the village school with nothing but a candle to keep her warm. Two elderly actors have found an empty classroom in the same school. They put together some desks to serve as a bed. The youngsters have spread their tarpaulin-clad sleeping bags on the earthen floor in another room, where a coal heater produces more smoke than warmth. Outside, the houses of the village are dark and silent. People escort me to a peasant family’s dwelling on the outskirts of the village. I’m directed to a small room with a coal heater; I share the space with a motor bike, two bicycles and a pigeon in a cage.

En route
I came to this village during the daytime, in the very company of the performers. We travelled in a bus sent by the host village to pick us up from the site of a previous performance. The group has no transport of its own, and also depends entirely on what the hosts arrange for them in terms of fees, housing and food.

The bus happened to be one of the most worn-out vehicles I’ve ever seen, but there were no complaints from the group members. It was mid-winter; clear, dry weather, sunny and
cold. The road to the village was full of pits and holes, making it difficult to keep one’s balance. The sixty members of the theatre group sat on the bare wooden seats or stood in the aisle, wrapped in thick, huge overcoats, woollen mufflers and caps. The dry, mountainous view outside the bus hardly changed; the mud-built houses of villages we passed merged with the rest of the landscape. At times we came across cave-dwellings, very common in the higher altitudes of this region. Dust from the road penetrated through chinks. It was no use trying to close any of the windows. The folding doors of the bus were held shut by hand. The aisle was stuffed full with boxes, trunks, bags and loose props. Somebody had put his arm around a big mirror, someone else looked after clattering thermos flasks.

My travel companions started their private itinerant theatre group less than two years ago. They carry on the tradition of a local theatre form of bangzi (clapper) theatre popular in Shanxi’s southeast. The acting, costumes and make-up do not differ very much from those in other local theatre forms in the province. The players emphasize their local dialect and specific musical traditions of their home region.

The leader of the theatre group and his wife are in their forties. For more than twenty years they had worked in a state-supported company, before starting their own enterprise. As teenagers during the Cultural Revolution, they took part in revolutionary plays, and later on they acted in traditional regional theatre forms popular in the area. In 1994 the husband was dismissed from his position as manager of the state-supported theatre company. He was fired after a conflict with the board of directors and some colleagues.

‘I had the main responsibility for what happened at the theatre; the others took too many liberties, but I was made the scapegoat’, he explains during our bus ride. He is reluctant to go into further details, but tells me about his wife who, for many years, was an actress in the same group before she became an office worker. This was around the time that he became the official theatre group’s manager, some years ago. ‘When I was dismissed I was left with no social security at all. I went to Yunnan, in the South of China, hoping to find a way out and to get rich by doing business, like so many others did. But I soon found myself walking a very thin line between legal and illegal practices, and I nearly got into really deep trouble. After I came back home my wife gave up her office job, and together we started this travelling theatre group. All my friends supported our initiative, some of my old colleagues even stopped working for the state-supported group to join our group, in spite of the fact that their living conditions became less comfortable and the salaries lower as a consequence. We started with empty hands, but all of us were professional artists with a lot of experience. Today, we still find that it’s not easy to earn a living like this, but we have nothing to be ashamed of.’

Fifty tours a year
Two thirds of the group’s members are professional actors, musicians, and supporting personnel, while one third are students, teenagers who learn the trade without being paid for it. The size of the group varies over time. At present, the number of students is somewhat bigger than usual. Everybody shares responsibility for the tasks which have to be carried out before, during and after the performances.

In addition to the bus, the group is using two trucks for transport, which (like the bus) are put at their disposal by the new hosts. The bus proceeds very slowly, the trip takes more than three hours. It is now past noon, and the group members haven’t had anything to eat yet. They got up early in the morning without breakfast and started loading the trucks with
sixty-seven wooden boxes of props, costumes, make-up and anything else needed for performance. The large set design, the backdrops and pieces of furniture were stowed on top of the boxes, all in meticulous order. Every box is numbered and is supposed to contain only a specific content, to make the work of packing and unpacking easier. Once we are on our way, the company’s leader tells me about the particular pressures of this kind of life.

‘We have to do more than fifty tours a year to make ends meet. Annually that amounts to 450 performances or more. We usually stay for five days in every place that we go to. On the arrival day there is time only for a single performance since we have to rig everything up, but in the next four days we can do two performances a day, each one lasting three or four hours. The fee is negotiable, usually 2,000 yuan or more for a whole period, to be paid by the village administration who, in turn, depend for their funding mainly on taxes from the villagers. That’s how it is today. We ask no entrance fee. From what we earn we have to pay about 3 per cent tax to the province and the state. Our group members get paid in accordance with their experience and the size of their contribution. One third of the group are students; we cover their living expenses but they get no salary.’

His wife continues to explain how arrangements are made with the village administration: ‘We have two representatives who are in contact with any villages who show an interest in receiving us. They travel beforehand to those places which we’re going to visit to make all the necessary practical arrangements. Many villages have poor telephone connections and mail is not reliable, so we can only get things done by going there in person in advance. We’re performing in the countryside all the time, so this is just the way to do it. The host village is responsible for our lodging and food, and they are entitled to decide on the repertoire and the order of the performances.’

A cheerful reception

Her husband enthusiastically reports on the repertoire: ‘It consists mainly of historical plays about heroes, judges and generals, but we also do family dramas stressing loyalty, obedience and respect. At present we have some ten different plays in our repertoire. We’re constantly adding both traditional and new plays, but our audiences know the old stories best, and usually they don’t want to be shown any new pieces. On each tour we visit a huge number of villages, so there is rarely time to go to the same place twice.’ Most villages have a permanent outdoor stage, erected during the Cultural Revolution; in some places the villagers have preserved an outdoor stage from former times, adjoining an old temple.

Husband and wife agree that their way of living in the countryside is hard and demanding, but they still seem happy to stay away from urban areas. They say their situation is getting much better now that they can actually make their own decisions. The work actually keeps them going, and there isn’t all that much time left to think about the future. Later, in a private and low-voiced conversation, the wife confides to me with a smile: ‘I’m actually doing it for his sake. There is no other way. He can’t handle the theatre group all on his own, and without the group he wouldn’t survive.’

She has a gentle appearance but seems to be strong-minded; indeed she strikes me as one of the strongest women I’ve met in the Chinese theatre world, a vital companion to her husband, a sister to the professional actors and actresses, and a mother to the young students of the group.

We leave the road and, for some minutes, follow a barely visible gravelled track that leads to a hilly area with mud-built houses. The houses merge with the environment. The
The village is divided into two administrative parts, East and West, with some 2,000 inhabitants in each part. Straight upon arrival the group is given a warm welcome by the villagers. In the village school, a hot meal is served. Everyone takes out their enamel food bowls for a helping of boiled rice and *doufu* sauce. Afterwards, the group drink ‘white tea’ (boiled water) together with local villagers and socialize with them in the sunny schoolyard. The atmosphere is relaxed and cheerful. One of the troupe’s formal representatives has just returned from an advance visit to another village planned for the tour. She talks animatedly about some funny incidents which she witnessed on the road during her trip.

The group begins to unload the trucks, taking out boxes, props and sets. Young and old, men and women, everyone works side by side to arrange the rather plain-looking stage. Gusts of wind enter through the glassless windows backstage and the open entrances to the dressing rooms. It’s not possible to drive the trucks straight up to the front stage, so everything has to be carried by hand over some distance.

The village is part of a *bu kaifang* (‘not open’) area, meaning that foreigners are officially not allowed to stay here. But the theatre people claim that I’m a member of the group and should not be counted as a ‘common foreigner’. Admittedly, there are practical reasons why one might wish to bar foreign tourists from the area: there are no restaurants or guest houses around, and there is no regular public transport, making it hard for foreign visitors to secure food or shelter. During my stay I don’t come into contact with any policemen or soldiers, but I do catch an occasional glimpse of a military cap hanging on a wall, or of shoulder straps with stars and stripes in a wardrobe. No one seems to be bothered by formal restrictions. When I venture to ask if there are any police around, I receive only vague answers.

**Waiting to enter the stage**

The pedlars have arrived early. They set up their carts alongside a wall which surrounds the spectators’ seats. Elated children immediately start buying the plastic toys which are on sale, such as ‘pea pistols’. Those pistols will soon become a source of irritation for performers and spectators alike. The pedlars’ carts are brimming with sugared rice cakes, bean jelly,
candied fruits, butter-flavoured crackers, roasted seeds and nuts, and plastic toys. Children mingle freely with the members of the theatre troupe, who are working hard to get everything ready in time. The kids jump around on the stage or climb in and out of open windows. They follow all the stage preparations, curious about everything that is going on. The group leader has gone out to discuss with some villagers matters of lodging for the following night, and the precise selection of plays to be performed. His wife stays on stage to conduct all the work with a firm hand. Wing parts of the stage setting are being fixed, some backdrops unfolded, pieces of furniture put in position. Loudspeakers are installed.

The stage is quite small. Backstage there’s only a narrow space, forcing some of the musicians to find a place on the stage proper rather than in the aisles behind the curtain where they would normally play.

‘Which box holds the make-up mirrors?’, someone asks. ‘Fifty-two’, the leader’s wife answers without hesitation. She’s helping one of the students to lay an embroidered silk cloth on a plain wooden table. During the performances the table will be used to symbolize all sorts of things – a bed, a rostrum at the court, a high building, a distant mountain, and so forth. The actors are getting dressed in a tiny room. They put the costumes over their normal clothes, while Jia shufu (‘Uncle Jia’) keeps a watchful eye.

Uncle Jia, a retired factory worker, is the oldest member of the group. After participating in an amateur group at the factory for many years, he has become, in the present group, the person who takes professional care of all the costumes, the shoes and the hats. A student helps him with this task.

A board supported by two wooden blocks serves as an ironing table. Uncle Jia smiles joyfully as he potters about amidst the costumes, folding or mending a beautifully
embroidered silk garment here or there. Many of the garments are quite old, like so many of the props in the group’s possession; they’ve been re-used and mended a great many times. Everything is kept in the best possible condition; it is clear that all the materials are handled very carefully and professionally.

‘All my life I’ve longed to work with a professional theatre group’, says Uncle Jia. ‘I never expected it would really happen, but when this leader asked me if I was interested in joining I immediately said “yes”. It’s a wonderful dream come true!’

An icy wind blows through the holes and open spaces of the theatre. Efforts to stuff the holes with cardboard and other materials hardly improve the situation, and the cold is getting more severe. Everyone has had a bowl of noodle soup for dinner. People use their own breath to warm up their hands, so they can take a firm hold of make-up sticks and brushes again. While they are waiting to enter the stage, they wear big, padded overcoats over their silk costumes. The leader’s wife sits on a box, painting her face for the main role in tonight’s play. With a deft gesture she spreads a basic layer of pinkish make-up on her face. The area around the eyes is daubed dark red to heighten an impression of youthful freshness, in accordance with her role. She makes her nose seem higher by adding a stroke of white along the nasal bone, and puts on a transparent powder which gives her skin an elegant and warm complexion. Thin lines for eyebrows, slanting strokes along the eyelids, and dark red, seductive lips are the finishing touches for this role’s character.

A protective deity
Uncle Jia has lighted some incense sticks. He places them in a sand-filled bowl in front of a small silk scroll with a symbol of Tang Minghuang, the deity who guards Chinese theatre. The scroll hangs on a wall in the dressing room. Some actors, Uncle Jia and the group leader’s wife now kow-tow in front of the image of this deity, touching the floor with their foreheads three times. Others don’t pay attention to this ceremony, or even step over the praying people somewhat irreverently to get to the other side of the room.

When the leader’s wife gets up she smiles apologetically. ‘I don’t take this too seriously. In former times actors believed that Tang Minghuang guarded them from losing their voices or forgetting their lines. Some of the older members still feel this way, so I think it’s no harm to sustain the tradition, even if the authorities condemn it as mixin [superstition].’

It’s eight o’clock in the evening, 14 degrees Celcius below zero. Thousands of stars are visible in the night sky. The audience has waited for hours in front of the stage, dressed in padded clothes and woollen or fur caps. They have got nowhere to get warm, and there’s nothing hot to drink. Many have brought children, wrapped in padded sacks and woollen blankets. A bangzi clapper and a drum with a metallic sound are now heard, indicating that the play will soon start.

Before the actual beginning of the first performance, the event is formally celebrated with some fireworks. A chosen villager enters the stage and lets off long strings of fire crackers, an age-old custom aimed at frightening off evil spirits. The man carries out his job solemnly.

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3 During the Tang Dynasty, Emperor Minghuang reportedly started the first theatre school in China. It was called ‘The Pear Garden’ (Liuyuan). He came to be worshipped as a guardian god of the theatre. After 1949, the worshipping of theatre gods was rejected by the communist government as an act of superstition. Eventually it was prohibited, just like the worshipping of Lao Langshen, a common god of prosperity who was also held in high esteem by actors.
and ceremoniously, but as soon as the flashing and the explosions start, people begin to applaud and shout with joy.

I ask the performers how they manage to bear the frightening cold day after day, all through the winter — actually the main season for travelling troupes to tour the countryside.

A communal, stoical answer follows: ‘Xiguanle! We’ve got used to it!’ There will be two performances the next day, the first one at three o’clock in the afternoon, the second one at half past eight in the evening. During the daytime the sun will take the chill off the audience’s seats; children will sit in a line in front of the stage, while grown-ups will huddle together in the back, basking in the sun and taking delight in the performance. The village teenagers will be more interested in teasing one another, laughing and talking outside the walls of the theatre area, as they usually do on such festive occasions. The villagers have four more days of entertainment ahead. For the theatre group, this is just a regular event in a long series of performances scheduled for the winter season.

REFERENCES


GLOSSARY

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Lifok was born in an Amis fishing village on the coast of eastern Taiwan in 1932. He developed a lasting passion for the music and culture of the Amis tribe. He became a folk musician and, at the same time, a scholar of his own native culture. Undaunted by his physical handicap – he depended on crutches after contracting polio – he became an active fieldworker and researcher. He transcribed folk songs, recorded music, collected photos, videos, oral history accounts, CDs, anything related to Amis culture, from rare shaman rituals to aboriginal pop. In this interview, Lifok reflects on his remarkable past, on his dual roles as musical performer and researcher, and on his memories of village life. ‘The Jew’s harp is a secret instrument that Amis men play to women at night, you can’t get anyone to teach it to you. You’ve actually got to get your mother to sing the songs she heard your dad play!’

On the occasional sunny weekend along the coast of eastern Taiwan, motorists on the highway might chance upon the curious sight of a little old man scooting away determinedly on a custom-made three-wheeled moped, chugging along the road back and forth between Taitung City and the hamlet of Iwan. Those who look carefully enough will observe a pair of crutches tucked away in a special extension next to the moped rider, who himself is sweating profusely under his helmet.

No ordinary little old man this is. His name – as printed on official namecards dispensed at our first meeting later at his Taitung home – is Huang Kuei-chao. He is shy – too embarrassed to look you in the eye directly – but manages a wave anyway. A pensioner out on a solitary joyride to the beach? Not quite. Once the pieces of paper stamped with purple-inked logos of his ‘work studio’ and home address are seen to be tucked away safely in pockets, and once the glasses of rice wine are passed round and partaken of by all, Huang Kuei-chao starts disappearing into the personality of his given non-Chinese name, ‘Lifok’, and later ‘Faki’, meaning ‘respected elder’ in his native language. He becomes the gregarious musician / anthropologist / ethnomusicologist / grand old man of Amis aboriginal culture all rolled into one.

He is one (and as his friends might say, more than one) of some 140,000 Taiwanese aborigines of the Amis tribe. They are the largest of nine¹ official minority ethnic groups in Taiwan, but are not yet considered enough to claim more than 0.5% of the country’s

¹ The other tribes being the Bunun, Paiwan, Puyuma, Saisiat, Atayal, Tsou, Rakai and Yami, all also of Austronesian origin.
otherwise Han-dominated population of 21 million. They are of Austronesian ethnic origin, and their ancestors are believed to have migrated from Southeast Asia a few thousand years ago to become the first settlers of the island.

Like many of his aboriginal friends, Lifok was born in one of 200 Amis hamlets dotted along the coast of eastern Taiwan. In his thirties, he moved to Taipei in search of work. Today, he lives mainly in Taitung City, but makes frequent weekend or day-trips to his old hometown of Iwan. Unlike his Amis compatriots, however, such joyrides to the countryside do not end with frolicks in the sea. They are actually full-blown fieldwork stints conducted in the tradition of any self-respecting anthropologist.

A warehouse of Amis culture

‘But I’m just an amateur,’ the man himself will argue on first meeting, speaking in Amis-accented Mandarin. ‘You people are the real chuanjia (specialists). I’m what you call – how do you say it in English? – just an ethnographer, a part-timer.’ He labours with the pronunciation of the foreign term.

Whether a ‘part-time ethnographer’ or a ‘dilettante anthropologist’, Lifok takes his subject of study – Amis music and culture – extremely seriously. His two-storey rented terrace on the outskirts of Taitung is more a warehouse-cum-shrine to Amis culture than a home. A tiny bed is relegated to one corner of a pantry-sized room crammed with a television, VCR, cameras, stacks of video tapes, bundles of brown-paper packages and the odd giraffe calendar. His living room is a haphazard archipelago of plastic stools meandering around Pisa-tower-like DIY shelves and desks, upon which tea-stained mugs nestle precariously amongst biscuit tins, bamboo Jew’s harps, books, numbered files and sheaves of loose paper bound with rubber bands and paper clips.

These piles of paper in turn constitute some sixty years’ worth of published monographs, oral history accounts, photographs, folksong notations, LPs, CDs, Taiwan Tourist Board brochures, ticket stubs, newspaper clippings and concert programmes. Each and every item is catalogued in a handwritten notebook – the exact classificatory scheme of which might well challenge the Hornbostel and Sachs system – and remains intelligible only to Lifok himself.

‘I even have books on Amis culture copied in Japanese in my own hand,’ he reveals. ‘In those days, I was too poor to buy books, and we didn’t have any photocopy machines. Nowadays there’s so much fuss over copyright laws. But I still photocopy things in secret anyway,’ he continues with an old-timer’s ‘been there, done that’ nonchalance.

It is hard to ascertain the exact physical worth of Lifok’s ‘treasury’, such is the scattered nature of his collection. His twenty shelves and cloth-draped cupboards might house over 10,000 photographs and more strips of film, one does not know. There are cipher notations of 400 folksongs recorded from his personal memory or transcribed from listening to singing by friends, family and strangers. There are CD recordings – published by himself or by cooperating academics – of rare shaman ritual and song-and-dance music. And there is an impressive aboriginal pop collection dating back to the 1950s, when the first aboriginal commercial albums were released on what is now known as the Hsin Hsin label.3

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3 To be published in the year 2001.
3 Today there are about 10 record companies in Taipei and Tainan that produce – in part or in majority – aboriginal pop CDs / tapes for the aboriginal market, the largest back catalogue holder being Hsin Hsin. Some record companies, such as Magic Stone, have repackaged ‘traditional Amis pop’ to enter the
The foreign ethnomusicologist is too overwhelmed for a response here. Questions come hard and fast as the miracle of 'discovery' takes place. Where did these folksongs come from, if only fewer than thirty of the 'same old tunes' have been circulating repeatedly in standard academic releases by Inedit and Wind Records found in the West? What of the music of these unheard-of shaman rituals – are they any different from the folksongs? Was – and is – there really an abo-pop cottage industry, or are these abo albums that feature colourfully attired maidens wearing jangly beads nothing but cover versions of Han-Taiwanese Karaoke hits?

The need to validate one's existence, culture, history, life and identity through extensive literary and would-be scholarly-historical evidence is not uncommon among many cultures today. Case studies on native Korean and Chinese 'emic' ethnomusicological scholarship as reported by Keith Howard (1998) and Yang Mu (1994) are good examples. One would therefore be tempted to think that Lifok is merely attached to the romance of self-actualization through his meticulous and baffling efforts at curatoring Amis ethnography.

He shows you pictures of his own Jew's harp performances in Japan; freeze-frame portraits of himself in action at educational talks on Amis music and culture in community centres and schools; catalogued photographs of each and every 'disciple' or 'godchild' (myself included) that he has acquired through the process of promoting his culture and mainstream Taiwanese/Cantopop market with considerable success. See Lifok 2000b, Chiang 1999 and Tan 2000 (unpub) for more details.
encouraging those who seek it. But Lifok’s story – as with any other valuable informant ethnomusicologists encounter in the field – is neither straightforward nor stereotyped.

More amazing than his massive collection of ethnography, perhaps, is his life – not only of the past but also of the present. Here, the conflicts of change, modernization and post-colonial identity⁴ are dealt with with the vigour of an insider stepping out of his culture to look back in.

**In bed all day**

Lifok was born in 1932 to an Amis farming couple in the fishing village of Iwan. His parents divorced before he was ten, leaving his mother – in accordance with matriarchal Amis culture – to support him through early life. At age 7, he entered primary school, only to have to leave it five years later, when he contracted polio.

‘I stayed in bed all day, and looked at the sea for eight years,’ he recalls during an interview in Taitung. ‘My hair was unwashed, I couldn’t take baths regularly, my fingernails were long. In Amis culture you’re not supposed to wash yourself when you’re sick. I was truly pathetic,’ he adds. ‘Other people had girlfriends, but nobody wanted to go out with me. It was then that I decided to occupy myself by writing diaries and reading books. I read anything people gave me – magazines, brochures, receipts; I wanted to record everything I knew and learnt.’

It was at that time that he started to notate folksongs – ‘some I knew already by listening to my mother at work; others I got friends to sing to me.’ One of these friends taught him cipher notation learnt through the Japanese education system in the local schools. ‘That’s when I took a serious interest in music. People gave me instruments to while my time away – the Jew’s harp, the clarinet, the erhu and the harmonica – I learnt them all by myself.’

‘With the Jew’s harp, because it’s a secret instrument that men play to women at night, you can not get anyone to teach it to you, you’ve got to get your mother to sing the songs she heard your dad play. And Mother always knows best because she didn’t just get to hear Dad, but also all the other male suitors!’⁵

Around this period of his life, Lifok began to look back into his own culture and identity for inspiration and support in the face of his physical difficulties; he began to record ‘all these precious things that I was afraid would disappear. Some of these folksongs I have noted; people don’t sing them anymore.’

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⁴ A word of multi-layered meanings; ‘colonial’ culture referring to anything from Japanese to Han Chinese to Western cultures that occupied significant places in various stages of Taiwan’s history. The earliest inhabitants of the island are thought to have been ancestors of the present aborigines, followed by migrants from South China. Chinese settlers can be traced to the 12th century, but it was not until 1683 that the island was predominantly Chinese-inhabited and declared a protectorate of mainland China. Westerners from Spain and Holland also began arriving in the 17th century, but the real impact of their culture was only felt second-hand through colonial Japanese rule and education after the Sino-Japanese war of 1895, and later first-hand, through the opening up of the island after the Second World War to the West and the explosion of mass media.

⁵ More on performance techniques of the Jew’s harp as well as the social conditions governing the learning of this instrument can be found in Lifok-Huang 1988a.
Folksongs today have changed; they’ve lost their meaning in performance. We used to have planting songs, weeding songs, weaving songs... but now everything’s done by machines and you don’t sing them in the fields but at a drinking party,” he says. ‘In the old days, there used to be no fixed lyrics – words were improvised according to the situation. If there was a guest in the village, the words to the song would reflect the arrival and welcome of the guest, etc. But when record companies came in and started making LPs and tapes and CDs, they began to add made-up lyrics. The titles have changed too. Today, many of these aboriginal “pop” song lyrics are all standardised hu shuo ba dao, luan luan lai (spouting rubbish; chaotic). People’s voices have also changed.’

Indeed. There is much debate in Taiwanese anthropological and musicological circles over the issue of folksong texts (eg Chiang 1999), ‘composed’ folksongs, ‘pop’ folksongs and – most significantly – change and ‘modernization’ of Amis folksong. Lifok’s one-person account – albeit supported by much fieldwork and documentation – appears to fall within Lomax’s ‘cultural grey-out’ camp of the proverbial ‘it was never like this in the good old days’. But while it is tempting to point accusing fingers at what an uninformed outsider might call Lifok’s brand of scholarly nostalgia or historical romanticizing, his life history jolts you back to the realization that fact is often stranger than fiction.

Some of the earliest album record covers of Taiwanese-aboriginal folk and pop songs, collected by Lifok.
‘They told me I wouldn’t survive as a cripple in the capital. Something still made me go.’

After eight years of languishing in bed as an invalid, Lifok met a village doctor who partly treated his stricken limbs and temporarily solved his mobility problems with physiotherapy and the use of crutches. He went back to school in 1956, this time enrolling as a missionary-trainee with the local Iwan Catholic church⁶ – one of many that were set up within various Amis communities by Swiss, Italian and Canadian missionaries on the eastern coast. Lifok graduated from his course in 1960 and subsequently became a trainee missionary who also played in brass bands and performed on the Jew’s harp. For nine years he ‘spread the word of God’.

Then, in 1972, his mother died. He decided to leave Iwan to ‘conquer the world out there in Taipei’, against the wishes of his friends and existing relatives. ‘Everybody was upset that I was leaving the Church. They told me that I wouldn’t survive as a cripple in the capital,’ he says. ‘But something inside me made me go. I had saved up some money over the years doing some sewing and odd jobs, and I took it to Taipei with me. For three months I didn’t find work. I just wanted to see everything new that I could see, hear everything that I could hear and eat everything I could eat. I went to every single movie, every single concert, every single sports match in Taipei. I have the ticket stubs and concert programmes to prove it!’

Academia Sinica

Music and shows aside, Lifok also found time to ‘better himself academically’, as he put it, borrowing books from people or the library and copying them by hand for keeping. ‘I even tried to take my high school certificate! But, alas, I was too old and rusty. I decided to give up after failing the exam repeatedly. I was running out of money anyway, and had to work,’ he relates.

This he did by mass-producing garments at a Taipei clothes factory. All the while, he continued with his semi-obssessive collecting and curating of Amis ethnography, inevitably creating a myth of eccentricity around himself as perceived by his fellow-workers who did not understand his mission. A fair amount of time was spent buried in books at the library of Taipei’s Academia Sinica’s Institute of Ethnology. He became a regular face there and was subsequently introduced in 1983 to a researcher – now professor – of anthropology, Huang Shiu-Wey.

Dr Huang recalls: ‘When I first met Lifok, I was amazed. The sheer amount of material he had accumulated was one thing; his life story and his opinions about his culture were another. I could not believe that such a shenqi (legendary) person like him actually existed. We became friends and colleagues soon thereafter.’ Life for Lifok changed dramatically after this episode. Thanks to Huang, his side-interest in his own culture became a full-time commitment when he was finally hired as a research assistant at the Academy.

⁶ The first missionaries from Holland and Spain arrived in Taiwan in the 17th century, but it was not until the 1940s that large-scale conversion of Taiwanese aborigines to Roman Catholicism and Protestantism took place. See Huang 1996 for further discussion of this phenomenon.
Awareness

During his 13-year stint at the Academy, Lifok pursued anthropology-related work on folklore and music, doing joint research work with Huang and publishing books, monographs and CDs on Amis culture. Significant works include a descriptive semi-anthropoligical guide to Amis harvest festivals (1994), a catalogue and brief analysis of Amis children’s songs in relation to ‘culture at large’ (1998b), and – of greatest interest to the ethnomusicologist – a classificatory guide to ‘traditional’ vs ‘modern’ folksongs (more to be said later).

After leaving the Academy in 1996, Lifok joined the East Taiwan Tourism Bureau, researching more or less the same interests until his retirement in 1998. Since then, he has also held workshops and talks on Amis music and played the Amis Jew’s harp in concerts within and outside Taiwan. He is also in the process of releasing his memoirs – already published in Japanese – in a Chinese edition.

At this point, with Lifok’s work finally gaining wider recognition, one might concede that ‘justice has finally been done.’ Indeed, while people outside Taiwan and even ordinary folk within may not have heard of his name, Lifok has at least become a local hero in his own community, carving out his existence in the world of native ‘insider’ anthropology, in spite – or rather because – of his fairy-tale hardships and final success.

The person himself, however, is not as naive as far as issues of recognition and cultural-hegemonic imbalance are concerned. Even while being so dogmatic and die-hard about assembling his ‘perfect, all-inclusive’ Amis resource archive and actively promoting his culture, he is acutely conscious of not wanting to play up to the demands of the minority-culture stereotype, and demonstrates this clearly in his views on music. Here, one could argue that his pronouncements are more ‘ethnomusicological’ than anything else. He speaks, for example, on the issue of ‘authenticity’:

‘I tell you, I do all this to preserve what’s left of our folksongs and our culture; of what used to happen “in the old days”. But I can’t tell you what’s “authentic” anymore, and I can’t give you an example of a typical song style because there are just so many and things are always changing. For sure, we did things differently in the old days, but even then, they may have been different in the “older” days.’

From ritual to art

“These days, you can’t expect things to be the same anymore. Songs used to be ritual; we never had the term or concept of “music” in our culture. Songs used to have no fixed words until the record companies came. Some of the songs were only sung by men and solo; women were not allowed to participate in some of the activities,’ he explains. ‘But song today – music – is now “art”. Or “commercial pop”. We have to make and understand these differences in light of new developments,’ he adds. ‘It’s not necessarily a bad thing to have music change to become “art”. How else would our songs survive, if not as art – as something that is appreciated for its own sake by outside people like you? Isn’t it a good thing that now that our songs have become “art”, they can make our life more beautiful? We don’t do those...”
Now that our songs have become art, they can make our life more beautiful."

manual rituals like weeding or ploughing that our songs used to accompany. Our songs have to find a new life – they have to find new social contexts to exist. We have to move on.'

Actions speak louder than words, so the cliche goes, and as a testament to his pronouncements, Lifok feels encouraged about the recording and video-taping of sacred rituals once screened-off from outsiders, paradoxically in the name of 'changing social dimensions'. 'These special rituals are no longer sacred once you take them out of context,' he explains, at the same time not quite negating their potency and significance if the situation arose that they should be enacted under different circumstances.

'When you put something on tape, it becomes something else. It is no longer a religious relic. It’s not dangerous for the performer or scholar to record them anymore. Culture is changing – we want to cling to part of it still – but we have to move on. You can’t expect us to live without electricity or banks, like in the old days,' he adds.

In the name of technological advance and convenience, he has also gone as far as to learn how to operate heavy photographic equipment, complicated video cameras and English-Chinese computer programs on a desktop. At the ripe old age of 61, he applied and qualified for a motorbike license for the purpose of expanding his fieldwork projects. ‘Without my bike, I wouldn’t be as active today at my age as I would have liked,’ he explains.

**Criticisms**

As to how many other members of the Amis tribe are as self-aware, pro-active, or culturally-initiated as Lifok with regard to musical matters, or how representative his views of his culture are, one cannot be too sure.

His classificatory 'models' of Amis folksong (Lifok 2000) mentioned earlier go beyond the work of early Japanese anthropologists (Kurosawa7, Tanabe8) and Taiwanese ethnomusicologist Hsu Tsang-houei (1984, 1992) in looking at the impact of change, modernization, professionalization and the elevation of 'folk' to 'art'. At the same time, they have also been criticized for being overly concerned with a static 'then vs now' view of culture, and for resting on the assumption that 'traditional' musical or cultural traits local to Iwan could be applied to an imagined 'pan-Amis' musical identity. Finally, there are ethical problems posed by what might appear to be his ethnomusicologically unfashionable views that 'the only way for Amis folk culture to survive is through Western art; through teaching our own children our songs and dances via the respected, tried-and-tested ways of Western music education and staff notation.'

Such comments are of course also echoed by other ethnomusicologists in the field, and similar cases in Japanese and Korean folksongs have been mentioned and discussed at some length (Howard 1990, Hughes 1987). But as with Japanese and Korean folksongs, Lifok's (pseudo-academic or not) contributions to the study and understanding of Taiwanese.

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7 K sutomo Kurosawa 1973 Taiwan Takasagokaku noongaku. [Music of the mountain tribes in Taiwan.] Tokyo. Source – based on fieldwork conducted in the 1930s – not directly consulted.

aboriginal folksong should not be totally discounted on account of their being caught in the ‘limbo’ territory of neither entirely ‘emic’ nor ‘etic’. At the end of the day, one thing is certain: That the worlds of uncharted musical territory and socio-cultural insights which beckon from the testimony of Lifok’s life and thoughts about music are boundless, awaiting even more discovery and research.

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The Ideal of Sound in Fujian Nanyin

Vocal styles are affected by language and tradition, and by different ways of cultivation. The tastes and wishes of different peoples are widely divergent as to what sort of tone they prefer. The greatest separation is between the Orient and the Occident; Eastern peoples prefer open, uncovered, nasal tone, and Western peoples prefer covered tone of various sorts.  

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Vocal ideals in nanyin, a classical genre of southern Chinese music, are very different from those in Western classical music. Properties of language play a formative role. The author, who tried to learn the basics of nanyin singing in Fujian, discovered that her success as a performer critically depended on skills in pronouncing correctly the Minnan dialect, which is used in nanyin. So, in linguistic terms, what exactly constitutes a lovely voice or a natural sound, in this specific genre?

In the autumn of 1996, while taking my first nanyin singing lessons in China, I was faced with the situation described by Henry Cowell in the quotation above (from an introduction to the record sampler The World's Vocal Arts). In China it didn't take me long to discover that singing was not just a matter of singing, and that what people in the West view as a pure and lovely sound was not necessarily valued in such terms in China.

One day my singing teacher Wang Xiuyi, a professional musician and a member of the local nanyin ensemble, asked me somewhat reproachfully: 'Why don't you use your natural voice?' She caught me by surprise, as I had always assumed that, in singing, I was already relying on my natural vocal resources. True enough, my performing habits had been shaped by years of vocal training at home (in a church choir), but hadn't the gist of the training been not to overstrain one's voice, and to sing from the belly, i.e. with a relaxed throat?

It appeared that the specific difficulties I had in reaching my teacher's 'ideal of sound' were connected to the correct articulation of words. Nanyin is supposed to be sung in Minnan dialect (Minnanhua). The phonemes of this dialect have several features quite distinct from those of the German language, while showing only vague relationships to modern standard Chinese. (Actually, in referring to it as a dialect, I'm conveniently following Chinese academic views – it could well be described more accurately as a separate language.)

Studying the language and the vocal style of nanyin simultaneously, I realized how closely the words and the singing were connected. In nanyin music, the phonetic and musical components – and, to a certain degree, the semantic components, too – are related in unique

1 Cowell, The World's Vocal Arts, 1955, recorded by Folkways Records & Service Corp. NYC.
ways in the aesthetic foundations of the singing – I would venture to say that they account directly for the ideal nanyin sound.

**Fujian nanyin**

Nanyin 亜音樂 is a genre of ensemble music in southern China, originally performed by members of the local elite mainly for purposes of entertainment or in the context of Buddhist festivities. I prefer not to enter into detailed discussions on the origin of nanyin. Suffice it to say that the music – which is many centuries old and, no doubt, an amalgam of different influences – received its current structural features during the Song and Ming Dynasties. Many elements of those periods are still in place in modern performance.3

Nanyin comprises three categories, the instrumental suites pu 堆, the historical vocal suites 招 (nowadays often performed without a singer), and the vocal pieces qu 亦. Historically most of the nanyin repertoire belongs to the vocal category. The lyrics are ballads

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2 The term nanyin is a compound of two words: nan 南 – south and yin 音 – music or tone. Fujian is a province in Southern China.

3 In discussing the origin of nanyin, no two researchers seem to hold the same view. Chinese scholars, especially Taiwanese, date certain features of the music much further back than Western scholars are generally willing to acknowledge. See Chen Mei'e, *Taipei Han Tang Yuehfu, Tour of Europe and Mainland China* (1995). Researchers like Stephen Jones assume that the music was first established during the Song or Ming Dynasty. See Jones, *Living Instrumental Traditions*, Oxford 1995, p. 298. See also Nora Yeh, *Nanguan Music in Taiwan. A Little Known Classical Tradition*, UCLA (PhD) 1985, p. 39.
mainly describing famous court romances, often sung in the first person, and – in most of the ensembles – by a woman. The performance style is intimate and refined, intended for a chamber audience, yet charged with powerful and fairly extrovert emotions, frequent expressions of deep mourning and sadness: the love sorrows and dejection are usually wringing the singer’s heart, making her weep and mourn her own fate, although the performance is entirely cast in tender, delicate and superbly controlled musical phrases.

As far as the mainland is concerned, the use of the Minnan dialect in the music may suggest that the tradition is only found in some parts of Fujian Province. However, in the course of time, Fujianese people migrated to Taiwan, Hong Kong and other Southeast Asian countries, so that nanyin can actually be found in those regions as well.

The nanyin sound ideal relies on phonetic elements of the dialect as found in Fujian nanyin; they shape the vocal style. Below I will discuss the role of a number of these elements – notably the phenomena of nasalization and pressed phonation – which are, in my view, at the heart of the tense emotional style of nanyin.

Before explaining them in more detail, I should point out that these elements achieve their full effect in combination with a number of other factors – not dealt with in this paper – such as a relatively low register of the voice and a relatively slow tempo (leading to a more subdued style than in most Chinese operatic singing), as well as the through-composed character of nanyin ballads – the music is not a plain sequence of separate units like stanzas and refrains, but more accurately an uninterrupted flow. Its various sections are interconnected musically. This affects the singers’ breathing and the way in which they produce the sounds.

Nasality, and phonetic characteristics of Minnanhua

In Western phonology, articulation is generally classified into three main types, in connection with the role played by the velum (soft palate): oral, nasal, and nasalized. The soft palate is responsible for articulation in the nasal-pharynx cavity. In the words of one phonologist: ‘The respiratory tract into the nasal cavity can be opened or closed by the raising or lowering of the soft palate. If the air flows unhindered into the nasal cavity, and at the same time, the oral cavity is closed somewhere, the resulting sound will be nasal. [m, n, ng etc.] If the respiratory tract to the nasal cavity is closed off, the resulting sound will be oral. If both respiratory tracts are open at the same time, the resulting sound is called nasalized...’ 14

In Chinese musicological studies such differences in sound are hardly ever taken into account, but phonological studies of the Minnan dialect do differentiate substantially in this respect.5 The nasalized sound is said to be a soft sound, partly responsible for the unity of phonemes. In the case of nanyin, it adds to the sentimental (i.e. emotionally charged) style of the music.

Minnanhua 是 the dialect or language spoken in southern Fujian, as well as in the local Chinese communities of the areas mentioned above. While regional differences exist, some common elements can be identified. Of all the forms of spoken Chinese known and still used in China today, Minnanhua is reportedly closest to the Middle Chinese that was spoken during the Song Dynasty. It is characterized, amongst other things, by nasalized vowels and

5 See Zhang Zhenyu, Taiwan Minnan Fangyans Jilie, Fuzhou 1983, p. 175-78.
by the denasalization of m, n, ng before these vowels. The Dialect Instruction Book of the University of Xiamen distinguishes as many as nineteen different nasalized vowels, and notes a frequent occurrence of nasal endings such as -ng. Besides these nasalized vowels and the nasal sound, glottis sounds such as -ak, -at, and -ap contribute to the special character of the spoken language. Furthermore, there are a number of tonal features. Chinese languages are tonal (meaning that the individual words carry specific tones which co-determine their meaning). Minnanhua has seven different tones within a relatively low register, as compared to standard modern Chinese. These tonal features are believed to contribute to the smooth and warm character of the nanyin vocal style.

Musical characteristics of nanyin
A general feature of the vocal music of nanyin is the frequent use of melismatic figures that split each individual syllable (= word) into its three constituent parts, this according to the Chinese phonological system which divides the syllable into head, waist and tail. In addition to this, singers may also split a word – as in the Indo-European phonological system – into initial sound and final position. Here is an example utilizing all these elements: the syllable hiong can be split as follows:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
h \quad i \quad o \quad ng \\
\text{initial sound} \quad \text{waist} \quad \text{tail} \\
\text{final position}
\end{array}
\]

In musical performance, a melisma could carry all these splits as follows:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{\small Initial sound} \\
\text{\small Waist} \\
\text{\small Tail} \\
\text{\small Final position}
\end{array}
\]

In nanyin, nasal singing can take place in three different ways. Firstly, through nasal syllables which are sometimes added sounds without any semantic meaning, like [m] in the example below:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
m \quad l \quad i \quad m \quad a \quad l \quad i \quad n \quad m \quad a \quad i \quad n \quad m
\end{array}
\]

Secondly, through nasal endings such as -ang, -iarg, -am, -iam. In such cases the splitting of the syllables will emphasize and extend their nasal quality:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
si \quad m \quad h \quad a \quad n \quad g \quad d \quad i \quad n \quad d \quad a \quad n \quad g \\
\text{mian} \quad \text{mian}
\end{array}
\]

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Thirdly, through nasalized vowels: a, e, ø, i, o, u:

Pressed phonation as a result of vowel quality
In addition to nasal sound, another prominent and easily audible feature of nanyin singing is pressed phonation (i.e. the production of 'pressed' sounds). One may wonder how this phenomenon can occur in music which is simultaneously characterized by the softness of nasal or nasalized sound, but once again, properties of the dialect offer an explanation.

There are approximately thirty-two syllables (words) with an [i] vowel as initial in the dialect. Nine of these are nasalized, while nine others have [i] in final position, implying that many words contain either an initial or a final [i] vowel. I was struck by this feature even while listening to nanyin for the first time, and not yet familiar with the peculiarities of the dialect.

The texts are in rhyme; if a final [i] appears in rhyming position, all subsequent rhymes are likely to have final [i] as well. The music is structured in such a way that melisms are found in every melodic phrase, and in each case a melisma occurs at the end of the phrase, with a melodic shape that will often be repeated in subsequent phrases (due to the demands of the rhyme). Singers tend to draw out the [i] sound along the melisma. The example below shows two different melismatic phrase endings (on the syllables li and bni), and their subsequent repetitions (on zi, actually pronounced [zi: ] in Minnanhua, and li.) Note that the music, if repeated, allows for some variation.

In other words, pressed phonation in Minnanhua is tied up with vowel quality.\(^8\) It does not necessarily conflict with the occurrence of nasal sound. The nasal resonance of vowels like [i] and [e] is produced in the front of the oral cavity. An important feature of pressed phonation is the elevation of the larynx, almost inevitable if the singer aims at producing long drawn-out [i]-vowels, as in the example above, but this same elevation also occurs in the production of -ng finals, and is responsible for the narrowing of the vocal tube.

As one vocal researcher put it: 'What makes the [i] vowel most distinctive acoustically is the high, close position of the tongue. With the exception of the apex of the tongue, which

\(^8\) Of course the dialect and the texts are not built up solely from syllables with [i] and [e], but these are the vowels best suited for pressed phonation, and they do occur very frequently, which is why I have singled them out here for discussion.
contacts the lower teeth, the front of the tongue is elevated so that the tongue arches almost to the roof of the mouth. Breathing method plays a major role in this process. A vowel embedded in a melisma sometimes gets a new push with every tone produced by the diaphragm. The singer therefore utilizes a practice of long and deep breathing. Just imagine what it takes to produce the word bo in sung performance as shown in the transcription below (with the ‘pushed’ tones marked):

\[
\text{\textbf{Conclusion}}
\]

There is a Buddhist saying that, regardless of how wide a separation may seem, the truth of the connection is greater still. Henry Cowell, in his remarks on differences in singing style

between Occident and Orient, stresses the enormity of the gap, but my experiences in Fujian have taught me that even the widest differences in aesthetic ideals and vocal technique can be bridged, provided one is persevering and open-minded enough.

Traditional education in China, including training in the field of the arts, is often based on the plain principle of imitating the teacher. In my attempts to master nanyin vocal music, I tried my best to sing in a manner that was far removed from the ideal sound qualities as I had learned them at home. Via articulation training, and basically by copying my teacher’s intonation, I eventually managed to adapt my voice and master the required pressed and nasal sounds of nanyin. Needless to say, any progress made in this process resulted from learning not just about language and sound production, but also, essentially, about the background and context of the lyrics. Only with such a combined approach could I begin to grasp and internalize the musical and emotional moods and expressive possibilities of nanyin in the manner of traditional singers. The fruit of all this labour was my participation in two concerts of nanyin with an ensemble in Xiamen, the capital of Fujian Province. The audience clearly felt that the appearance of a foreigner on the stage was an exotic event, but nevertheless they—and my teacher, too—responded favourably, finding my performances convincing.

Generally speaking, nanyin lyrics about courtly love affairs provide literary ingredients for an overtly emotional, sometimes (depending on the performer) even desperate mode of expression. Pressed and nasalized phonation (as the result of properties of the dialect), and the realization of these sounds in melismatic figures, are two key ingredients in the highly emotionally charged style of nanyin singing. While such aspects may also occur to some extent in other Chinese vocal genres, they are very prominent in nanyin (and this certainly goes for the high number of nasals and [i] vowels and their specific modes of realization in music, which may be seen as unique features of nanyin).

The genre possibly embodies, in one of its most perfect forms, the ideal of ‘singing like pearls’ favoured for many Chinese vocal genres, specifically southern genres, since the Tang Dynasty. Surely this may also be argued for kunqu, a delicate southern genre of opera, which has an even more detailed system for syllable splitting than nanyin. Kunqu, however, operates in a theatrical setting and on an altogether more grand and more extrovert scale, which entails vocal and stylistic demands of its own. The intimate vocal qualities and intricacies of nanyin and its characteristic mournful sound are unmistakable, and undeniably shaped and perfected within the framework of the specific language in which these southern love ballads are sung.
Han Yong (born 1957), currently residing in the United States, has the distinction of being a Chinese composer who followed a slightly different route in reaching his American musical public. Han did not join the new wave composers or enter America via graduate study in composition. Neither did he embark on an academic career in the United States. Instead, he forged his path through much meandering: from food delivery man to film actor, from poor migrant to successful composer. Joanna Lee spent three days in December 1999, January and March 2000 (across the millennium) talking with Han.

Han Yong, the son of a music teacher in Xi’an, started his musical career with piano lessons as a child. He stayed in Xi’an during most of the Cultural Revolution, and had secret hopes of becoming a great pianist until an injury rudely crushed his dreams. He studied composition at the Shanghai Conservatory from 1978 onwards, became a teacher at that Conservatory in 1985 and (in the early 1980s) wrote a brilliant violin concerto, which combined Bartokian and Shostakovitchian elements with Chinese pentatonism. He was respected as one of the leading artists of his generation. But Han Yong wanted more – the world outside China tempted him. In 1987 he moved to New York, with practically no knowledge of English, few contacts and few ideas of how to proceed once he arrived. There was no chance of starting a musical career just out of the blue, or of going to an American university. Han Yong had to eke out a meagre living with all sorts of small jobs – he started as a deliveryman for Chinese restaurants. He tried to save as much time as possible for pursuing his music studies, and, tucked away in a tiny room on the edge of Harlem, attempted to keep life going, but it wasn’t easy. While working for a fashion company and, later, for a music publisher and struggling with deteriorating health, his dreams of becoming a composer gradually drifted into the background. For seven years he wrote practically no music. Then, one day in 1995, his fate changed. He met his future wife, his financial condition improved, he became more confident and took up composing again. He began to collaborate with his wife in various theatre productions, embarked unexpectedly on a subsidiary but fruitful career as a film actor, and was discovered as a composer by American ensembles and orchestras who began to give him commissions. In this interview, Han Yong talks about his chequered path to success, his ideas about composing, and his views on music and the course of musical history.
When I was a teenager, I was a true fan of revolutionary operas.

JL: In March 1999, your orchestral composition, Drifting Center, was premiered at Carnegie Hall by the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra with great success. I understand you consider this piece an important breakthrough in your compositional life. Why?

HY: I used to believe that to create a new piece of music, I would need a technical breakthrough. When I wrote Drifting Center, I realized that a new approach rather than a new compositional technique was more important than anything else. Let’s take people who don’t know what a bed is – how would you tell them? Would you want to give them a photograph or a drawing, or a paragraph describing its actual physical properties? My way is to take this person and put him or her on the bed, and let him sleep, make love on it, and so on. I don’t show any picture, but I let the person rest on the bed, use it, feel it and experience it. I want the listener to feel the essence of what I write in my music.

JL: What are your earliest musical memories?

HY: I have always loved listening to music, ever since I was a toddler. My father was a vocal teacher at the Xi’an Music Conservatory. He not only loved traditional Chinese music, but also Western music, and he often took me to the Conservatory to listen to phonograph recordings, since we did not have a radio or record player at home. When I was about four or five years old, my favourite piece, which I listened to all the time whenever my dad brought me to the Conservatory, was the sixth movement of the Huanghe Dahechang (Yellow River Cantata), Hebian duikouqu (“Dialogue on the Riverbank”).

JL: Why did you like that specific piece of music?

HY: It’s very dramatic, full of character, rhythmically humorous. Another piece that I liked at that time was the main theme from the revolutionary opera Hongse Niangzi Jun (The Red Women’s Detachment). As a kid I used to love sweets and candies, and I often carried them with me. Whenever my parents took me to visit their friends I would offer people sweets in exchange for them switching on the radio or the record player. I was often successful!

JL: You must have been humming your favorite tunes... Do you still like singing?

HY: When I was a teenager [during the Cultural Revolution], I was a true fan of revolutionary operas. I could sing the vocal parts of evening-long performances from beginning to end.

JL: When did your proper musical training begin?

HY: I started with piano when I was seven. That was in 1964, just before the Cultural Revolution. As soon as the Cultural Revolution started, piano playing came to be viewed as a ‘Western’ musical activity and was banned. My first piano teacher was my dad: he taught me for about a year before the political situation brought the lessons to an end.

JL: What music did you learn?
HY: Czerny, Bayer, and Hanon studies and pieces; and Chinese piano music, by composers such as He Luding and Ding Shande.

_JL:_ Where were you between age eight and eighteen, that is, during the Cultural Revolution?

HY: I remained in Xi’an for most of the Revolution years. By the time I was fourteen, in 1971, the worst excesses of the Cultural Revolution had subsided. Piano playing by that time was more or less condoned, and one day while I was at my home – we lived in part of a building complex that housed members of the Xi’an Music and Drama Academy – I heard some wonderful piano playing. I peeped in and saw a twenty-year-old man playing, perhaps a piece by Chopin, I don’t remember anymore. I went in and asked him for permission to continue listening. Then I asked him whether he could give me private piano lessons. His name was Wei Youshan. At present he lives in Hong Kong as a professional musician and
organizer of the Huanghe Piano Competition. Wei taught me the standard repertoire of Czerny sonatinas and Mozart and Beethoven sonatas. As his private student, I set myself the goal to become the best Chinese pianist of my generation. I got up at 5 a.m. every morning, when the sky was still dark, and went over to the building where the ballerinas rehearsed during the daytime. It had a piano. The door to the rehearsal room was always locked, but if necessary I climbed over the window to get in. Actually, as a teenager, I was not particularly brave and daring, so I went together with a friend, a trumpeter, and had him climb in before me to switch on the lights. Then I would climb in and start practising the piano.

By the time the ballerinas arrived, around 8 a.m., I would leave the room for breakfast and then return home to continue practising on our own piano until lunch. Between 8:30 a.m. and noon, I did nothing but Hanon exercises, scales, and arpeggios. After lunch, without a break, I continued with Bach. After dinner I had a bit of rest, then played again for the rest of the evening, concentrating on classical sonatas. Our neighbours were not exactly pleased with all my playing. The room faced west and was situated on the top floor. During the summer it got very hot in there, I used to put my feet in a tub of cold water. In winter I wore fingerless gloves and hats to keep warm. I studied with Wei from 1971 to 1975, which was when he moved to Hong Kong. By that time my piano technique had become very good. I was registered in secondary school, but I did not attend any classes. I did some study about two weeks before the final exam period and then took the exams. I still passed with good grades. According to my schoolteachers, I was a good student.

**JL: What else happened during those years?**

**HY:** From 1975 to 1978, I spent some time in the countryside, working in the fields. I often travelled home, staying a few months here, a few months there. From 1975 to 1976, I was a piano student of Zhang Kongfan. One day, while I was practising, my wrist began to hurt, it all happened within five minutes. My teacher, my parents and I searched for doctors far and wide to cure my injury, which impeded me from playing the piano. I was heartbroken.

But eventually I learned something very valuable – to look at the bright side of things and to accept reality, also in times of adversity. During the Cultural Revolution, my family suffered; there was some interference from Red Guards, big character posters (dazibao) were written denouncing my family, but at least they didn’t use physical violence against us. My family belonged to one of the so-called ‘five black types’ (heiwulei); my grandfather had owned land, so he was categorized as a landlord.

Because of my wrist injury, my dad suggested that I start learning the violin. I tried it for two days but then gave up. I also tried to play the clarinet, and gave that up, too. Finally, my dad suggested that I try my luck at composing.

**JL: Do you remember the first composition you wrote?**

**HY:** Yes. My eldest sister was working in a primary school as a music teacher in 1977. There was an annual music competition for all the schools in the city, in which newly composed music and dances were submitted for adjudication. She asked my help in composing a new song for that year, a pentatonic melody. It was my first piece, and it won the second prize.

While I was in the countryside I didn’t do much labour, really. I read books on music instead. We slept in dormitories, usually on the floor with twenty people in a room. During
the daytime I assisted the others in the fields, but in the evenings I hid under a blanket with an electric torch to read books on composition translated from Russian.

JL: I have the impression you survived the Cultural Revolution without much suffering.

HY: I believe I’m a person whose philosophy and outlook on life are really based on the quality of the internal conditions of life, not on any environmental circumstances.

JL: How about your musical training after 1978?

HY: My dad taught at the conservatory while I was young, so I already knew a lot of music through recordings, even works by composers such as Bartok and Shostakovitch. I still view Bartok’s Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion as a masterpiece. I also greatly admired music by other early twentieth century masters, like Stravinsky and Milhaud. I remember being rather fond of Debussy’s Cello Sonata.

JL: The works and the composers you mention are modern, and their music is pretty complicated.

HY: I learned to appreciate them by ear, I didn’t get to see any scores. The only full score I had access to at that time was of Beethoven’s Sixth Symphony. But I wasn’t interested only in Western music. I also learned a lot about Chinese music from my mother, who taught literature at the Shaanxi Provincial Opera Institute (Shaanxi Sheng Xiqu Yanjiuyuan). As a kid I would often go backstage to look at the people while they put on makeup and prepared for the stage. I did that from when I was very young, and in the process I learned all the operatic tunes. I used to go to performances for free, there was never any need for me to buy tickets.

JL: When did you enter the Shanghai Conservatory of Music?

HY: In 1978, when China reinstated the university entrance exams. I was among the first who were admitted to the Shanghai Conservatory, after I had passed examinations in Xi’an. We were required to do many compositional exercises: an art song setting – for which they gave you the lyrics – which had to be finished in three hours; an instrumental piece, also in three hours; then a composition based on a given melodic motif, and harmony exercises. There was even a practical piano exam, at which I played Beethoven’s Sonata in C Minor (Pathetique). Furthermore, there were examinations on Chinese folksong, political essays, and the Chinese language.

I submitted original compositions, one of which, I remember distinctly, had a very descriptive title: ‘Silence before the Storm’ (Bao fengyu zhi qian de jijing). I also handed in some incomplete piano pieces. I did very well in all these tests. When everything was finished, the examiners already said, ‘See you in Shanghai.’

Later, my teachers told me that I was the only student who had been admitted to the Conservatory without submitting a major orchestral work. They said they found my smaller musical works quite unique.

I have always thought that it was difficult to teach or to learn to master the musical language of any particular composer. I think now that when I wrote my first composition, it happened mainly out of an instinct of what music could do to express a particular atmosphere. I reflected for a long time on what composition should really be about: it was
not so much dependent on the working out of technical details of melody or harmony, but on the clarities of one’s creative approach and artistic goal.

**JL:** What training did you receive at the Shanghai Conservatory?

HY: I became a student in the composition department of Shanghai Conservatory, which is the oldest and most famous of the country’s conservatories — it was founded in November 1927. I did five years of intensive study, pretty tiring at times! For two years on end I had to complete up to twenty harmony exercises every week. I took lessons in reading orchestral scores and I took training in keyboard harmony. It was Shi Yongkang who taught me counterpoint, form, harmony, and orchestration. We did not use a textbook for his courses. Apart from composition lessons, I also took classes on Chinese folk music as well as on composition for Chinese instruments.

The late 1970s were a golden age in terms of China’s educational system; the atmosphere was positive and people were really keen to seize opportunities after the stalemate years of the Cultural Revolution. The economic progress — or perhaps one should describe it as a shock of the system — of the 1980s and 1990s turned China into a very different country. At present, money has become the one motivating force for everything. But in 1978, when a stable period began for the Chinese, following the trial by fire of the Cultural Revolution, people were still sincerely focused on professional training and proper education. That was the milieu which nurtured my own generation of artists — composers, film directors, etcetera — who are now making their mark not only in China but also abroad, in every part of the world.

**JL:** How would you describe your attitude as a student?

HY: I guess I was slightly less ‘traditional’ than the stereotypical, obedient Chinese student. I always tried to think of ways to disprove what my teachers taught. One time I attended a counterpoint class specifically on fugal writing which was given by Chen Mingzhi. He taught the writing of fugal themes, stressing the importance of either choosing major or minor and not mixing the modes. I then deliberately wrote a main theme that mixed up major and minor. I thought my experiment was useful: I had to grapple with developing this theme, deliberately avoiding clashes of major/minor, but the tonal ambiguities allowed for a lot of creativity.

**JL:** In 1982, as a fourth year conservatory student, you wrote your Violin Concerto, which became a critical success.

HY: Since my teachers had told me that I was the only student who hadn’t composed a major orchestral work on entering the Conservatory, perhaps I felt the need to react by writing a large-scale piece. The actual incentive was a composition competition for Shanghai Conservatory students, which had been set up by the late Madame Tcherepnin (Li Xianmin). I submitted a score of the Concerto, without a recording. Two days before the deadline, my teacher said it would be good to have a recording. I quickly gave the music to a violinist to learn, and then conducted an orchestra of fellow students who sightread the full score and recorded a homemade tape! I didn’t win the competition, though.

In 1983 a recording had to be made of the Violin Concerto for my graduation recital. At that recital both Chen Gang — the composer of the Butterfly Lovers’ Concerto — and my
teacher Chen Mingzhi came up to me to praise the result. Michael Tippett and Meirion Bowen, when they visited the Shanghai Conservatory and heard my piece, praised it as well. Unfortunately I never got to meet Tippett in person, his opinion reached me via my professors. The Violin Concerto was later recorded by the Shanghai Philharmonic. Arrangements were then made for me to start teaching at the Shanghai Conservatory, from 1984 onwards. In the interim period, I taught a music appreciation course at the Xi’an Conservatory.

**JL:** *Can you describe the style of your Violin Concerto?*

**HY:** I used pentatonic melodies in a modern framework. I felt that the use of pentatonicism need not be limited to the so-called ‘folksong’ style. Han (Chinese) music, specifically pentatonic figurations, could still develop their own functional, harmonic style. I started working on this idea from my second year at the Conservatory onwards. In the Chinese pentatonic series, the major third can be identified as the centre of tonality, which is stable. In a different sense, the dominant seventh chord in Western functional harmony ‘leads’ to the tonal centre in Western music, while pentatonic harmonies are derived from major thirds.

We can build augmented 6th chords, creating a system of three different pentatonic scales, covering 15 interrelated pitches. A system of chromatically ordered pitches is then created, minus the duplication of C, E, and G# of the initial augmented 6th chord. So I can make melodies based on these three branches of augmented 6th chords (one pentatonic scale, or even two, or three).

**JL:** *But what about the overall musical style of the Violin Concerto? Were there Western influences?*

**HY:** My idiom was definitely influenced by Bartok and Shostakovich. The Concerto is a one-movement work, and even the form and the genre (its title, ‘Violin Concerto’) were Western-inspired. At that time, I accepted a lot of Western influence, but the harmonic and melodic materials were based on Chinese pentatonicism.

The opening theme is very ‘modern’, but the second theme is inspired by Chinese operatic tunes. Furthermore, there are lots of whole tones in my melodic writing; even as I switch from one pentatonic scale to another there are few semitones. For me the pentatonic series and my treatment based on the augmented 6th chord constituted the basic idea for my musical language at that time. It took me two months to finish the composition. The orchestration was revised after a year.

When I compose, I like to develop a piece in many ways, neither focusing on one special aspect, nor going to any extremes. In my view, Chinese music is not ‘mysterious,’ it does not defy characterization. In fact it has very strong characteristics. Just think about the percussion music of the Chinese theatre, how logical and numerical it is.

**JL:** *What happened to your career in China after the Concerto?*

**HY:** In 1985 there was a composers’ conference in Wuhan, at which all the country’s
young composers turned up. A recording of my Violin Concerto was played, and I talked about my compositional methods. The work enabled me to become a professor at the Shanghai Conservatory; at the conference it also catapulted me to become one of the leading young composers of that period.

JL: When did you leave China?

HY: I taught composition and counterpoint in Shanghai for three years. I moved to New York in September 1987, not able to speak much English. I couldn’t carry on a conversation beyond the three phrases ‘Hello,’ ‘Goodbye,’ and ‘How are you?’ Under such circumstances, there wasn’t any hope to start looking for a real job. So I worked as a deliveryman for Chinese restaurants, for which I did not need to speak any English: it was just a matter of knowing how to read the addresses. I didn’t even have to say how much the check was, just show the piece of paper to the customer. I did think of attending college, but knew that I wouldn’t even be able to pass the TOEFL exam at that time. I didn’t like being a delivery boy, but I carried on with this work for about a year, taking time off to study. I would work for two weeks (earning about $600), then quit to study English on my own and listen to music for a couple of weeks. As soon as the money ran out I’d find another restaurant to employ me again as a deliveryman.

In my second year in New York City, I began working at a fashion company assembling accessories. My handiwork was good, and my boss liked me a lot. He even offered me a share in the company if I were to stay with him. In 1991, after being at this fashion company for more than two years, I decided I had to go back to music. I worked very hard, often more than eighty hours per week. My health deteriorated, so I had to stop working for three months to recuperate.

In that year I visited China, where I had some medical checkups. I was also able to see my father again, who would die one year later. When I returned to New York, I began to work for Music Pen, a company that published scores of both serious and popular music. I entered data for them into a computer and learnt a lot about computer skills, very handy for me once I resumed composing.

JL: How long was your break from composing?

HY: I did not write music from 1987 to 1995, except for some small pieces. I wrote one song, some music for two student movies by college film students, as well as for a documentary film for Channel 13, PBS, Escape from China, about students who demonstrated in Tiananmen Square in 1989.

Although I did not compose much, I spent a lot of time listening to music and going to concerts. I had one neighbour who was in charge of ticketing at Lincoln Center, and who kindly arranged concert tickets for me so I could get in for free. I also knew an usher at the Metropolitan Opera House who let me in whenever I was there. I was especially interested in
modern opera and new music, but unfortunately they did not schedule that very often at Lincoln Center at the time. They favoured operas like La Traviata and Carmen, with which I was already familiar from early youth.

In May 1992 my father passed away. I had always been very close to him, we were great friends, so it came as a blow. I felt I could not continue to work in Music Pen, not the way I had worked – mechanically. I stopped working and decided to look after my creative, musical, career again.

I returned to composing, supporting myself by teaching piano in 1993 and 1994, but found that I could not immediately apply my free time and energy to the task. In January 1995, I met my wife Joumana at a party. This encounter became a turning point. I began to feel better about my personal life, and I found that a new force had entered my creativity; now I wanted to compose. In April 1995, Zhou Long, an old friend and music director of ‘Music from China,’ commissioned a piece from me. Seven Brocades was the result.

**JL:** What were the creative impulses of Seven Brocades?

**HY:** During the years when I did not compose I continued to think about music. My view of Western music culture gained a new perspective through concert-going, and my understanding of Chinese music also changed. These seven years were very important for my outlook on composing. While I was still in China, I looked upon Western music as something very sacred, unattainable and pure. After my arrival in America, Western music simply became a part of my life; it was no longer unattainable. I found out where Copland, Bartok and others had lived in New York City. Their music became a part of my everyday life; it featured in the concert repertoire that I experienced all the time. Because of this I was able to develop a more rational approach towards Western music. I felt closer to it (rather than distant, which I was when I lived in China). I also discovered innate connections between music and life.

At the same time, I began to develop a different perspective on Chinese music, which mirrored my shift in response to Western music. While I lived in China, I had been surrounded by Chinese music and culture; I had felt Chinese music all the time, but I had not processed it (and the culture) in my mind. When I arrived in America, I acquired the distance needed to observe Chinese music and culture.

I was able to understand Chinese music and the effect it had on me more fully; at the same time, I was absorbing Western music and culture, and its various trends. Minimalism, which I now fully comprehend, is clearly a part of American culture. Look at the World Trade Center in New York City: all the windows of this building are the same. The lines are simple and there is no decoration.

**JL:** Let’s get back to Seven Brocades and its influence.

**HY:** Seven Brocades is very different from the Violin Concerto. You cannot possibly learn another language as well as you know your original language, your mother tongue. Chinese is the language that is closest to me, and which reveals my character. The seven years when I did not compose taught me a lot about Chinese culture and its heritage. I was able to establish a true relationship to my native heritage.

New York City is a confluence of many musical cultures. Seven Brocades is the result of my initial reactions to all the musical cultures which I have lived and breathed in. The pitches
Daoism really makes you look at society with a very calm eye.

Dao relates man and nature. Man is a part of nature, just like a stone, or a tree. There has to be harmony between all these parts. Everything emanates from taiji, which generates yin and yang forces.

I feel that everything in this world – without any exception – is part of this order. Yin and yang are two aspects of the same thing: there is always a dualism of good and bad, saintly and evil. Light must have darkness, hot must have cold, to contrast and balance, man must have woman, and war is alternated with peace.

This philosophy really makes you look at society with a very calm eye. Modern humans have been conditioned to have many choices. For example, we hope that war will be minimized, a justifiable wish. However, there will always be frustration in human beings, because they find that war is unavoidable; people can prepare, control or minimize war, but not avoid it altogether. In Daoism, no right or wrong exists; there is nothing worth fighting about. I have learned to look at the world with distance, while at the same time going to the essence of things.

Why do I write music? I want to write music because this is what I want to communicate. The substance I want to convey is not only theory (as in compositional method), but also what is behind the musical notes: there has to be a mental concept.

JL: You have also written theatre music. What are your experiences?

HY: With Joumana Rizk, I wrote the theatre music for Turandot, the original play by Gozzi. We performed at the LaMama Theater between December 1995 and January 1996. Apart from writing the music for this production, I also performed on stage, playing the synthesizer.

I can tell you a story about this Turandot. One night after the performance a lady came up to me and said, 'I enjoyed the show very much. Would you like to do some commercials?' I said, 'Well, commercials can make a lot of money.' She gave me her business card, and some days later I took my cassette tapes to her office. I wanted to hand my tapes to her, but she said, 'No, no, no, I don't need them.' I looked at her, wondering what was happening. She said she wanted my photo and my measurements. She said, 'You know, I saw you on stage. You were relaxed and confident. I want you to be an actor.' So... I tried. After a week, I was called for an audition for an IBM international commercial. The casting director was the same who did the casting for Bertolucci's film The Last Emperor. I went to the audition, telling people there that this was my first audition, and that the lady coached me. I was invited to Los Angeles for further auditions, together with two other candidates, and was

She said, 'I want you to be an actor'. So... I tried.
eventually selected. An amazing experience – I was travelling business and first class on airplanes for the first time in my life. The shooting lasted for two days. My counterpart was an experienced actress who played in *The Joy Luck Club*.

Through this experience, I grew more confident about becoming an actor. I have since worked in commercials for IBM, UPS, Microsoft, Buick, and American Express. The income is a lot better than that of musical commissions! I continue to do commercials even now. I like to do it because I don’t need to rack my brain for it, and the activity does not conflict artistically with my work of composition. It is kind of refreshing, something very different from writing music.

With Joumana I have composed music for five stage plays. This continues to be a fruitful collaboration.

*JL:* Your work *Folds of Light*, for *erhu*, piano and percussion, seems to be an abstract piece of music, although grounded in Chinese operatic style.

*HY:* The opening passage of *Folds of Light* is an *erhu* solo, like a monologue; it moves almost in moto perpetuo. Compared with *Seven Brocades*, *Folds* is more emotional, closer to human expression. Every time I compose, I look for something new. With every new piece I feel like an explorer.

*JL:* *Seven Brocades* is more open and more natural?
HY: More symbolic, I would say. By contrast, *Folds of Light* is more human and more emotional.

**JL:** Drifting Center, your most recent work, commissioned by Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and premiered in March 1999, I believe, is about nature.

HY: The idea for *Drifting Center* occurred to me during a car trip to Boston. My wife Joumana asked me what I wanted to say in my new work. I was unable to respond. I said I didn’t want to describe objects or expound a philosophy for others. I just wanted to find the natural, internal energy of ‘objects’. For example, fire: I wanted to give listeners the feel of what fire is, of its unmediated energy, and translate that into musical terms. For the section on water, I wanted listeners to experience the feeling of being in the rain without an umbrella.

I was very excited about this approach. So when I wrote *Drifting Center*, I tried to make sure that the experience conveyed by the music was immediate. This approach is more important than any musical or compositional method. But of course technical aspects remain important, too. Through music I want to become a laser that identifies and captures the energy and essence within objects of nature.

*Drifting Center* is constructed on methods included in the *Yijing* (I Ching, The Book of Changes). As in *Seven Brocades* and *Folds of Light*, *yin* is conceived as negative, female, dark, absorbing, while *yang* is conceived of as positive, male, light and penetrating. In numerical terms, *yin* is odd, *yang* even. Groups of intervals, rhythms, and the families of instruments used are based on number sequences found in the *Yijing*.

**JL:** Can you tell something about your early film music?

HY: My first soundtrack was for *Cuò wèi* (Dislocation), directed by Huang Jianxin in 1986. Huang is among the fifth generation of film directors, along with Zhang Yimou and Chen Kaige, and he worked in the Xi’an film studios. It took me two months to develop musical ideas for that film, but I had only five days to write out the score, which features nine percussionists!

**JL:** [After seeing a segment of the film]: I found the music very descriptive, very visual.

HY: I wrote a lot of film music in the 1980s. At that point, composers of film music in China were not paid well. But this film director was kind, and he gave me a bit more for recording fees.

**JL:** If you compare your stage music (like Turandot) with that for the screen, what is the difference between the two?

HY: Theatre people always fear that the music will take over or overshadow the drama. But I want the music to support the events on stage. In *Ivanov* – another collaboration with my wife Joumana – there is one whole scene in which the music is continuous. My music for *Turandot* covers no less than forty minutes of the play. By contrast, most stage plays have only a little bit of music.

All the same, film gives you more space. The sky is really the limit when you write music for films. At least the thinking space is much broader. But ultimately I feel that stage
and film music effects can be quite similar. Theatre people believe that words are most important, but music can help to enhance the effect of the words. Up till now, I haven’t written any operatic works, but I’m currently discussing a possible project with an opera company.

I feel that opera is one of the pinnacles of all music and drama. I don’t want to set music to lines like ‘Are you hungry?’ or ‘I just ate a sandwich’. Opera should inspire us to higher thoughts, more so than direct speech. I would like my music to be a long historical poem, on the basis of extremely dramatic structures. After all, a structure has to be put together dramatically. I am very sensitive to libretti: how the words sound as well as what they mean. I am as sensitive to words as to musical intervals. Just think of the opening motif of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony... Intervals are very important to music, from the shape of the line to harmony. When you use musical intervals properly, the effects can be as thick as blood; if not, tepid as water.

JL: What romantic music do you like?

HY: Where do you draw the line? Anyone after Beethoven? For this period, I divide composers into two groups: 1) purely from feeling, Tchaikovsky and Dvorak; 2) built on more philosophical thinking: Beethoven, Brahms. Of the two groups, I prefer the latter. I don’t like over-sentimental music, I prefer that which is structurally stronger. About a year ago, I developed the following idea about music history. When we listen to music, we mostly view it as ‘classical’ without giving it much further thought; we don’t attempt to place it in the context of the society in which it was created. Nowadays, you can listen to Bach [sings Prelude in C major from Book 1 of The Well-Tempered Clavier] and wonder why we no longer compose something like this any more. But when you analyse the music, you realize that in Bach’s time, being dramatic and sentimental was not part of the compositional ethic. What Bach created was the beauty of the line, and especially the texture between the lines. So Bach’s music is strong in terms of lines. By the time we get to Beethoven, the situation becomes different. People and composers began to grow away from the palaces and the aristocracy, and they started searching for their individuality. Society created new audiences for the music. The 19th century audience was more popular, so the music began to address individual feeling and grew more emotional.

Then came the twentieth century. What was it that composers of the new period wanted to write? What did they really want to say? What was their relation to society? In Debussy’s time, composers retreated into the salon. Music moved away from popular listeners’ expectations, composition became a fantasy, and music an image of the composer’s fancies. Debussy’s music is not basically dramatic, it reflects his state of mind. There was no longer a popular audience in the twentieth century. Composers developed styles in many directions, and popular media became an important fact of life. The perception of time became different: as soon as any work of art was created, it almost immediately became a part of history. People are now constantly looking for a ‘place’ in society. Composers constantly try to create something unique in order to make a mark, and to establish their ‘place’.

Personally, I want my music to truly integrate my beliefs: I want to create melodic beauty, drama, intense human thinking and feelings. Many composers are mainly interested in creating an atmosphere, nothing else. I want my music to have an atmosphere that also has a content inside.
JL: You are currently working on Picture of Years, a work that depicts the twelve animals of the Chinese zodiac.

HY: This new work is commissioned by the Camellia Symphony Orchestra in Sacramento, California. Picture of Years combines the use of traditional Chinese instruments (bamboo flute, bowed stick-fiddle erhu, plucked zither zheng and percussion) with the Western symphony orchestra, putting them together with the purpose of complementing as well as contrasting one another. The twelve parts of the work portray different characters, textures, colours, patterns, and moods. The number twelve in Asian culture is symbolic of regeneration; it also appears in Western numerology: twelve months, twelve astrological signs, twelve chromatic pitches. I wonder if this is a coincidence or an invisible principle we all share.

My impetus for this work is the common sharing of time and space in human existence. Sacramento is a city where many Chinese immigrants stayed in the last century: they contributed not only by building the railway, but also in many other ways, evolving and becoming an integral part of American culture. I have confidence that this is going to be a popular work; it's a very entertaining piece.

JL: Do you teach at all? Have you travelled in China recently?

HY: I was in Shanghai in the summer of 1999, where I gave a talk at the Conservatory, specifically about my compositions and my ideas about music. I also talked about my approach to Western music. I believe that all eras have different approaches to music. During Bach's time, the emphasis was on lines and internal order, and on forward movement. When we come to the Romantic period, composers were concerned about individual emotions. Melodies were subordinate to composers' expressions and emotion. In modern music (from Debussy onwards), composers have concentrated on creating an atmosphere and a feeling.

JL: Who among living composers do you find interesting?

HY: I admire György Kurtág most. Every Kurtág composition is a complete whole. He has incorporated content and a classical sense of form and counterpoint. Yet there is also intelligent thinking and intense feeling in his music. I feel that every pitch, every timbre in Kurtág's music develops from the content. Not one note is wasted; everything is integral.
A SELECTIVE LIST OF

Pop ‘n’ rock loan words and neologisms in the PRC

Peter Micle
(Beijing)

The vocabulary in this list includes neologisms and loan words of Western pop and rock genres gleaned from an array of sources including magazines, audio cassette tapes, CDs, posters, books, newspapers and dictionaries in the People’s Republic from the early 1980s up to the late 1990s. The author also included some older words already part of modern Chinese lexicon well before the 1980s and which in many cases can be found in standard English-Chinese and Chinese-English dictionaries.

The list below falls into the following categories: (a) pop and rock genres in mainland China and the West; (b) pop and rock terms; (c) phonetic loan names of foreign pop and rock singers; (d) names of foreign pop and rock groups, and (e) a list of international record labels. In some cases, pop and rock genres and terms in (a) and (b) are followed by a brief note citing the source and, where they exist, variations on the lexical item.

Phonetic loans of pop and rock genres often appear in English. This is especially apparent from articles published in the Beijing-based newspaper Musical Life [Yinyue shenghuobao] and Audio and Visual World [Yinxiang Shijie] published in Shanghai. An article published in Yinyue shenghuobao in February 1998 on Kurt Cobain employs a Chinese word for ‘grunge’ (zaoyin) in the title, but throughout the text, the word appears in English. The practice of employing English and/or a Chinese equivalent might suggest that such popular music genres are used interchangeably by fans, popular music critics and the music industry with little or no distinction. Many Chinese who are ‘well read’ on popular music genres both in China and the West will often demonstrate some degree of bilingualism both among themselves as well as in the company of foreigners in switching to a foreign word while speaking Chinese or attempting to show that they are aware of the foreign origin of a certain popular music genre. In the process of being transplanted to a new sociocultural environment, these lexical items often take on a new meaning of their own (e.g., ‘party’ and ‘copy’).

Loan words are found in both oral and print cultures. How they are discursively deployed in the mass media scarcely has any uniformity for they are continually reproduced

* I would like to thank David Stokes for his comments and criticisms on various drafts of this paper. I also want to thank Jiang Ning and Zhu Haining in Beijing for their timely comments. I also greatly acknowledge the help of Antoinet Schimmelpenninck for finely tuning this paper and pouncing on more inconsistencies than I thought possible during the final layout stages.
and redefined in different cultural, social and political discourses. Words such as ‘grunge’, ‘punk’, ‘thrash metal’ and ‘rock’ are often used in the print media by some commentators when specifically talking about popular music genres in the West while the phonetic loan often denotes a ‘new’ music product that ties fans, musicians, the music industry and others to a mainland Chinese reality. As many of the examples below illustrate, transcribing foreign words and names do not strictly follow unified transcription rules and one often encounters popular genres and names rendered into Chinese characters in more than one way.

(a). Pop ‘n’ rock genres in mainland China and the West

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Pinyin</th>
<th>English Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bulasi</td>
<td>blues</td>
<td>Blues. Cf. bulasi 布鲁斯 (Wang &amp; Han, 1988:136); yuangu 念曲 (Wang &amp; Han, 1988:136); buluizi 布鲁兹 (Chen Di, 1986:53); landiao 蓝调 (Tony, 1994:33).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chengshi minyao</td>
<td>城市民谣</td>
<td>Urban folk. In the early nineties, this genre became synonymous with Ai Jing’s 1992 smash hit ‘My 1997’. Other flagbearers of this genre include Li Chunbo, Chen Lin and Sun Yue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Electronic rock.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dixia yinyue</td>
<td>地下音乐</td>
<td>Underground Music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dongbeifeng</td>
<td>东北风</td>
<td>‘Northeast wind’. Folk songs from northeast China. In 1987, popular music magazines such as Yinyue sheng-huobao 萤火虫 ran regular columns introducing folk songs from the northeast. Many songs such as 淑 mediante (Cradle Song) and 送给郎 (Seeing off One’s Lover) appeared on cassette tape compilations as medleys set to a pulsating drum beat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dongnanfeng</td>
<td>东南风</td>
<td>‘Southeast Wind.’ A term used to refer to pop songs from parts of southeast Asia (Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore) sung in both Mandarin and Cantonese (Yu Ning, 1996:45).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feizhuliu yinyue</td>
<td>非主流音乐</td>
<td>Alternative music. Cf. linglei yinyue 另类音乐. Sometimes used for ‘grunge’.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
fengke  风克  Funk.

gangtai gequ  港台歌曲  Hong Kong and Taiwanese pop songs. The term ‘Cantopop’ is often used rather loosely in English to denote ‘saccharine’ tunes and ballads sung in Cantonesan and Mandarin by Hong Kong and Taiwanese pop stars and mainland singers as well. ‘...apart from the marginal and marginalised niche market of heavy metal and rock, it is the sickly sweet songs of Canto-pop that fills the airwaves’ (Dutton, 1998:239). Cf. Mandapop (Witzleben, 1999:255 ff).

gongye zaoyin yinyue  工业噪音音乐  Industrial Music.


heibo haobo  黑卜号卜  Hip-hop (Li Wan, Shi Wenhua, 1988:74).

hou bengke  後朋克  Post-punk.

jiliu jinshu  激流金属  Thrash Metal (Tony, 1994:34).

jiezou yu bulusi  节奏与布鲁斯  Rhythm & Blues Cf. Jiezou yu landiao  节奏与蓝调.

jin’ge  劲歌  (lit: ‘energy’; ‘vigor’ songs). The term jinge often appears in glossy song books and on video covers to characterize pop songs that are deemed to be runaways hits at a particular point in time. It sometimes appears with 流行 conveying its huge popularity as in jin’ge liuxing jingq  劲歌流行金曲  (Ge Feng, 1994:2). Also used to describe songs as in 这首歌没有劲儿 which could be rendered as ‘this song is insipid, lacks guts, lacks balls’. Jing is often used in colloquially speech to describe ‘northern-style’ pop ‘n’ rock songs or the vocal delivery of ‘northern-style’ singers (这首歌没有劲儿;他唱得没有劲儿) in contrast to Hong Kong and Taiwanese pop songs often described by northern Chinese as ‘maudlin’, ‘insipid’, ‘weak’ or ‘lacking strength’.1

jiubah yinyue  酒吧音乐  Honky Tunk (Li Wan, Shi Wenhua, 1988:98).

jueshiyue  爵士乐  Jazz.


kouhuige  口水歌  (lit: ‘saliva songs’). A reference to Hong Kong and Taiwanese pop songs produced not by glands in the mouth, but by the Hong Kong and Taiwanese music industry and readily chewed and digested by audiences (Zhang Haiying, 1997:26). Cf. 口水文学  a pejorative expres-

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1 As Andreas Steen rightly points out ‘Beijing rockers tend to criticize the genre [Hong Kong and Taiwanese pop songs] for being overly commercial (but they seem to overlook its impact on their music).’ Steen 1998:154n64.
Karaoké. [A] form of singing accompanied by prerecorded musical accompaniments, MTV images, and on-screen lyrics developed in Japan since the 1970s. Over the decades, karaoke has changed from using simple multi-track cartridges to a sophisticated setup combining an integrated sound and microphone mixer, one or several karaoke monitor(s) (KTV), and a laserdisc system with a built-in device which can alter the key of the original song to the singer's choice (Su Zheng, 1988/1999:185). According to Zhong Yuming (1990:24), the first karaoke bar appeared in Shenzhen in September 1988.

Cf. *zaoyin* 嘚音; *mianzhi* 臭技.

Blue grass (Li Wan, Shi Wenhuo, 1988:6).


Rap (Zhong, Zilin, 1990:44).


Popular songs / Popular music. Cf. *tongsu yinyue* / *tongsu gequ* 通俗歌曲 / 通俗歌曲. While these two terms are often used interchangeably by fans, the music industry, critics, and others, distinctions are made. How these genres are produced and redefined in different cultural, social, and political discourses and the struggle of defining such popular music genres is a subject deserving full length treatment. The provenance of the term 流行音乐 may be attributed to a borrowing from the Japanese.
ryūkōka 流行歌 (also read as hayaruita), but the generally acknowledged appearance of 流行歌詞 is in reference to the emergence of popular urban songs in Shanghai in the late 1920s. Cf. liu yinyue 流音乐, Zhang Mu (1936); 流行歌(Zhang and Kong, 1989:28).

piliwu 霹雳舞
Breakdancing. Enormously popular in the mid to late eighties and featured prominently in the film Rock’n’ Youth [Yaogun Qingnian], with Tao Jin and others doing somersaults, handstands and splits in the Forbidden City. Tao Jin, who tragically died of cancer of the liver in late August 1997 at the age of 36, was dubbed by the reporter Zhu Tao (1997:1) as the ‘King of Breakdancing’ (pili wangzi).

pizige 五四歌

qing yinyue 经音乐
Light music. ‘This genre encompasses instrumental arrangements of Chinese traditional melodies, new pieces by Chinese composers based on simple melodic material, folk songs arranged for voice(s) with instrumental accompaniment, and recent vocal compositions drawing on elements of traditional Chinese style’ (Hamm, 1995:276).

qiuge 囚歌
Prison Songs. While ‘the very name of the term suggests songs sung by prisoners’ (Ling Xuan, 1988:38), the genre has gained a wider currency to designate songs sung by the floating population (盲流), educated or ‘rusticated youth’ during the Cultural revolution (知識青年), prisoners in labour reform camps (勞改和勞教人員) and juvenile delinquents (少年犯) (Jin Zhaojun 1997:28-29). As subaltern groups, the songs and music of the mangliu and zhiqing are in one sense, similar to itinerant performers and entertainers in Chinese history such as the jianghu (lit: ‘rivers and lakes’) who wandered from place to place eking out a living and not unlike entertainers such as the jongleur in Europe throughout the Middle Ages who moved from place to place in search of work. In late 1988 and early 1989 the term qiuge became virtually synonymous with Chi Zhiqiang. ‘The majority of these songs express feelings of.

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3 William Malm (1971:277) suggests that while during the Edo and Meiji periods, both ryūkōka and hayaruita were used interchangeably to denote ‘most of the topical songs of the street, tea houses and music halls’, hayaruita ‘most often refers to the older popular music while ryūkōka is applied to any kind of music including Western products’ (ibid). Sanetō Keishū includes the words liuxing in ‘List of Loanwords from Japanese Recognized by the Chinese’ (1982:234). A reference to liuxing to denote ‘Western popular tunes’ (西洋流行之歯) can be found in an essay entitled ‘On Music Education’, (音樂教育論) by Zeng Zhimin (1879-1929) in Liang Chiao’s Xinmin congshao (New People’s Miscellany) published in Japan in 1903. See Wang & Yang (1996:19).


5 Andrew Jones points out that ‘[t]he proposal to institute “light music” was written by Li Ling in 1964.” (1992:15n.25), the subject was already discussed by Li Ling in the late 1950s and a number of essays in the early 1960s. See Li Ling, Yinyue yihua suitan (1984).

ruange

软歌


ronghe yinyue

融合音乐

Fusion.

shangguang yaojun

闪光摇滚

Glitter Rock.

shijie xing qiaoji

世界性敲击

World Beat (Zhong, Zilin, 1990:45).

shuifang yinyue

睡房音乐


shuochang gequ

说唱歌曲

Rap (lit: ‘to speak and sing songs’). 说唱歌曲; 饶舌歌曲; 说唱音乐 (Guan Ying, 1995:278). 说唱 is also a generic term for a vast array of storytelling and narrative singing in China.

shuqing yinyue

抒情音乐

Sentimental music. Used to cover a wide range of songs that generally follows a political line and includes revolutionary and love songs (Li Ling, 1980:21). Used by Li Ling in his essay ‘Types and Forms of Light Music”, August 1962) as a music genre of qing yinyue 轻音乐.

siwang jinshu

死亡金属

Death Metal.

songge

颂歌

Odes; songs of praise. In the early 90s, the term became synonymous with the release of The Red Sun praising Chairman Mao. Songs include 《太阳最红, 毛主席最好》 (The Red Sun Shines Brightest, Chairman Mao is the Dearest); 《毛主席的光辉》 (The Radiance of Chairman Mao); 《红太阳照边疆》 (The Red Sun Illuminates the Border); 《毛主席永远和我们在一起》 (Chairman Mao will Always be with Us ). Cf. yulege ‘quota
tion songs’. During Mao’s 100th birthday celebrations (1993-1994) a plethora of songbooks were published with songs of praise and quotations of Mao set to music. Cf. gesong 歌颂 (to ‘eulogize’; ‘praise’) as in 歌颂毛泽东’s songs praising Mao Zedong’.

tiange

甜歌

Lit: ‘sweet songs’. Used by Chen Xiaowen (1997:95) to refer to sweet, saccharine songs sung by the female singer Li Lingyu.

Tongsu gequ / tongsu yinyue

通俗歌曲 / 通俗音乐

Popular songs / Popular music. Cf. 流行歌曲. According to the Beijing-based popular music critic Jin Zhaojun, the the term ‘was coined by an old ‘comrade’ who disliked the associations to ‘yellow music’ conjured up by the word liuxing yinyue (Quoted in Jones, 1992:19). Orville Schell calls tongsu yinyue ‘middle of the road pop music’ (1994:315).

wudao yinyue 舞蹈音乐  . Dance Music.

xiaoyuan gequ 校园歌曲  . Campus Songs. 'The birth of the campus songs can be traced back to the year 1977 [in Taiwan]. During that year, Sony and Synco (the Syno Branch in Taiwan) gave birth to the Golden Melody Award, which aimed to recruit student singers and composers from the universities for the purpose of expanding Sony's market to the university students' (Yang, 1994:58). 'The first campus songs in [mainland] China, as I recall, were heard back in 1977...Around 1980, campus songs were inseparably linked to "misty poetry" and poets such as Bei Dao, Shu Ting, Gu Cheng, Jiang He, Yang Lian and Mang Ke. Tertiary and middle school students used this genre as a form of expression and were actively involved in the "creating poetry movement". As a result, campus songs stagnated during this period. It was not until 1982, or thereabouts, that the craze for campus songs appeared among middle school students in Beijing. In the beginning, students used new texts to pre-existing melodies. The songs were simple yet distinct.' Huang, Liaoyuan, (1997:164-165).

xiaoyuan minyao 校园民谣  . Campus folk songs. This genre has its provenance in Taiwan’s campus folk song movement in the 1970s. On the mainland, the popularity of this genre was inseparably linked to urban folk in 1994. A ‘campus singer’ (xiaoyuan geshou, 校园歌手) refers to college students who take part in singing competitions held on campus which often draw financial support from sponsors such as cosmetic companies. These singing competitions attract students from other campuses around the country. See Liu Biju (1995:26).


xibeifeng 西北风  . 'Northwest wind' Pop, rock and disco arrangements of folk songs and folk song 'source material' from north Shaanxi province in northwest China.7 The huge popularity of the 'northwest wind' can be dated, as nearly as any such event can be with the release of the film Red Sorghum in 1987. The following year Meng Guangzheng and Xu Peidong wrote the song 'My Beloved Birthplace' (我亲爱的故乡) which was a huge runaway success and became one of the ten smash hits of that year. On December 10 1988 the Worker's Daily wrote that "'northwest wind' songs are the most popular songs in China'. (Yu Genyuan, 1996:777-778). Cf. xibei yaogun 西北摇滚.

xin langchao 新浪潮  . New Wave. Sometimes used as a generic term for a vast range of often short-lived movements / musical practices.

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xin yinyue 新音乐

New Music. Historically, the term was synonymous with 'the music of Zheng and Wei' (鄭衛之音) grounded in the assumption that such music was 'vulgar', 'low', 'common', 'inferior', 'modern' and polluting the music of the court. In the late Qing and early Republic, 'new' was employed across different discourses as a metaphor for political and social reform. In 1904 Zeng Zhimin defined 'new music' as 'a new form of expression and mode of thought which is new in style and character' ('On Music Education', quoted in Da Wei, 1993:41). The Hong Kong based music scholar Liu Ching-chih defines 'new music' in early twentieth century China as a 'European-type of Chinese music' (1988:196). Cheng Yongzhi (1992:289) traces the term from the concept of modernity as a new mode of thinking in Chen Duixiu's New Youth in 1915 to how it was employed and defined by the political left in the 1930s. In its contemporary usage, the term is broadly used to denote a musical way of thinking that aims for different forms of expression. 'New music is creativity. It should employ Chinese folk music as a focal point and from there create a whole new range of musical possibilities' (Huang Jingang, quoted in Wu Jiniao, 1994:15). Xin yinyue 新音乐 is sometimes used in the press as a euphemism for yagongyue 抑歌乐.

yangge 洋歌

Conventionally rendered in English as 'model opera'. The repertory during the early years of the Cultural Revolution consisted of eight works: The Red Lantern 《紅燈記》; Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy 《智取威虎山》; Shajibang 《沙家浜》; Raid on the White Tiger Regiment 《奇襲白虎團》; On the Docks 《海港》; two ballets: The White-Hair Girl 《白毛女》; Red Detachment of Women 《紅色娘子軍》 and the symphonic suite based on Shajibang. Many of the model works began to reappear in 1984 (Barmé 1987:36-38) and despite the 'mania' for these 'modern revolutionary operas' which has swept the nation in recent years, the obvious nexus between these works and those 'ten years of devastation' (十年浩劫) continues to be a bone of contention among disparate groups of Chinese. Cf. 现代京剧 革命现代京剧.

yangbanxi 样板戏

yinyue dajiang 音乐大奖

Music Awards.

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9 From July 5 to July 31 1964, these operas swept the stage in Beijing and soon emerged as potent flag bearers of the Cultural Revolution (Mu Yi, 1996:16). Other 'model operas' in the early 1970s included Azalea Mountain 《杜鵑山》; Song of the Dragon River 《龙江颂》; the ballet Fighting on the Plains 《平原作战》; the symphonic suite Ode to Yimeng 《沂蒙颂》 based on material from Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy; the piano concerto The Yellow River 《黄河协奏曲》 based on Xian Xinghai's Yellow River Cantata 《黄河大合唱》 (1939), a piano accompaniment of arias from The Red Lantern and the opera Boulder Bay 《磐石湾》. See 'Drama, Revolution and Reform' (Chapter 11) in McDougall and Louie (1997:346). An excellent synopsis of these model works in English is provided in McDougall and Louie (1997:352-362).
yaogun 摇滚

yuluge 语录歌
Quotation songs. A term widespread during the early years of the Cultural Revolution for songs set to quotations of Chairman Mao (Yu Genyuan, 1994:1108). In the early 1990s, a collection of revolutionary and quotation songs were issued by the Shanghai Branch of China Records entitled The Red Sun - New Rhythms to a Compilation of Odes to Mao Zedong 红太阳 歌颂歌新节奏联唱 which took the nation by storm. In 1992 China Records in Shanghai issued a second collection under the same name. A spate of other revolutionary and quotation songs in the wake of the enormous success of The Red Sun (I & II) followed. These included Cherishing the Memory of You - Walking Down the Altar of Mao Zedong 怀念您 - 走下神坛的毛泽东. Echoes of History 历史的回声 and A Radiant Journey 光辉历程. The Shanghai-based Red Sun Music Production Room (红太阳音乐制作室), a subsidiary company of China Records founded in 1994, issued another 3 collections of The Red Sun (III, IV, V).

zhong jinshu 重金属
Heavy Metal.

(b). Pop 'n' rock terms

baijin changpian 白金唱片

baozhuang 包装
To wrap; package; dress up. Baozhuang geshou 包装歌手 ("packaged singers"); Yinyue baozhuang 音乐包装: 歌手包装 (Zeng Suijin, 1994:34). 'What is packaging? It's the wrapping that covers a product. In a commercialized society, everything is "packaged". Singers are no exception' (Wang Yi, 1994:248).

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10 On the 30 September 1966 newspapers and journals around the country published ten quotation songs:
`Lead us to the Core Strength of Our Work' (领导我们事业的核心力量); 'Policy and Strategem are the Life of the Party' (政策和策略是党的生命); 'We Should Believe the Masses, and Believe the Party' (我们应当相信群众，我们应当相信党); 'Our Education Policy' (我们的教育方针); 'Work is Struggle, Who is a Revolutionary, Who is a Counter-Revolutionary, Who Utters the Words of a Revolutionary?' (工作就是斗争，什么是革命派，什么是反革命派，什么是口头革命派?); 'We must oppose any enemy support' (凡是敌人拥护的，我们就要反对); 'There should be a clear distinction between enemies and friends' (分清敌友); 'Seize Victory' (争取胜利); 'Hope the Party Will Take Good Care of Us' (希望寄托在你们身上). See entry for yuluge in Chuo Feng (1993:151). See also Barmé Shades of Mao (1996:19) in 10).

11 On these ‘Mao tunes’ Orville Schell writes: '[a]lmost everywhere on went in urban China during 1992, the sound of these transvestite-like songs blared out of music shops, hair salons, department stores, hotel lobbies, airport waiting rooms, restaurants, dance halls, bars and even train-car speakers’ (1994:288).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Term</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>banchang geshou</td>
<td>Backup singer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bu chadian</td>
<td>Unplugged; acoustic. Cf. yuanyinde 原音的; buyong diande 不用电的. (Holley et al., 1999:252).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD (changpian)</td>
<td>CD (Compact Disc).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chaoxing</td>
<td>Lit: ‘to fry stars’. To make a person famous; create and package a star through publicity. Cf. chao mingxing 炒明星; mingxingzhi 明星制.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chunui dadie</td>
<td>Debut (virgin) album (May, 1998:10).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ciqu zuozhe</td>
<td>Songwriter (Holley et al., 1999:275).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dabang</td>
<td>Break into the charts. Cf. shangbang 上榜 ‘on the charts.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dadie</td>
<td>Album (Angel, 1998:3).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dakoudai</td>
<td>‘Cut Cassette’. According to one source, cut cassette tapes and CDs are excess stock in America which are sent to Hong Kong as scrap plastic and then imported illegally into mainland China.13 ‘Cut’ cassette tapes and cds, are readily available at street stall outlets and small shops throughout China.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dopai(er) gexing</td>
<td>Big label Stars.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>da mingxing</td>
<td>Superstar; celebrity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daoban</td>
<td>Pirated Copy. While reputable music stores often carry ‘original copy’ (yuanban) labels on their merchandise and the Beijing-based Musical Life even runs a regular column exposing the latest copyright infringements, the pirates still run the seas. Pirated copies often come out before the official first ‘original copy’ – the only one for which the singer(s) receives royalties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dawaner</td>
<td>(Big-time) celebrity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diange</td>
<td>Choose, select or ‘order’ songs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dianshi yinyue</td>
<td>Television music. Cf. dianshi gequ 电视歌曲.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dianying chaqu</td>
<td>Sound track (Holley et al., 275).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dibaozhen</td>
<td>Low Fi (Yan Jun, 1998: 14-15). Used to denote music made without sophisticated high-tech equipment producing a somewhat rough and unpolished sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.I.Y.</td>
<td>Do it yourself (自己做). English term used to refer to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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13 A wholesale dealer in cut cassettes and CDs in Nanjing. Interviewed by David Stokes, November 1994.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>duikouxing</td>
<td>Lip-sync (Holley et al., 1999:276).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fanban</td>
<td>Pirate edition; to reproduce or reprint without permission. Cf. daoban 盗版.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fanchang</td>
<td>Covers. E.g. <em>Gangtai fanchang</em> 港台翻唱.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fanchang zhuanji</td>
<td>Cover Album.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fanlu</td>
<td>Copy an original (tape, cd) (Yu Genyuan, 1994:207).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fashaoyou</td>
<td>(lit: 'fever friend'). According to Yu Genyuan, the word has its provenance in Hong Kong slang referring to someone who is crazy or wildly enthusiastic about something as in <em>dianzi fashaoyou</em> (electronics enthusiast), <em>diaoyu fashaoyou</em> (angling enthusiast) <em>yinyue fashaoyou</em> ('mad' music lover). For other uses of fashaoyou see Yu Genyuan (1996:212). The term is also used specifically to describe someone who is crazy about stereo equipment and music. Also refers to those who are intent on buying and keeping in touch with the latest hi-tech equipment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fashao yinxiang</td>
<td>The latest hi-tech sound equipment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gangxing</td>
<td>Hong Kong movie or pop star.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gedan(r)</td>
<td>Song list; 'song menu'. An indispensable part of karaoke bars and clubs where clients choose their songs from these song menus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gemi</td>
<td>Music fan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gexing</td>
<td>Singing star; star singer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| guantou yinyue | 预头音乐 | 'Canned Music'. Used to describe arrangements or 'covers' of pop songs. As the name suggests, they are pre-existing ready-made tunes (i.e. 'canned'). One commentator in 1995 described the process of writing 'original works' to stir-frying (chao cai 炒菜), but added if the end result produced an 'inedible dish', then there was always the 'canned' (guantou) version. (San Er, 1997:189-191). The Beijing-based Red Star Music Art Company's slogan reads: 'we hold in high esteem original works and reject copies and arrangements' (lit. 'cans'). ‘推崇原创,拒绝罐头’ (Huang Liao-yuan et al., 1997:366). |
| guanggao ge | 广告歌 | Advertising music, jingle. (Cheng Dong, 1992:163). Cf. guanggao gechong; guanggao yinyue 广告歌; 广告音乐; guanggao duangechong 广告组歌唱 (jingle).|
| heji | 合集 | Compilation album. |
| jiguang changpian | 激光唱片 | LD (Laser Disc). |
| jingju Kaolu OK | 京剧卡拉OK | Peking opera sung with a karaoke machine (Yu Genyuan, 1996:379). |
| jingxuan zhuangji | 精选专辑 | Greatest Hits. |
| kaobei | 考别 | To copy. Often appears in colloquial speech as a verb to refer to 'covering songs'. Also used to refer to dubbing cassettes. |
| kaxiong | 考兄 | Lit: 'copy brothers'. Fans and others who have procured copyright cassette tapes which are copied onto blank audio cassette tapes (kongbai luoyindai) and then sold illegally on the black market. YXJS, 1996:14-16. |
| liuxing | 流行 | ‘Popular’, 'widespread', 'fashionable'. While used to refer to the popularity of a piece of instrumental music or song, it is sometimes used by rock musicians in a derogatory sense to denote pop(ular) music that is perceived as contrived, formulaic and generated by commercial artifice. In this context, liuxing could convey a number of meanings from 'too poppy', 'commercially-driven' to 'much like everyone else'. |
| liuxing yaoshou | 流行乐队 | Pop(ular) musician (Zeng Suijin, 1997:428). |
| lucyindai | 录音带 | Cassette tape. Cf. yindai 音带; hedai 盒带; cidai 磁带. |
MTV

MTV

MTV. Used to refer to music television in general. Also used to refer to a video clip. Cf. yinyue dianshi 音乐电视. 'The first mainland MTVs were made in 1988 for the songwriter / singer Hou Dejian.' (Barmé, 1993:4).

ouxiang geshou

偶像歌手

Pop idol.

pa daizi

扒带子

Lit: 'to gather; rake up' cassette tapes. It is used to characterize foreign commodities and foreign cultural influences. Tie Cheng (1997:42-43). Although it suggests a grab-bag mentality of everything that is foreign, pa daizi implies an active and conscious choice towards foreign influences and commodities. It encapsulates the term nalai zhuyi 拿来主义 'bring-it-here-ism') coined by Lu Xun in 1934 in an essay of that name and used by intellectual circles in the mid-eighties to describe the import of foreign cultural influences. In the eighties, for pop and rock musicians, songwriters, composers and audiences alike, pa daizi had the meaning of actively absorbing foreign influences through the medium of cassette tapes.

paihangbang

排行榜

'Music charts'. Cf. Liu xingbang gequ 流行榜歌曲.

Party

Party

A term popular in the mid to late 1980s to refer to a social gathering where rock groups and singers perform when not allowed to perform at official venues such as a sports stadium. When not allowed to play the stadiums, Cui [Jian] gigged at functions universally known by the English word 'party'. Organized by foreign residents or entrepreneurial Chinese proto-promoters, parties may be held in parks, restaurants or bars' (Jiavin, 1995:100). See also Xue Ji (1993:282-289).

qianyue geshou

签约歌手

Singers under contract; contract singers.

qingshun(pai)

青春派

Teeny-boppers.

remen danqu

热门单曲

Hot singles; remen jingqu 热门金曲 hot (smash) hits. Cf. zui remen de gequ 最热门的歌曲 (greatest hits); chang-xiao danqu 畅销单曲; fengmi yishide ge 风靡一时的歌.

sandajian

"三件套"

The 'three big things' i.e. television (电视机), video (录像机) and tape recorder (录音机). These have been supplanted by the 'three little things' (三小件). On 3 Feb. 1993 the Xinhua News Agency reported on the craze for the 'three little toys' sweeping Shanghai: LCD televisions (微型液晶彩电), pocket receivers (袖珍收音机) and portable Discman CD players (便携激光CD唱机) (Hsu, 1993:85).

sida gewang

四大歌王


sida tianwang

四大天王

The Four Kings: Aaron Kwok (Guo Fucheng), Leon Lai (Li Ming), Andy Lau (Liu Dehua), Jackey Cheung (Zhang Xueyou).
suge 俗歌  Popular song (Zhan Hao, 1996:6).


tiaocao 跳槽  Lit: 'to jump the trough'. This term is used to describe employees who change their job and find new employment. The term originally referred to draught animals feeding from one trough to the next. In the entertainment industry, the term refers to pop singers who 'jump' from one record company to the next before terminating existing contracts.

tuowu paidai 逃脱派对  Rave party (Wu Qi, 1998:23).

xiaoyang 小样  Demo tape. Cf. (xiaoyangdai (-小-)样带.

xinshengdai geshou 新生代歌手  New-generation singers.

xuanhuan jita 虚幻吉他  Air guitar (Holley et al., 1999:253). Cf. jiaxiang jita 假想吉他.

xueto 穴头  Organizer of a group or artist who tours around the country for money (Yu Genyuan, 1996:827).

ya wenhua 亚文化  Sub-culture.

yaogunye 摇滚业  Rock Industry.


yiyan 义演  Benefit gig.

yuanchuang yinyue 原创音乐  Original Music. A term often used to designate popular songs that are not 'copies' or 'covers' but newly-composed melodies and lyrics. 'Original music is music that we write ourselves. It is not Hong Kong and Taiwanese pop or popular music from America and Europe' (Wu, Jiniao, 1994:14).

yuanban 原版  Original Copy. Cf. daoban 盗版.

yueping 乐评  Music Criticism.

yuepingren 乐评人  Music Critic. Cf. yinyue pinglun zhe 音乐评论者 (Feng, Cui, 1997:32); koutou yinyue pinglunjiu 口头音乐评论家 (music commentator) (Feng, Cui, 1997:32).

zhuanji 专辑  Feature Album. Refers to an album by one particular artist, particular artist. E.g. 'Cui Jian zhuanji' 郑建专辑.

zhuixingzu 逐星族  'Star chasers', 'fans', 'groupies'. A reference to young teeny boppers who idolize pop stars.

zhutige 主题歌  Main theme song(s), title tune(s) used in television dramas, soap operas and films. Cf. chaqu 插曲, songs or tunes taken from television or film.
Foreign Pop ‘n’ Rock Singers

Names of foreign pop and rock singers generally appear as phonetic loans or in the case of a few exceptions, a phonetic loan and a direct equivalent in Chinese. For example, 普林斯 or 王子 for Prince and 艾尔维斯·普莱斯利 or 老王 (the King of the Cats) for Elvis Presley.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foreign Singer</th>
<th>Chinese Name</th>
<th>Lead Vocals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ai’erdun Yuehan</td>
<td>埃尔顿·约翰</td>
<td>Elton John</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ai’erweisi Pulaissi (Maowang)</td>
<td>艾尔维斯·普莱斯利 (猫王)</td>
<td>Elvis Presley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ailike Kelaipa</td>
<td>埃里克·克莱普顿</td>
<td>Eric Clapton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baobo Dilun</td>
<td>鲍勃·迪伦</td>
<td>Bob Dylan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baobo Ji’erdoufu</td>
<td>鲍勃·铁多夫</td>
<td>Bob Geldof</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bier Halei</td>
<td>比尔·哈雷</td>
<td>Bill Haley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bili Qiao</td>
<td>比利·乔</td>
<td>Billy Joel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chake Beili</td>
<td>查克·贝里</td>
<td>Chuck Berry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dawei Boyi</td>
<td>大卫·鲍伊</td>
<td>David Bowie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dai’anna Luosi</td>
<td>戴安娜·罗斯</td>
<td>Diana Ross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiemi Hengdelikesi</td>
<td>杰米·亨格利克斯</td>
<td>Jimi Hendrix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda Langstite</td>
<td>林达·郎斯塔特</td>
<td>Linda Ronstadt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luode Sidiate</td>
<td>劳德·薛弟特</td>
<td>Rod Stewart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maduona</td>
<td>马多娜 (玛多娜)</td>
<td>Madonna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAike’er Jiekexun</td>
<td>迈克尔·杰克逊</td>
<td>Michael Jackson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Jiage</td>
<td>迈克·贾格尔</td>
<td>Mick Jagger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulinsi (Wangzi)</td>
<td>普林斯 (王子)</td>
<td>Prince</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sipulinsiting (‘Laoban’)</td>
<td>斯普林斯坦 (‘老板’)</td>
<td>Bruce Springsteen (‘The Boss’)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(c) Foreign Pop ‘n’ Rock Singers

Names of foreign pop and rock singers generally appear as phonetic loans or in the case of a few exceptions, a phonetic loan and a direct equivalent in Chinese. For example, 普林斯 or 王子 for Prince and 艾尔维斯·普莱斯利 or 老王 (the King of the Cats) for Elvis Presley.
(d). Foreign Pop ‘n’ Rock Groups
Phonetic loans and Chinese equivalents are used. There are also instances of foreign pop ‘n’ rock groups that combine a phonetic loan and a Chinese equivalent (e.g. Dobbie Brothers, 社比兄弟) as well as phonetic loans which include additional words not found in the original loan word. For example, The Bee Gees are rendered into Chinese as Biji san xiongdi (lit: ‘Bee Gees three brothers’). In some examples, both a phonetic loan and a Chinese equivalent of the same band or group is found (eg: The Beatles, 甲壳虫; 拐头士).

i. Chinese equivalents of foreign band names.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Phonetic Loan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gunshi yuedui</td>
<td>滚石乐队</td>
<td>Rolling Stones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiakechong (Pitoushi)</td>
<td>甲壳虫 (披头士)</td>
<td>The Beatles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niepan</td>
<td>涅槃</td>
<td>Nirvana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shairen yuedui</td>
<td>谁人乐队</td>
<td>The Who</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qiang yu megui</td>
<td>枪与玫瑰</td>
<td>Guns ‘n’ Roses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xiao hongcaoo</td>
<td>小红草</td>
<td>The Cranberries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xinxing chengshi laoshu</td>
<td>新兴城市老鼠</td>
<td>The Boomtown Rats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xingshouqiang</td>
<td>性手枪</td>
<td>The Sex Pistols</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yinsu qingnian</td>
<td>首度青年</td>
<td>Sonic Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Za Nangua</td>
<td>砸南瓜</td>
<td>Smashing Pumpkins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ii. Phonetic loans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Phonetic Loan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A’ba</td>
<td>阿巴</td>
<td>Abba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laide ZepuLin</td>
<td>华德泽普林</td>
<td>Led Zeppelin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pingke Fuluoyide</td>
<td>平克佛鲁伊德</td>
<td>Pink Floyd</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

iii. Phonetic loan + additional words not found in the original loan word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Phonetic Loan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biji san xiongdi</td>
<td>比奇三兄弟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bee Gees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

iv. Phonetic loan with a Chinese equivalent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Phonetic Loan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dubi xiongdi</td>
<td>社比兄弟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doobie Brothers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(e). International Record Labels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Phonetic Loan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baolijin</td>
<td>宝丽金</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baidai</td>
<td>百代</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dika</td>
<td>迪卡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feilipu</td>
<td>飞利浦</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huana</td>
<td>华纳</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huana xiongdi</td>
<td>华纳兄弟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suoni yinyue</td>
<td>索尼音乐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polygram</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decca</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philips</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warner Brothers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sony Music</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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The following abbreviations are used in the references:

RMYY: Renmin Yin Yue [The People’s Music]
YXSSJ: Yinxiang Shijie [Audio and Visual World]
YYSHB: Yin Yue Shenghuobao [Musical Life]
YTTY: Yin Yue Tian Tang [Music Heaven]

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TRADITION, POLITICS AND MEANING IN 20TH CENTURY CHINA'S POPULAR MUSIC

Zhou Xuan: ‘When will the gentleman come back again?’

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In 1937, still at the beginning of her film career, a seventeen-year-old Chinese starlet sang a melancholy love song about parting. Few people had heard of the singer, but the song subtly captured the mood of wartime China and became an instant success. It created such a stir that it came under close political scrutiny. Maybe it wasn’t just a love song, but a veiled protest against the Japanese? Or a secret message directed against the Nationalist Party? Or a piece of pornography, a decadent prostitute’s song? Or an anti-communist proclamation? Different political factions in China found conflicting reasons to condemn and prohibit the song as a national danger. More than half a century later, the original recording is still not available in Mainland China. The song gained new popularity in a Taiwanese version, but movie star Zhou Xuan, who sang the original which earned her quick fame, is unaware of its continued impact. In 1957, after a total mental breakdown, she died in a hospital in Shanghai. She was 37.1

The film song Heri jun zailai, translated as ‘When will the gentleman come back again?’ or, more colloquially, ‘When will you come back again?’ is one of the most popular and controversial songs of 20th century China. First recorded in 1937 by movie star Zhou Xuan, Republican China’s famous ‘Golden Voice’, this song quickly made its own history within the music world of old Shanghai. Its popularity derived from an accidental convergence of various factors. Zhou Xuan’s vocal talents, the qualities of the melody and the lyrics, and – most notoriously – the various interpretations and political readings of the lyrics all contributed to this song’s impact. As a commercialized traditional love song it became a top-selling record; somewhat later, due to the sensitive political situation in war-time Shanghai, it came to be viewed as a political threat and was criticized by all censorship offices. The lyrics were interpreted as either anti-Japanese, treasonous or pornographic. After 1949, the song was banned because it was seen as bourgeois and decadent in the People’s Republic of China (PRC).

1 A previous draft of this article was first presented as a paper at the 5th CHIME Conference, held in Prague 1999. I would like to express my gratitude to the participants of the conference. Their various comments, and especially the vital enthusiasm of Frank Kouwenhoven, helped me to rethink certain aspects of this paper. Furthermore, I am also indebted to the colloquium at the Institut of East Asian Studies in Berlin, led by Prof. Mechthild Leutner, where I was given the opportunity to discuss the topic again and where I received further encouragement.
Nevertheless, *Heri jun zailai* survived, not only in Taiwan and Hong Kong, but also under Mainland China's new political superstructure, where it lived on secretly in the minds of the people as a cherished but suppressed emotional relic of the past.

Thirty years passed. Then China's reform policy was suddenly faced with a new version of *Heri jun zailai*; it popped up in Taiwan in the 1980s. Just like the original song had done, many years before, the Taiwanese version provoked heated discussion and varied responses on the mainland. *Heri jun zailai* served as a well-known target during the 'Campaign against spiritual pollution' (1983). However, for the general public, the song also took on the role of a historical and cultural bridge between Republican and modern times. Its reappearance coincided with a sudden revival of Zhou Xuan and a renewed public interest in her life and music. The song accompanied China's modern history in remarkable ways. In the course of time, its fate came to connect Mainland China not only with Taiwan but also with Japan. And even today the song is not entirely deprived of its political connotations: the original recording is still not available in the PRC, and it is the new Taiwanese version which has become popular among the younger generation.

What are the factors that turned the song into such a weighty and controversial item? In trying to answer this question, my point of departure will be a short biography of Zhou Xuan. Then I will concentrate on the story of her song *Heri jun zailai*, how it survived, made its own career and, by the end of the 20th century, partly initiated Zhou Xuan's own revival. Besides her, two other actresses/singers, Li Xianglan (Yoshiko Yamaguchi) and Teresa Teng, are identified with the song and will be mentioned here. They greatly contributed to
the song’s popularity outside Mainland China and enhanced its ability to overcome geographical, historical and even ideological boundaries. Insight into the song’s sixty-year-long history will offer new perspectives for discussing the continuities and discontinuities of China’s modern history, musical taste and practice. Furthermore, the dynamic interplay of the numerous elements involved reflects China’s 20th century cultural policy and can serve as a telling example of the impact of politics on the changing meaning of popular music.

The ‘Golden Voice’: Zhou Xuan (1920-1957)
Named Su Pu at her birth, Zhou Xuan was born in 1920 in Changzhou, Jiangsu Province. She became one of the most successful actresses and popular singing artists in Republican China. After the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war (1937) and in the following twenty years of her career, she recorded over two hundred songs and acted in forty-two movies.²

She is said to have had many brothers and sisters, but since the household was very poor, she was doomed to share the fate of many girls at that time: her uncle ‘kidnapped’ her at the age of three and took her to Jintan, Jiangsu Province, where she was sold to a family named Wang and given the name Wang Xiaohong.² Only a few months later, her new nursemaid, Ouyang Yu, was married to a worker in Shanghai. Xiaohong had to accompany her and was handed over to a family named Zhou in Shanghai’s Beijing East Road – this time her name was changed to Zhou Xiaohong.² Her new foster father was originally from Canton and worked as an interpreter in the French Concession. Due to his increasing opium addiction and the resulting lack of money, Xiaohong was almost sold into prostitution.² Fortunately, Zhou decided to ‘give’ Xiaohong – now aged eleven – to the dance troupe of Sun Moban. The ensemble went bankrupt, but Sun took her to his home, where she worked and lived as his domestic assistant. In the autumn of 1931, Sun introduced her to the already famous Mingsue Gewutuan (Bright Moon Dance Ensemble), which was directed by Li Jinhui (1891-1967). Xiaohong acted and sang together with such well-known actresses as Li Jinhui’s daughter Li Minghui, Li Lili (b.1915), Wang Renmei (1914-1987) and others. By the end of that year, she had made her stage debut under the name of Xiaohong, after stepping in for the sick Wang Renmei.²

After Japan had occupied Manchuria (on 18 September 1931) and bombed Shanghai in early 1932, the artistic spirit changed. Many writers, filmmakers, intellectuals and musicians felt the need to concentrate on the fate of their country, and began to put a high value on patriotism and nationalism. The writing of pure love stories and the singing of sentimental love songs were now condemned as not being patriotic. Apart from a predictable decrease in audience size, due to war-time conditions, Li Jinhui and his troupe were also criticized for

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² According to a song list by Zhao Shihui, Zhou Xuan recorded 211 songs, of which 114 were film songs. See: Zhao Shihui, (ed.), 1995: 245-247.
³ The first years of her life remain fairly unclear. Ma Yining (1981) wrote that she was born in 1918 in a nursery in Jiangsu and immediately sold to a family in Shanghai. Therefore, nobody can say anything about her parents. Zhang Yingjing and Xiao Zhiwei, editors of the ‘Encyclopedia of Chinese Film’ (1998: 395), claim that Zhou Xuan was born on the 1st of August, 1918. According to Zhao Shihui (1998) and to the ‘China Cinema Encyclopedia’ (Zhongguo dianying dacidian), 1997, she was born on the 8th of August, 1920. Zheng Junli (1957) stated that she was born in 1918. Zhou Xuan (1941) herself said that she could not remember whose child she was before the age of six.
⁶ Ma Yining, 1981: 420.
political reasons, as the result of which the ensemble split up and the actresses went their separate ways. Shortly before this happened, during one of the ensemble’s last performances in Beiping (Beijing), Xiaohong acted in the song-and-dance drama Ye meiguī (Wild Roses), and decided to give herself the name ‘Zhou Xuan’. The story of why she chose that name is as follows. One song of the drama, Minzu zhī guāng (The Glory of the Nation), contains the line ‘Zhou xuan yu sha-chang zhi shang, ...’ (literally: ‘Dealing with people on the battlefield, ...’). After the Japanese bombing of Shanghai in 1932, as Zhou Xuan later said, she felt constantly surrounded by enemies, for example during performances, or in the bus. She liked the above-cited line because the words perfectly reflected her present situation. It was director Li Jinhui who came to know her inner feelings and, after a performance, came up with the idea of using the two characters zhou xuan (‘dealing with people / social intercourse’) from the song. Since her family name was already Zhou, he suggested that the combination with xuan would both express her feelings and be a good name for an actress of her calibre. However, since the character xuan lacked the necessary female content, the singer Yan Hua (1918-1951), who later became Zhou Xuan’s husband, decided to add a small wang character on its left-hand side, which changed the character’s meaning to ‘beautiful jade’.\(^7\) The name Zhou Xuan, therefore, must be seen as an expression of her patriotic character, although this was probably not realized by her audience and came to be forgotten in later years.

Zhou Xuan participated in anti-Japanese music activities, and danced and sang for some minor ensembles. In 1934, she won a singing competition organized by several radio stations in Shanghai, and became known as the ‘golden voice’ (jīn sāngzì). In the following year she started to work for the Yihua film company. After playing some minor roles, her career as a film star began in 1937 with the Mingxing film company and the film Malu Tianche (Street Angel), in which she had the lead role and sang Sījī ge (Song of Four Seasons) and Tiānyā gēnǐ (Sing-Song Girl at the World’s End). These were later to become very popular tunes. The film was first released in July 1937, shortly before the outbreak of war and the three months fighting for Shanghai, which led to Japan’s occupation of the Chinese parts of the city. Zhou Xuan, learning to play the piano and improving her Mandarin, was at the beginning of her career and decided to continue working in the film

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\(^7\) See: Zhao Shihui, 1998: 284.
business of Shanghai’s foreign concessions, which were surrounded by Japanese-occupied territory and therefore described as the ‘lonely island’ (gudao).

She lived and worked in Shanghai and occasionally also in Hong Kong. As someone who promoted resistance, she participated in stage performances and also toured the Philippines. According to personal notes and reports about her life, she loved to sing and was a talented artist. She was also a lively talker, very fond of laughing. The famous composer He Luting (1903-1999) praised her musical expression, which was seen as the result of a hard-working routine and helpful in creating her own artistic style.8 In the 1940s she became one of the most adored Chinese film stars whose private life was of public interest and was therefore constantly scrutinized in Shanghai’s newspapers and film magazines. Her private life was shaken by various ups and downs, which were due in part to the daily conflicts inherent to a patriot’s successful acting in the entertainment world within Japanese occupied Shanghai and Hong Kong. Three unsuccessful romantic attachments may have led to her depressive tendencies in her later years, after she had given birth to two sons, Zhou Min and Zhou Wei. After the war she moved to Hong Kong, but decided to go back to Shanghai in the autumn of 1950 in order to play an active role in building up the new socialist China. Private tragedies and her own mental instability made her even more depressed, and finally insane. She was 37 when she died in hospital on the 22nd of September 1957.9

A song is born: Heri jun zailai
The first ‘real’ Chinese sound film with both dialogue and music was produced in 1934.10 By then, film music and the combination of songs and narrative had grown into a heavily discussed topic: left-wing filmmakers promoted the ideological and educational functions of music and criticized the use of music for mere entertainment and money-making. It was a fact that melodies easy to memorize were likely to make a movie more attractive. But songs also gained popularity purely by being disseminated via films.11 In order to live up to high public expectations in this field, film songs were given particular attention. During the 1930s it became common practice for most of the songs to be sung by the actors or actresses themselves.

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9 In 1938 she married Yan Hua, the famous singer and composer of popular songs. The relationship deteriorated rapidly and it was as early as 1940 that she went to a mental hospital for the first time. She later fell in love with Zhu Huaide. After spending a few years with him in Hong Kong, they decided to plan their wedding in Shanghai. Zhou Xuan, already pregnant, found out shortly after their arrival in Shanghai (1950) that Zhu had cheated her several times and secretly taken large amounts of money from her. She left him and lived together with her son Zhou Min. During the production of another film, she fell in love with Tang Di. One year later she gave birth to her second son, Zhou Wei. By the time they had nearly finished their wedding arrangements in May 1952, Tang was accused of bribery and sentenced to three years in prison. Fortunately he had been wrongly accused and was released the following year. When he came back home, Zhou Xuan was already in hospital because of mental instabilities. He did not care very much about her and, instead, enjoyed life with his new girlfriend. The year of Zhou Xuan’s death coincided with Mao Zedong’s Anti-Rightists Campaign. The PRC’s economic growth after 1949 was accompanied by quite a number of political campaigns and ‘thought reforms’, and while one might assume that Zhou Xuan’s mental health was affected by the new circumstances, there is no written evidence for this. See also Jonathan Stock, 1995: 119-135.
From this point of view, the movie Sanxing ban yue ("Three Stars Surround the Moon"), which premiered in Shanghai’s "Strand Cinema" on the 14th of February 1938, was hardly an exception. It was produced by the Yihua film company, with Zhou Xuan and Ma Loufen playing the lead roles. This was one of China’s last silent movies, and for Zhou Xuan the only silent film in which she played. During its screening, the songs in the film were probably played on a gramophone, so that the audience could hear the music. This was a common practice at that time. Many Chinese cinemas had a record player and a ‘master of musical accompaniment’ (pei yue shi) who synchronized the sounds as much as possible with the pictures.

Sanxing ban yue depicts the situation in a capitalist Chinese enterprise. Jiang Liyuan, a patriot who does not want the Chinese market to be flooded with Western products, has already established his own factory and produces household goods. His son, Jiang Zongliang, has been sent to America to study chemistry. Zongliang’s plans to stay in America after graduating are ruined by his father, who wants him to work in the family enterprise in Shanghai. The parallel story starts with the actress Wang Xinwen (acted by Zhou Xuan), who works for the Huazhong radio station. Huazhong runs out of money and Wang Xinwen looks for a new job, which – of course – she then finds in the above-mentioned company. She falls in love with Jiang Zongliang, who has already become the manager, but does not dare to show her feelings for him because of their differing social backgrounds. Jiang, though, in order to properly promote one of the company’s products, asks Wang Xinwen to sing an advertising song, which she does so well that he falls in love with her. After some further complications, Wang eventually leaves the company, although both are still in love with one another, and sings the song Heri jian zailai. Later, Zongliang takes the successful promotion of one of the company’s goods as an opportunity to arrange a party for the working staff. On that occasion, two song-and-dance dramas, Sanxing ban yue (the title of the movie) and Gongyi jiuguo ("Technology Saves Our Country"), are performed. Wang Xiwen, who is also invited, re-encounters Zongliang. The problems are solved, the two lovers finally united and the movie closes with a happy ending.

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12 Chinese: Xinguang daxiyuan, at the crossing of Ningbo Rd. and Guangxi Rd.
13 The film script was written by Pang Pelin. See: Zhu Tianwei, 1990.
14 Her son Zhou Wei (1987: 66) refers to the movie as ‘the only silent movie in her life’.
Sanxing ban yue was the second movie directed by Fang Peilin (d. 1949 ?), and his first music film (gechang pian). The lyrics for the love song Heri jun zai'ai, sung in colloquial Mandarin Chinese, were especially written for this production and, as Wang Weinde points out, became so popular because their mood both underlined and successfully brought together the character and the emotions of the two protagonists. Above all, the song was excellently interpreted by Zhou Xuan, who further enhanced its appeal by her singing style typical of folksongs (minzu xiaodiao). Since she herself, an actress at the beginning of her career, was now playing an actress, reality and fiction became intertwined. After the immediate success following the song’s release on record, it was impossible to mention the song without thinking of the seventeen-year-old actress Zhou Xuan.16

何日君再来？Heri jun zai'ai ? ('When will you come back again ?')17

17 Melody: Liu Xue'an; Text: Bei Lin; Translation: Andreas Steen.
When will you come back again?

Lovely flowers do not blossom very often, a wonderful view does not exist very long. Sorrow covers my smiling brow, missing you brings tears to my eyes.

[Chorus]
After we have parted today, when will you come back again?
When you have emptied your cup, please eat a little, life has few opportunities for intoxication, [and] without pleasure everything is even harder to bear.

[spoken, male voice: 'Come, come, come, have a drink and talk later!']

If we part today, when will you come back again?!

Amidst unbridled pleasure, we’re swaying through that night of spring, oh! The jackdaw is lonely, nesting in a tree, the bright moon is shining high in the sky.

[Chorus]
After we have parted today, when will you come back again?
When you have emptied your cup, please eat a little, life has few opportunities for intoxication, [and] without pleasure everything is even harder to bear.

[spoken, male voice: ‘Come, come, come, I’ll give you the next cup.’]

If we part today, when will you come back again?!

Time is short, we have to depart very soon, such a wonderful moment will never return. One second is weighed in gold, drink as much as you like, don’t hesitate.

[Chorus]
After we have parted today, when will you come back again?
When you have emptied your cup, please eat a little, life has few opportunities for intoxication, [and] without pleasure everything is even harder to bear.

[spoken, male voice: ‘Come, come, come, I’ll give you the next cup.’]

If we part today, when will you come back again?!

Stop singing Yangguan [can] die, (and) raise your white-jade cup, I chat and talk of anything, to ease your troubled mind.

[Chorus]
After we have parted today, when will you come back again?
When you have emptied your cup, please eat a little, life has few opportunities for intoxication, [and] without pleasure everything is even harder to bear.

[spoken: ‘Hey! Have another cup, drink it dry!’]

After we have parted today, when will you come back again?

The lyrics were written by Bei Lin, whom Zhu Tianwei later identified as Huang Jiamo. Huang was a GMD-affiliated scriptwriter and an advocate of Chinese ‘soft movies’ (ruanjing dianying) and theory, who wrote the lyrics at the request of film director Fang Peilin. What kind of message did the lyrics convey? On the plainest level, the song gives

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19 Huang also worked together with Fang on other film projects in that period. (See Zhang Yingjin (ed.), 1999: 20.) The ‘soft film’ was the artistic response to leftist film production and its politicization of the medium. This group of filmmakers ‘rejected the didactic tone so prevalent in many leftist films by calling film “ice-cream for the eyes” – sensuous, pleasing and devoid of politics’, (Zhang Yingjin and Xiao Zhiwei (ed.), 1998: 16). Unfortunately, not much information is available about Huang Jiamo. The ‘China Cinema Encyclopaedia’ (Zhongguo dianying da cidian), 2nd ed., Shanghai 1997: 413) contains a few lines on his life, without even mentioning when and where he was born (or died). We also find his name in Cheng Jihua (ed.): Zhongguo dianying fazhan shi (‘History of Chinese Film Development’), 2 volumes, 4. ed., Beijing 1998: 396ff, where he appears as an editor of film magazines and as someone engaged in Chinese film theory.
voice to a sing-song girl who desperately tries to persuade her lover not to leave her. Parting and separation are common traditional themes in Chinese poetry. It was probably Huang’s aim, consciously or not, to rely on his ancestors in writing a modern Chinese popular song with which the film audience and the urban listener could easily identify.

With his reference to *Yangguan san die* (‘Three Repetitions of the Yangguan Melody’) in the song’s fourth stanza, Huang showed that he was fond of China’s traditional culture; perhaps he intended to encourage the audience not to forget the great poets of the Tang Dynasty (618-907). *Yangguan san die* was a song initially based on a poem by Wang Wei (701-761). Wang Wei had written the poem as a *jueju* 20 for a friend who was sent to Central Asia and who had to cross the Yangguan pass – situated in what is today Gansu Province – on that journey. 21 Over the following centuries the song became so popular that it appeared in various text books and song books, also with new words, verses and repetitions added over time by different authors. 22 The most famous lines of the poem, translated as ‘A Farewell Song’, are the following: 23

The little town is quiet after morning rain;  
No dusk has chilled the tavern willows fresh and green.  
I would ask you to drink a cup of wine again;  
West of the Sunny Pass [Yangguan] no more friends will be seen.

Let me quote another poem by Wang Wei, ‘Parting among the Hills’, to underline the historical importance of the motif of separation: 24

I watch you leave the hills, compeer;  
At dusk I close my wicket door.  
When grass turns green in spring next year,  
Will you return with spring once more?

In yet another context, we also find a line where it says that the elite enjoys a luxurious life and, while drinking wine, does not realize that the enemy is already entering the city via its west road. 25 In brief, the theme of saying farewell, combined with wine-drinking and longing for the friend’s return, was nothing new to a Chinese audience. One respect in which *Heri jun zailai* differed from its classical predecessors was that the words were sung by a woman. But this was no novelty in Chinese history either, as will be shown below. In the modern song, the female singer’s request to stop singing the Yangguan Melody is basically an appeal to ignore feelings and sentiments traditionally linked with parting, and not to lament the sad circumstances – instead one should enjoy the last evening. The Chinese audience was surely familiar with the kind of situation described in the song, and at the same time recognized its famous traditional source, which stressed the classical farewell motif but which could also be interpreted as a hidden warning against wrongful elitist behaviour and the miseries of drinking too much wine.

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20 Jueju: a poem of 4 lines, each containing 5 or 7 characters, with a strict tonal pattern and rhyme scheme.
21 In Stephan Schahmacher, 1982: 104.
A song of general despair

*Heri jun zailai* was the dance song (*wu qu*), having become popular overnight. There was 'probably no dance hall that could afford not to play it'. There were other dance songs as well, rhythmically speaking much more suited to the purpose of dancing, but in this case the attraction is said to come from the rather simple instrumentation (mainly accordion), the style of Zhou Xuan's singing, and the content of the lyrics, which, apart from their traditional connotations, evoke an emotional situation experienced by nearly every Chinese living in Shanghai at that time. The Chinese parts of Shanghai were occupied by Japanese forces, thousands of people had been killed, the government had fled to Chongqing, and the patriotic, nationalist spirit was at an all-time low. Who was not full of grief and sorrow, who was not lonely or parted from their lover, or beloved relatives? Who wasn't uncertain about when to return home and did not want to have another drink in order to forget all this, or - at least for a moment - to enjoy life at the side of a lovely woman?

The song spoke for the masses. It reached all the radio listeners in Shanghai, and created a sense of solidarity that now entered each private home, café, department store and dance hall. But the melody was not only to be heard in Shanghai and Nanjing. After the incident at the Marco Polo Railway Bridge in July 1937, as Hong Kong-based film director Li Hanxiang recalled in 1987, *Heri jun zailai* became the most popular song in Japanese-occupied Beijing (Beijing). Something that could only happen with well-known tunes happened: listeners changed the first two lines to make them fit their own context: 'Lovely flowers do not blossom very often, good alcohol does not last very long.' War-time China faced many difficulties and social problems. While they are beyond the scope of this essay, one type of experience was that couples were split apart, or that women, for whatever reason, were left alone by their husbands or lovers. Many people must have witnessed such splits. The song could be seen as a lively and melancholic expression of feelings connected with such a traumatic experience. A woman fears being left alone, and out of despair tries to delay the farewell for as long as possible. The 'lover' mentioned in the song does not need to be strongly persuaded, quite obviously he too is eager to have another 'last' drink with her. Not knowing what will follow his inevitable departure, his attitude demonstrates despair, hopelessness or even surrender: there is nothing one can do, just drink!

The silent movie 'Three Stars Surround the Moon' seems to have enjoyed a rather short-lived success, probably because the public was more interested in the novel medium of sound films. All the same, the popularity of its hit song steadily increased. As the song was recorded by China's biggest recording company, EMI Shanghai - by then a subsidiary

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27 Japanese troops from the Tianjin garrison tried to take over the bridge, situated fifteen miles southwest of Beijing. They met with fierce resistance from Chinese troops. The shooting marked the beginning of open warfare between China and Japan.
29 'Three Stars Surround the Moon' is clearly regarded as one of the less important movies of this period. The two-volume *History of Chinese Film Development* (Ed. Cheng Jihua, 1963) ignored both the film and the song, presumably for political reasons. (Cheng's publication did pay attention to films like 'Street Angel' (Vol.1, 442-449) and 'Orphan Island Paradise' (Vol.2, 80-81, 85-87 ff). About 'Orphan Paradise', the book said that the film had been successful in Hong Kong, where it was shown for twelve days: "people were moved when the sing-song girl sang Liuwang qiu ["Exile Song"] and 'March of the Volunteers'....." The China Cinema Encyclopedia (Zhongguo dianying da cidian, 1997) refers to 'Three Stars Surround the Moon' but not to the song *Heri jun zailai*; and Zhang Yinpeng and Xiao Zhiwei ignore both the film and the song in their recently published *Encyclopedia of Chinese Film* (1998).
of EMI London – it entered an Asia-wide distribution network. Via record sales and radio broadcasting, the song was spread all over China, with the result that its traditional message with a modern edge soon began to lead a life of its own, independent of the song’s original context. Now, as public property, it could be freely explored and interpreted.

A popular film song goes ‘political’, and travels to Japan
In September 1939 the song appeared in a so-called ‘progressive movie’ (jinbu dianying) and in yet another context: a film called Gudao tiantang (Orphan Island Paradise), directed by Cai Chusheng. This was one of the few Mandarin movies produced in Hong Kong during the Sino-Japanese war, ‘in which the elements of traditional horror, thriller and suspense were blended with nationalistic and anti-Japanese themes’. One scene in Gudao tiantang ultimately changed the meaning of the song. In the film, a dancing girl, played by the famous Li Lili, escapes the Japanese occupation in the north-east of China and seeks refuge in the foreign concessions of Shanghai, where she participates in underground resistance organizations like Shenmi qingnian (Mystic Youth) and falls in love with the group leader. On one occasion she works in a bar and is asked by a group of easy-living people to sing the popular song Heri jun zailai. ‘I can’t sing that song’, she says, and her audience protests: ‘But three-year-old children can sing it, how come you can not?’ Then she gives in: ‘Well, I will only sing the first stanza.’ While she is singing, the song raises the nationalist spirit of some people present in the bar, who suddenly come to realize that there is no difference between the humiliation of a patriotic singing girl and that of their own country. They set out to capture the ignorant traitors among the audience and assassinate them. The dancing girl and the group leader decide to sacrifice their love for each other to the greater good of the resistance and go on to participate in guerrilla fighting.

Li Lili (Qian Zhenzhen), interviewed in August 1995 by Wang Wenhe, stated that the song did not have anything to do with ‘leftist’ thinking or criticism. According to her, it was chosen because it was known to everybody, and some of the words had simply been changed to fit the new context. This may be true, and the song in its new form surely reflected part of the social reality in Shanghai. But its new context still implied an important shift in meaning: the song now appeared in a progressive movie next to such revolutionary tunes as Yiyongjun jinxingqu (March of the Volunteers) and Songhuajiang shang (On the Sungari River). A pleasure-seeking audience had requested its performance, and had responded with patriotic action. By equating the dancing girl with the fate of the country, the familiar man-woman love relationship of the original song was suddenly transformed into a people-state relationship. Did it mean that, henceforth, the song had to be understood as ‘When does the patriot [or communist] come back again?’

30 After the early 1930s, after the Japanese occupation of Manchuria, the term jinbu (advance, progress, improve) was used to denote a new genre in film, literature or music. The progressive aim was not to entertain, but to raise the patriotic and nationalist spirit among audience and listeners for the cause of resistance. It was strongly supported by underground leftist artists and thinkers and usually associated with their ideas.
34 Unfortunately, we do not know which part of the lyrics had been rewritten.
Regardless of any political interpretations, the song grew in popularity. It appeared in every song anthology or text book of the period. It even made Japan aware of China’s popular music development, and eventually it was the first Mainland Chinese popular song to become a number-one hit in Japan. Around 1940, the song was translated into Japanese and recorded by Watanabe Hamako. One year later, after the record had proved successful, it was decided that the song should be recorded again, this time by the Japanese movie star Yoshiko Yamaguchi (Shirley Yamaguchi), better known in China as Li Xianglan.

Li Xianglan was born in Shenyang (Mukden) in 1920 as the daughter of a Japanese official of Manchuria’s railroad administration. She sang fluently in both Chinese and Japanese. During the 1930s she became well-known within the Shanghai film and entertainment world, where she tended to change her name and identity as it suited her. In 1937, while she was recording one of her songs in Shanghai’s EMI Studio – she sang a jazz-rumba tune called Ye lai xiang ('Fragrance of the night'), later one of her most successful songs – she was struck by the sound of a melody sung in a clear and lovely voice in an adjacent room. It was Zhou Xuan who, at the same time, was recording Heri jun zailai. Since Li had always admired Zhou Xuan, she started a conversation with her, which led to a life-long friendship. Apart from Li Xianglan’s best friends, probably very few people in China learnt the secret of Li Xianglan’s Japanese origin. In fact, Li Xianglan recorded a Chinese version of Heri jun zailai. She also sang the song in two Chinese movies in which she had the lead role. She did so, as she explained in an interview in 1981, because it was one of her favourite songs and she wanted to honour her beloved friend Zhou Xuan.

The song must have had huge audiences throughout China and Japan. But how people understood its meaning varied strongly depending on the context in which the song was heard, and on any available ideological perspectives. These two factors were crucial to the song’s interpretation and criticism, and its formal reception by the authorities.

35 E.g. in: Dianying li ge 500 shou (‘500 Beautiful Film Songs’), Shanghai 1940.
37 See: Li Xianglan 1990: 236-239.
38 Zhao Shihui (1998: 147) mentioned that she used five different names.
39 The two movies were: Bai Lan zhi ge (‘Song of Bai Lan’), Huoxian jiaoxiangqu (‘Adversity Symphony’). Wang Wenhua, 1995: 232.
Criticizing the ‘gentleman’ (jun)

The song, which voiced the sentiments of the people and was cherished by countless radio listeners and record fans, was feared by every official institution. This fear had nothing to do with the popularized traditional folk style of the singing, but everything to do with the rather seductive lyrics and — most importantly — the use of the Chinese character jun. The junzi — this was common knowledge — is a brave, righteous and humane moral person (or ruler), an ideal to strive for and a character type which has been part of Chinese ways of thinking ever since it was developed by Confucius.

According to Confucian teachings, the jun embodies the Five Virtues, which are benevolence, justice, propriety, wisdom and sincerity. In Chinese literature and poetry, the character jun was used to denote a variety of different but always ‘good’ character types. The earliest known anthology of Chinese literature, the ‘Book of Songs’ (Shijing, around 600 B.C.) mentions the jun in various contexts, where it came to be interpreted and translated variously as king, ruler, prince, marquis, official, husband, host, and guest.\(^{41}\) One of the 305 poems in the Book of Songs is called Junzi yu yi, translated by Arthur Waley as ‘My lord is on service’:

My lord is on service;
He did not know for how long.
Oh, when will he come?
The fowls are roosting in their holes,
Another day is ending,
The sheep and cows are coming down,
My lord is on service;
How can I not be sad?

My lord is on service;
Not a matter of days, nor months.
Oh, when will he be here again?
The fowls are roosting on their perches,
Another day is ending,
The sheep and cows have all come down,
My lord is on service;
Were I but sure that he gets drink and food.\(^{42}\)

In the poetry of the Tang Dynasty, jun was also used to address a friend, translated as ‘you’.\(^{43}\) Another illuminating interpretation can be found in the courtesan poetry of the Tang Dynasty.\(^{44}\) In the poem Yun huan (‘Bun of Hair’), written in the capital Chang’an (today’s Xi’an) by the well-known courtesan, Zhao Luanluan (8th century?), we read the following lines: \(^{45}\)

\(^{41}\) See the translation of James Legge, 1960.

\(^{42}\) In Arthur Waley, (transl.) — the Book of Songs; originally published 1937. This poem was taken from the 1987 edition, Grove Press, New York, p. 92 (Waley’s poem no.100 in the series).

\(^{43}\) Here we can cite a line by the poet Du Fu (712-770) in a translation by Albert Richard Davis (1968: 45-64): Si jun ling ren shou, meaning ‘Thinking of you makes me thin’; it was probably written for his friend, the poet Li Bai.

\(^{44}\) I owe this information to a stimulating discussion with Dorothee Dauber, Berlin, and thank her very much.

\(^{45}\) Translated by Robert van Gulik, 1961: 172. For the Chinese text see Quan Tangshi (‘Complete Tang Poems’), Shanghai 1960, juan 802, p. 9032.
The clouds of my hairlocks are not yet dry,  
The shining side-tresses are raven-black.  
From aside I stick a golden needle in it,  
My coiffure finished I look round, smiling, at my lover.

Here, the courtesan uses the character jun to describe her lover, who, judging from the very meaning of the word, must be a gentle but strong, righteous and moral man, a ‘gentleman’. On the basis of these (and similar) examples, I conclude that jun was an often-used character in the Chinese shi and ci poetry of the Tang and Song Dynasties. In fact, the phrases jun lai (‘the gentleman comes’) and jun bu lai (‘the gentleman does not come’) were lyrical expressions often used for the common problematic situation of emotional longing. Since the jun had been at the centre of Confucianism and allowed a broad spectrum of meanings and usages over the centuries, it is no wonder that it became crucial to the decoding of the song Heri jun zailai.

In Republican China, especially during the war years, the question ‘When will the jun come back again?’ was understood in a number of different ways. The Nationalist Party (Guomindang, GMD) in Chongqing, together with the regime of Wang Jingwei in Shanghai, believed that it was a secret message to call the communists back to Shanghai. The Japanese Cultural Bureau, partly driven by moral concerns, prohibited the song after its second release in Japan in 1942, because they felt it was a foreign, sentimental and seductive love song. But they also had other reasons. Japanese censorship in China interpreted the song as downright anti-Japanese; they thought its first line was a paraphrase of Heri Chongqing zai hui lai? – ‘When will Chongqing come back again?’, i.e. when will China regain its autonomy again? Finally, there were the communists, who equated the song with the decadent life-style of Shanghai – after all, the lyrics were sung by a prostitute who forced her lover to drink and thereby prevented him from participating in the national struggle against both Japan and the GMD.

For these reasons, various parties forbade the song to be performed in public, in spite of its popularity and overall character of a love song. Li Xianglan, who sang the song during one of her Shanghainese concerts in 1940, was interrupted by the Shanghai Ministry for Public Security in the middle of her performance for causing anti-Japanese agitation: she was accused of either working for the GMD – supporting its return from Chongqing to national power – or being a communist spy. She explained to the police that she regarded it purely as a love song and she was later allowed to continue her performance, but public security kept an eye on her and remained sceptical, ‘maybe because they did not even know that I was Japanese’, as she wrote later. Her Japanese origin may certainly have escaped the attention of the authorities. At that time Li Xianglan was primarily a Manchurian film star, and not yet

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46 Both phrases are to be found in the Quan Tangshi (‘Complete Tang Poems’), Shanghai 1960. See e.g. jun lai, p. 8998, and jun bu lai, p. 9008.
47 Li Xianglan, 1990: 237.
49 See Li Xianglan, 1990: 238; Zhu Tianwei, 1990: 230. See Li Xianglan, 1990: 238; Zhu Tianwei, 1990: 230. See in a more general context, Stephenson (1994: 244) points out that most people apparently viewed Li Xianglan as either a Chinese star or a Japanese star masquerading as a Chinese, but in either case she was seen as a woman with a distinct nationality.
among the most popular film stars of Shanghai; her real popularity did not start until May 1943. Her career progressed more or less in phase with the gradual rise of the 'greater sphere of joint East-Asian prosperity' (Da Dong Ya gongrong quan), a political concept which the Japanese propagated in the years 1940–45. As a person who frequently shifted her national identity, Li Xianglan became a public symbol for Asian 'cross-boundary' culture, and the very embodiment of the principles behind Japan's mainland policies, as Stephenson concludes.  

But given the fact that the tune was so popular and influential, why not actually use it to propagate political messages? Eventually, this is what happened. One of the first people to be faced with attempts at political appropriation of the song was Zhou Xuan; rumour has it that nationalist officials asked her to broadcast a rewritten patriotic and obviously propagandistic version of the lyrics, something along the lines of Heri heping lai? ("When will peace come?"). She reportedly refused this and declared that she would only sing the original version.

How popular – and how symbolically charged – the song and its five Chinese characters He ri jun zailai had become can also be illustrated by the fact that, during the war years, two movies were given the name of the song as a title. In 1940, the Hong Kong based film studio Nanyang produced a love story with this title. In 1944, one year before the end of the war, another movie with the same title was shot by the Japanese-controlled film company Zhonghua Diaoying in Shanghai, with a purpose similar to the above-mentioned GMD example. Since Japan was eager to realize its dream of a unified and harmonious 'Greater East-Asian Sphere' under Japanese leadership, the country was keen to project a more genteel and friendly image. The title of the popular song and its love content – known and appreciated by the public in China – would probably encourage a large audience to go to the cinema, without realizing what the actual film would be about. Or, as Zhou Wei (son of Zhou Xuan) interpreted the Japanese point of view, in a somewhat ironical comment that suggested an interpretation even more flexible than the one offered by China's invaders: were not the Japanese actually meant to be the 'gentlemen' (i.e. the new lords), after their bombing of Shanghai in 1932? Were not the Japanese, before they occupied Shanghai in December 1941, the gentlemen who had to be called back to Shanghai, because they were fighting against Western imperialism and for the ultimate benefit of China?

In brief, many interpretations were possible during those years. The fact that Heri jun zailai was suspected of hiding political messages was basically nothing new. In ancient China it had already been common practice to interpret love poems politically. Around 1940, the song was directly transformed into a political target and weapon. Different parties used it or criticized it for their own ideological purposes. This development continued under the communists after their rise to power in 1949.

**Fighting the ‘gentleman’**

After the founding of the People’s Republic of China in October 1949, the question whether Heri jun zailai should be interpreted as a kangri gequ (anti-Japanese song), a hanjian gequ

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50 Stephenson 1999: 223.
51 This situation was described by Chen Ji (1999), who recently published a biographical novel under the title *Yidai gexing: Zhou Xuan* (Actress of a Whole Generation: Zhou Xuan), Shanghai 1999: 90.
(traitorous song) or a huangse gequ (yellow song) remained unsolved. The lyrics — with their allusions to wine drinking and seeking relief in intoxication — were repeatedly attacked as a typical product of a rotten capitalist world; they became a favourite target of criticism by the communists, who were opposed to bourgeois sentimental songs and wanted to eliminate decadent and Western influences within music production and composition. The song was, so to speak, forced to leave the country step by step.

For Liu Xue’an (1905-1985) — the composer not only of this song but also of other patriotic and well-known compositions, for example Changcheng yao (‘Ballad of the Great Wall’, 1936) and the title song of the movie Gudao Tiantang (‘Orphan Island Paradise’, 1939) — this composition was a heavy burden which caused him to suffer throughout his life. He was criticized during the anti-rightist movement in 1957 as well as during the Cultural Revolution (1966-76). His tragedy was that Heri jun zailai had been created on the spur of the moment, without too much effort, in contrast to some of his more laboured compositions. It represented neither the true heights of his creativity nor his patriotic spirit, which was real enough — but this song just happened to become his biggest success. Liu’s son recalled in 1990 that, one day, his father had attended an undergraduate party at the Shanghai Music Conservatory when someone came up with the idea of an ad-hoc song-composing competition among the already graduated students. Liu Xue’an immediately wrote down the melody of Heri jun zailai and played it as a tango song, which won the approval of all the other participants. Film director Fang Peilin liked the melody and, thinking it would fit into his new movie, asked Bei Lin (Huang Jiamo) to provide the lyrics. Unlike Liu Xue’an, Bei Lin was never criticized or even really mentioned in the articles concerning Heri jun zailai; for what reasons he escaped criticism remains unclear.

More than forty years later, after the fall of the Gang of Four (1976) and Liu Xue’an’s public self-criticism in 1980, Liu was rehabilitated. He wrote: ‘The unhealthy elements of the lyrics reflect my former incorrect way of looking at life. The song was arbitrarily used by several different people. This was absolutely against my original intention, and the abominable effects that later resulted from this have always made me feel a deep pain.’ Liu’s self-criticism coincided with a more differentiated discourse on his compositions. Official criticism began to turn away from individuals. Instead, it began to attack cultural problems caused by capitalism and by an immoral society as a whole. This ideological shift became possible in the late 1970s and early 1980s. It was a necessary aspect of the ‘New Era’ (xin shiqi), epitomized by Deng Xiaoping’s advice of ‘seeking truth from facts’.

53 The use of the term ‘yellow’ in the meaning of seductive and pornographic had its origins in mid-19th century America, as explained on page 1 in the booklet Zenyang jiaoxue huangse gequ (‘How to Recognize Yellow Songs’), Beijing 1982. The booklet states that for higher circulation and more profit, pornographic elements were incorporated in American magazines. Two magazines became quite successful with a series of comic strips entitled ‘Yellow Children’. After the introduction of this series, people began to label magazines with similar content as ‘yellow press’ (huangse kexi). Later the term was also applied to literature, film and music. ‘Yellow literature and art (huangse wenyi) were regarded as natural products of an immoral western capitalist society which deserved to be criticized in the People’s Republic of China.

54 For a biography of Liu Xue’an see: Liu Xuefang, 1994.


56 See footnote 19.

57 In: Zenyang jiaoxue huangse gequ (‘How to recognize yellow songs’), Beijing 1982: 50; and: Shanghai Wenhuibao, 17.08.1980.

58 For the political reform under Deng Xiaoping see e.g. John King Fairbank, 1992: 406ff; orville Schell, 1995: 354ff.
China after 1978 – the ‘gentleman’ comes back again

By 1978, when Deng Xiaoping initiated his new reform policy, popular music and songs not only from Taiwan and Hong Kong, but also from Europe and America, poured into Mainland China. Among the songs from Taiwan was one that immediately caught nearly everybody’s attention: Heri jun zailai, in a fresh and modern version by Teresa Teng (otherwise known as Deng Lijun; 1953-1995). Teresa Teng, the most influential ‘foreign’ female singer in Mainland China during the 1980s and even the early 1990s, breathed new life into quite a number of old popular tunes through her own repertoire – tunes which had survived in Taiwan and Hong Kong for some thirty years. These songs, still familiar to a large audience, were also loved by the young generation. The tunes easily replaced the revolutionary songs and operas of the previous ten or fifteen years. Since a large number of people longed to hear and sing about personal feelings of love and other emotions, the all-embracing ‘love’ towards the People’s Republic and the Chinese Communist Party of former propaganda texts was now replaced by a more liberalized expression of personal feelings. Once again, the content of the ‘gentleman song’ seemed to reflect the experience of many of its listeners: the Cultural Revolution had devastated the country; married couples often lived in different cities and families were split up because relatives had been sent to work and learn in the countryside. Above all, the former jun had failed – people were now officially allowed to blame Mao Zedong for his political mistakes. And they did not stop there. Deng Xiaoping’s new reform programme was heavily criticized, too, both within the CCP and outside, as was clearly demonstrated at ‘Democracy Wall’, where, in December 1978, Wang Jingwei urged that democracy be recognized as China’s ‘fifth modernization’.59 In other words, the meaning of jun could still be explained in a number of different ways, ranging from lover and husband to ‘ruler’ or CCP official. The line ‘When will the gentleman come back again?’ continued to rack people’s brains.

Exactly how difficult it was for the cultural institutions of Mainland China to cope with that problem is evident from various issues of Beijing Wanbao (Beijing Evening News). In 1980 alone, this newspaper published nine articles concerning Heri jun zailai.60 Once again, it was the song to be criticized, the example of the sort of lyrics which deserved to be rejected as typical products of a decadent and immoral society. In former times (argued the newspaper), this song had ‘anaesthetized people’s fighting ability’ against the GMD and Japan. Nowadays the song was purposely directed against Mainland China: it aimed at undermining the very foundations of socialism and the new party line of the ‘Four Modernizations’.61

The song was again severely attacked during the ‘Campaign Against Bourgeois and Spiritual Pollution’, launched by the Chinese Communist Party between 1982 and 1984. At the beginning of the campaign, the People’s Music Publishing House (Renmin yinyue chubanshe), Beijing, published a 60-page booklet entitled Zenyang jianbie huangse gequ? (‘How to Recognize Yellow Songs’). The booklet criticized the lyrics, music and performance of yellow songs. Two of the ten articles (by different authors) in this publication directly address the song Heri jun zailai.62

61 In: Renmin Ribao, 25 March 1981; see also Renmin Ribao, 2 May 1981: ‘Heri jun zailai?’ shi shenme yang de ge? (‘What kind of song is “When will you come back again?”’).
62 Most of the articles had been published earlier in journals or newspapers.
In a contribution by Nan Yong, structured as a question-and-answer interview, a person, slightly puzzled after having read the latest in a series of statements about the notorious song in the *Beijing wanbao*, asks how the song should ultimately be regarded: as progressive, traitorous or yellow? The author replies that *Heri jun zailai* is both a yellow song and a commercial one (*shangye gequ*). But why then did this song appear in the progressive movie *‘Orphan Island Paradise’*? Nan Yong answers that the song clearly was used in that film for two reasons: to enhance the popularity of the film, and to expose the attitude of bad and ignorant elements – or traitors – in society. Asked about the relationship between the song and the composer, the author concludes that Liu Xue’an wrote some very good compositions, for example the title song *Gudao tiantang*, but adds that *Heri jun zailai* was Liu’s worst musical product. The article finishes with the following statement: ‘Comrades who still like *Heri jun zailai* must think carefully: should we simply accept that “Lovely flowers do not blossom very often”’ [first line of the song!] ‘or should we instead use our hands to create some truly imperishable flowers?’

**Zhou Xuan comes back again**

While a number of people and institutions were involved in finding a politically correct interpretation of ‘When will the gentleman come back again?’, the name of Zhou Xuan reappeared in public and her songs regained popularity. Zhou Xuan was usually discussed without reference to the song *Heri jun zailai*. She was described as an innocent actress and singing girl who had been corrupted by the bad elements of society. Since she had also been active in anti-Japanese agitation in the 1930s and returned to a liberated Shanghai in 1950 to work at establishing a new socialist China, there was nothing to criticize her for. More importantly, a few months before she died Zhou Xuan had apparently wanted to meet with Chairman Mao. This was suggested in an article appearing shortly after her death in 1957. Zhou Xuan had decided to start practicing liberation songs (*jiefang gequ*) after her release from hospital.\(^63\)

Shortly before the ‘Campaign Against Spiritual Pollution’, in 1982, when the discussion about *Heri jun zailai* was at its height, Zhou Xuan’s eldest son, Zhou Min, expressed his ‘ordinary person’s feelings towards his mother’. His ‘Mama was neither a criminal nor a hero, she was just an average person’, whom he had only seen twice in his life. For Zhou Wei, the other son, it must have been even more difficult to form an image of his mother, because he lived with his father, Tang Di, and was only five years old when she died in 1957.\(^64\) Since Zhou Xuan had been seriously ill and spent many months in hospital during those years, Zhou Min was raised by the famous film actors Zhao Dan (1915-1980) and his wife Huang Zongying (b.1925). Both were Zhou Xuan’s friends, and had six children of their own.

After the imprisonment of Tang Di in 1958, the two brothers were reunited in Zhao Dan’s family. During the Cultural Revolution they were criticized for their family background and sent to labour camps in Jiangxi and Inner Mongolia. Since times had changed with Deng Xiaoping’s reform policy, the two sons felt motivated to participate in their mother’s rehabilitation, but also started to look into her material and financial situation.

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\(^{63}\) See: Zheng Junli 1957, and the article *Zhou Xuan cai Bai Chang jia zuo ke* (‘Zhou Xuan as a Guest of Bai Chang’s Family’), 1957.

\(^{64}\) See: Zhou Min, 1982; Zhou Wei, 1983.
Zhou Xuan on tape (Shanghai, 1985), with additional orchestral accompaniment.

Zhou Min practically ignored the existence of his little brother. Zhou Wei, on the other hand, went to the Shanghai court in 1986, in order to become officially accepted as Zhou Xuan’s second son. Their battle became a subject of public interest, probably stimulated by the fact that the Shanghai Branch of the China Record Company had released two tapes of carefully selected Zhou Xuan songs with the title Jin sangzi Zhou Xuan (‘Zhou Xuan, the Golden Voice’) in 1985.65

Not only the two brothers, but also Tang Di, and later Huang Zongying, published public statements to reveal the truth about Zhou Xuan’s past. It took Zhou Wei four years to be officially accepted as Zhou Xuan’s son and to receive an inheritance of 70,000 yuan.66 Stimulated by all the public rumours surrounding Zhou Xuan, Zhou Wei sat down to write a biography of his mother: Wo de mama Zhou Xuan (‘My Mother Zhou Xuan’, 1987).67

The five years between 1983 and 1987 saw an interesting ideological shift in official criticism of Zhou Xuan and her music. What was the political background of the series of

65 See also Stock, 1995: 119-135.
66 The money came from Zhou Xuan’s bank account in Hong Kong, which was administered by the Shanghai Branch of the Bank of China. Huang Zongying, who was officially in charge of the bank account, since she took the guardianship of Zhou Min when he was eleven, was forced by law to solve the problem. For details see Huang Zongying, 1988; and the official declaration of the Shanghai Court, in: Zhao Shihui (ed.), 1995: 236-242.
67 Zhou Wei wrote the biography in co-operation with Chang Jing. The book begins with an introduction by He Luting, China’s famous composer and director of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. In his epilogue, Zhou Wei says that he felt forced to write the book for his mother, and could not remain quiet any longer.
events which began with a bout of official criticism, was followed by the release of the tapes, and continued with the publication of the biography? In the wake of the PRC’s campaign against ‘spiritual pollution’, criticism was directed against the growing influx of Western and gangtai (Hong Kong/Taiwanese) popular music. Since that music happened to be a significant source of income for the profit-seeking state-owned record companies, a compromise had to be found. To solve the problem, the cultural bureaus criticized gangtai music and promoted compositions of the more ‘healthy’ tongsu music style.68 In this context, the music of Zhou Xuan ‘was effectively [re-]introduced from above’69, and served both as a symbol of political relaxation and as a model for forthcoming compositions. Its former popularity and ‘Chinese’ characteristics – notably Zhou’s traditionally inspired but modernized folk style singing – were valued as a powerful answer to Western popular music. Yet Zhou Xuan’s songs were still not distributed in their original versions. The recordings featured her voice, but her singing was given a new accompaniment of electronic and acoustic arrangements performed by members of the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra. This was done ‘to appeal directly to those engaged in the improvement of popular music’.70 Furthermore, as Jonathan Stock points out, the new tapes included only songs that were written by ‘politically respectable ... composers and lyricists’, and that had not been labelled ‘yellow music’.71 Needless to say, the song Heri jian zailai did not appear on the tapes.

The new positive evaluation of Zhou Xuan’s music received a further boost from the renowned revolutionary composer He Luting, who stated in 1986 that Zhou Xuan had been a very talented and hard working artist, totally different from all the other stars who had sung yellow music. He remembered her saying in 1941 that she was dissatisfied with the situation in Shanghai and wanted to leave the city together with him in order to join the communist New Fourth Army in Shaanxi province. He Luting told her that this would be too dangerous because she was far too famous. Everybody, even the Japanese, knew her well, and there were a great many journalists after her. Furthermore, He Luting was also concerned about her health. He feared that she would not get used to the poor living conditions in the countryside.72

The ‘Zhou Xuan Year’ 1987
Following Zhou Xuan’s political rehabilitation, the year 1987 became a real ‘Zhou Xuan year’ in Asia. Apart from Zhou Wei’s biography, two further biographies were published in Taiwan. One was edited by the Taiwanese company Rolling Stone Records (Gunshi changpian) under the title Zhou Xuan xiao zhuang (‘A short biography of Zhou Xuan’). The second one, with the more promising title Zhou Xuan de zhenshi gushi (‘The real story of Zhou Xuan’), was written by Tu Guangqi.73 One year later (1988), the Japanese author

68 Gangtai music is a term used to denote the characteristics of popular music coming from Xianggang (Hong Kong) and Taiwan. Tongsu music refers to ‘healthy’ light music promoting socialist themes. See also: Jones 1992, Stock 1995, Steen 1996.
73 Both books were published in Taibei, 1987. Since they do not give any further information on the song discussed here, I will refrain from going into details.
Nakazono Eisuke (b. 1920) wrote a book entitled 'The Story of Heri jun zailai'. The same year, Zhou Wei declared his mother a wenhua mingren (famous cultural person) and, together with his wife Chang Jing and the Shanxi TV station, produced a 38-minute movie about his mother: Ta de yi sheng – Zhou Xuan ('Zhou Xuan – Her Life'). The film reached large audiences because it was soon broadcast by TV stations in Shanxi, Beijing, and other parts of the country. In 1990, a publishing house in Shanxi published a book called Zhou Xuan gequ 100 shou ('100 Songs of Zhou Xuan'). Heri jun zailai was included in this book, with a long comment by Zhu Tianwei, a research assistant at the China Film Archive. Zhu cited composer Liu Xue’an’s son, finally revealing the story that the song had been composed on the spur of the moment for an ad hoc student competition – a story I referred to above, and one that would seem to confute all political connotations of Heri jun zailai.

In 1993, after the mood of debate and excitement had calmed down, the China Record Company, Shanghai, released two CDs under the title Jin sangzi: Zhou Xuan yuan sheng (‘The Golden Voice: The Original Sound of Zhou Xuan’). The two CDs were a response to market demand; they took advantage of a wave of romantic and nostalgic yearning for the 1930s and 40s, brought about by EMI Hong Kong a year before with a CD series of Zhou Xuan’s ‘legendary hits’. But once again, the recordings produced in Mainland China turned out to be a travesty. On the CDs released in Shanghai the original voice of Zhou Xuan was remixed and accompanied by a modern disco-synthesizer pop-beat – a poor compromise that destroyed the spirit and sound of the original recordings. It was presumably in line with

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76 Zhou Xuan: Jin sangzi – Zhou Xuan yuansheng, China Record Corporation Shanghai, SCD-040, 1993, (2 CDs); Zhou Xuan (Chow Hsuan): The Legendary Chinese Hits (5 CDs), EMI-Hong Kong, FH 81001-81005, 1992.
the communist strategy of ‘filling new bottles with old wine’. The arrangements were undoubtedly influenced by two factors: the copyrights for the songs were owned by EMI Hong Kong, and the original sound was still somehow considered ‘dangerous’; it had to be modified in some way, in this case by adding ‘healthy’ modern pop sounds. All the same, Heri jun zailai only appeared in the CD-series issued in Hong Kong, not in the Mainland China edition.

Taiwan – bringing back the ‘gentleman’
While the debates and the controversies continued, the song and its title were once again made popular by Teresa Teng (Deng Lijun). In 1987, the lyrics and music of Heri jun zailai appeared in a compilation of 20th century songs, edited in Beijing as material for teaching Chinese musical history.\(^{77}\) The lyrics were also allowed to be printed in one of Teresa Teng’s song books published in Mainland China.\(^{78}\) After Teresa Teng’s sudden death in

\(^{77}\) See: Zhongguo jinxian dai yinyueshi jiaoxue cankao ziliao (‘Reference Material for the Teaching and Studying of Chinese Music History’), Beijing 1987. Heri jun zailai was one of fourteen songs listed under the rubric ‘Film and Dance Music of the 1940s’. Astonishingly, the song also appeared in a song book of Deng Lijun in the same year. See footnote 78.

\(^{78}\) Deng Lijun geji (‘Collected Songs of Teresa Teng’), Shandong 1988.
1995, people were poignantly reminded of her close connection with the song: *When Will You Come Back Again? Theresa Teng Forever*, was the title chosen for the headline of an article commemorating her death, which appeared in *Sinorama*, an illustrated bilingual periodical in Taiwan. In this context, the words were both a rhetorical question and a hint at one of her most successful recordings – without even mentioning the name of Zhou Xuan. Teresa Teng, who influenced popular music production all over Asia during her thirty-year-long career, seems to have taken the place of Zhou Xuan in the public’s appreciation. She is now the primary singer identified with this nearly sixty-year-old popular song. In the article, *Heri jun zailai* is referred to as one of her most popular tunes, and the song is mentioned twice alongside the printed lyrics. Her music, as the author says, “transcended time and space, and even brought the two sides of the Taiwan Strait closer together. ... Her songs were more than pleasant pop tunes; they were the products of – and messengers for – a particular system of values, attitude towards life, and a form of emotional expression.”

In other words, Teresa Teng was transformed into the key subject of one of her best-known songs – in the end, *she* became the *jun*, the person who made others (the public) yearn for her return. The phrase ‘When will you come back again?’ could now be interpreted as a quest for a new pop star of Teresa’s calibre and character. Pop stars could well be viewed as the modern versions or the ideal images of righteous *jun*. Certainly in Teresa Teng’s case this idea does not seem far-fetched.

The impact of Teresa Teng’s music on Mainland China during the late 1970s and 1980s can hardly be overestimated. It is reflected in a Chinese saying of those years: ‘Old Deng [Xiaoping] rules by day, Little Deng [Lijun] rules by night.’ In Taiwan, her coffin, draped with the national and Guomindang flags, was carried by military officers and family members. ‘Conservative estimates say that five to six thousand people followed the procession all the way [to Chinsand, a town on Taiwan’s north-east coast].’ After her death, people mourned, not only in Taiwan, Hong Kong, or Mainland China, but also in Japan, Singapore and in Chinese overseas communities. This shows the unifying character which her popular songs had for two generations – something that had never before happened on such a large scale to a popular artist in Asia.

In Japan, the actress and singer Li Xianglan (Shirley Yamaguchi) rose to considerable fame and was connected in somewhat similar ways with Zhou Xuan’s song. An article in a Hong Kong periodical was devoted to her: ‘Enemy of Two Countries. Success of the Tune *Heri jun zailai* – Li Xianglan’.

### Li Xianglan and Chinese-Japanese relations

Immediately after the beginning of Deng Xiaoping’s reform policy in 1979, Li Xianglan, who had left Shanghai in 1947, visited China and her old friends several times. In February

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80 For more information on Teresa Teng see for example a collection of essays on her personality: *Qingsui Deng Lijun* (Heartbreaking Teresa Teng). Lijiang 1995.
82 How great Teresa Teng’s impact is even today can also be seen by the fact that Beijing’s rock bands released a compilation of her famous songs in 1998: *Gaobie de yaojun – A Tribute to Teresa Teng* (‘Farewell Rock – A Tribute to Teresa Teng’). The record was produced by studios in Hubei, Beijing and Hong Kong. One of her most popular tunes, *Heri jun zailai*, was not included.
1982, when the discussion about Heri jun zailai reached its apex in Mainland China, Nakazono Eisuke investigated the origins of the song and, with some difficulty, arranged an interview with Li Xianglan in Japan, where she had turned into a rather busy and active politician. She had married the former ambassador of Burma (Myanmar), Otaka Hiroshi, and had changed her name to Otaka Yoshiko. From 1974 to 1978 she held a seat in the upper house in northern Okinawa, which had been under American jurisdiction until 1974.84

Through the centuries, Okinawa had undergone strong influences from Chinese culture and language. One can assume that Li Xianglan served primarily as an intermediary between the two nations. Later, she worked both as Vice Director of the Environmental Government Administration and Director of the Women's Department of the Liberal Democratic Party. Nakazone, who described Otaka Yoshiko as one of the leading politicians engaged in re-establishing Japanese-Chinese diplomatic relations, at some point asked her about the composer and lyric-writer of her famous song. She replied merely that he should go and ask another Chinese composer, Li Jinguang, about this. Li Jinguang was a younger brother of Li Jinhui (the person who once guided Zhou Xuan during her stage debut as an actress, and who earned fame as a composer of 'pornographic' songs). Li Jinguang, like his brother, had been active as a composer. He had written some of Li Xianglan's most famous songs, such as her 1937-tune Ye lai xiang, and he certainly knew Liu Xue'an, the composer of Heri jun zailai. Consequently, Li Xianglan gave his address to Nakazone.85 Obviously, at that time the news of Liu Xue'an's suffering and self-criticism (1980) had not yet reached her.

In the early 1980s she decided to invite the aforementioned Li Jinguang to Japan. This step, carried out as a formal act of foreign diplomacy, a gesture of cultural friendship between the two countries, showed her gratitude and personal appreciation of an old Chinese composer, but simultaneously highlighted her own past in China. It may have had a certain effect on the Japanese media. For the PRC, it was the first time that a Chinese composer of popular music was officially invited and formally recognized by a foreign country. The whole ceremony did not fail to influence the PRC's cultural policies. In fact, it is said to have been partly responsible for the production of the Zhou Xuan tapes in Shanghai in 1985.86

In any event, Li Xianglan's past was rediscovered. As Japanese-Chinese relations improved, she witnessed a revival of her songs and career as an actress. She even felt encouraged to write her autobiography. After it had been published in the 'Zhou Xuan year' 1987, the book gave her even more publicity and culminated in a veritable 'Li Xianglan Fever' (Li Xianglan re) in Japan.87 Not surprisingly, the book pays ample attention to one of her personally favoured songs: Her jun zai lai. It was one of her most successful recordings, a song that was regarded as representative of her repertoire, and – even more important in the context here – one that she was clearly identified with.

86 The fact is that people started to ask: 'How could it possibly happen that Chinese popular music is officially accepted and even appreciated in Japan, but not allowed to be sold and broadcast in the reform-oriented PRC?' In informal interviews during my fieldwork in Shanghai, 1997-98, several people drew my attention to this telling connection.
87 Her biography was later translated into Chinese: Li Xianglan - Wo de qian ban sheng ('The first half of my life'), Beijing 1990.
Concluding remarks

In summary, many interpretations and versions of ‘When will you [the gentleman] come back again?’ existed throughout 20th century China. They accompanied the history of the song and, more generally, the entire development of China’s popular music up to the present. Today the song and its key line not only draw attention to Zhou Xuan, Teresa Teng or Li Xianglan, but – at least among the older generation of listeners – also to its political connotations. Three actresses from three different countries claimed this song as their own and were famous for it. And in each case, their recordings of it were criticized or even temporarily prohibited. But even if ‘lovely flowers do not bloom very often’, this particularly ‘flower’ has continued to bloom for more than sixty years. It has survived severe censorship and critical attacks, and lives on today in the hearts and minds of Asian listeners.

What was it exactly that made this song so spectacular? Leaving aside the entrancing melody and other musical qualities, which never played a role in the criticism of the song, the answer should include both a cultural and a political dimension. As Simon Frith said: ‘The pleasure of pop is that we can “feel” tunes and perform them, in imagination, for ourselves. In a culture in which few people make music but everyone makes conversation, access to songs is primarily through their words. If music gives lyrics their linguistic vitality, lyrics give songs their social use.’

In ancient China, a poem (shi) was regarded as a private, intimate and personal means of communication among friends. In later times it was read and enjoyed in silence, by intellectuals, and valued because of its literary skill. I would like to suggest that the often debated lyrics of Heri jun zailai should be regarded as a modern equivalent of a Tang poem. In this case, the words were written by a man, to illustrate and support the meaning of a certain sequence in a movie, and they were sung by a woman who, in accordance with traditional customs, remained passive in her fear of being left alone.

In spite of ample references to traditional literature, this poem was a cultural novelty in many ways. Its lyrics were more colloquial and easier to understand than Tang poems, the words were accompanied by music and – above all – the song was recorded. The final product was a revolution, a commodity, a piece of art that could be taken into each private home, a new form of pleasure made possible by a new medium. Who wouldn’t have liked to have a courtesan at home singing Heri jun zailai? The song essentially invited a mass audience – and not merely intellectuals – to participate in a modern revival of a traditional (and partly forgotten) form of communication, and to engage in the kind of intimate uniting of friends described in the lyrics. But this identification with traditional culture, combined with a streak of sensationalism and of new consumerism, can explain only one part of the popularity of the song. All these factors together resulted in a particular way of ‘reading’ the lyrics, which foreshadowed their interpretation and use as a ‘social’ tool or weapon. In the beginning, the song merely described the personal situation of most people. Listeners felt the tune and relived its emotions in their imagination. The song became a fundamental part of their cultural consciousness, and it appealed to people’s private – and perhaps unconscious – fantasies. Sung by a soft female voice, to a lovely melody, the words fulfilled listeners’ need for consolation while they tried to escape the hardships of war, revolution and general uncertainty.

I have tried to show that the political aspects of the song clearly centre on the multiplicity of meanings of the character jun (gentleman). Throughout China’s history, and especially in

times of national crisis, Chinese rulers have always feared the dissemination of hidden subversive messages via poetry. In the creative play with characters, symbols, metaphors and rhyme schemes, poets could hide ideas or messages intended to damage the country or to turn a political tide. Both the ruler and the ruled – artists included – were familiar with the great difficulties connected with reading, writing and decoding poetic messages. On both sides, raising people’s suspicions and fears could lead to all sorts of excesses. Clearly, this kind of political anxiety dominated the decision to prohibit the performance of *Heri jun zailai* in Republican Shanghai. After 1949, in the political context of Communism, only one possible judgment remained: the song had to be banned because of its feudalistic and bourgeois content. Escapism and romanticism needed to be criticized. In socialist theory, the sole aim of music was to mobilize the masses for the revolution, and to upgrade their revolutionary spirit. At this point, I would like to point out that ancient Confucianist theory propagates music as a means of elitist moral education and personal refinement, not as a medium for entertainment. The communist understanding of music was actually in accordance with this, judging from the vast number of revolutionary and patriotic songs that appeared under communist rule. But in Zhou Xuan’s song, the jun who was asked to come back was obviously neither the kind of high moral gentleman that Confucius must have had in mind, nor the strong hero who stood at the centre of communist propaganda. The song did not seem suitable for propagating such high-minded ideas. But even if the word jun now emerged in the context of an entertaining and frivolous love song, it was not completely deprived of its moral connotations. The jun was still the ideal type of a ‘good’ and civilized character, a type that had been part of China’s collective memory for many centuries.

The song clearly reflects China’s transition from tradition to modernity, not only in a passive or symbolical way. The recorded versions of *Heri jun zailai* became important consumer goods which actively influenced the country’s society and culture. The same could be said about some other popular compositions, but this song is a particularly telling example of how deep and far-reaching the political and emotional impact of a popular song in Chinese society can be. The song is also the near-ideal subject for a case-study of all those factors which help to create and perpetuate a true classic: not only the accidental combination of an attractive tune and a provocative content, but also a lucky convergence of tradition and modernity, of film and star cult, love and war, imagination and reality, life and death, criticism and propaganda, reform policy and nostalgia, past and present, home and abroad – all these elements contribute to the immense impact of *Heri jun zailai*. The song ultimately seems to embody almost everything that is central to 20th century Chinese culture. In its reference to deep yearning and in its hope of perpetuating a precious emotion in a world in danger of falling apart, the song even seems to epitomize its own history. But it should still be understood primarily as a psychological statement, a powerful expression of feelings of deprivation, loneliness, fear and uncertainty among individuals in times of political disorder, centring on that crucial utterance of despair: ‘When will you come back again?’

**Epilogue**

In 1992, while I was a student in Shanghai, I had great difficulties finding the booklet ‘How to Recognize Yellow Songs’. Although I found it listed in practically every library catalogue, the librarians would always meet my requests with an unfriendly *mei you* (‘we don’t have it’). When I finally got hold of a copy and asked for it to be photocopied, one assistant explained: ‘There is no reason for you to read or copy that book, we no longer talk about
“yellow music” today. We can now listen to everything we want.’ Specifically with regard to the song \textit{Heri jun zailai}, this is still not entirely true.

Naturally, the situation today is different from that of former times. Today, in China as in any other part of the world, record sales, mass consumerism and popular tastes determine the market value of any music that is produced. The young generation is allowed to enjoy its own version of \textit{Heri jun zailai} as a pure love song – and young people are often unaware of the origin of the song and the political debates that surrounded it in the past. Circulation on the market of old and new recordings has triggered a form of popular discourse about Zhou Xuan. This has initiated the rehabilitation of one of her most famous songs. At present, four decades after her death, Zhou Xuan is regarded as a symbol of old Shanghai’s cultural independence, as Jonathan Stock points out.\textsuperscript{89} Various aspects of her life and former popularity have placed her at the heart of a cult of romantic nostalgia which has accompanied the growth of modern Shanghai since the early 1990s. Nowadays, Zhou Xuan makes her appearance in nearly all the fields of modern cultural production and consumption. Numerous stories have been added to what was known about her life, tales true and false which have added to the weight of her legend. It does not come as a surprise that in 1995 Zhao Shihui, who admired Zhou Xuan throughout his life, felt inclined to edit a book based on ‘her own words’, in order to separate facts from fiction in her life story.\textsuperscript{90}

In the summer of 1999, I came across a vast number of reprints of old cinema adverts being sold in the city centre of Shanghai, including some of Zhou Xuan. And in May 1999, in the wake of many books already written about the history of Shanghai’s former film industry, Chen Ji published a biographical novel under the title \textit{Yidai gexing: Zhou Xuan (Zhou Xuan, Actress of a Whole Generation’). The book refers twice to \textit{Heri jun zailai}, but its primary concern is clearly to depict Zhou Xuan’s revolutionary spirit.

\textsuperscript{89} Stock 1995: 129.
\textsuperscript{90} Personal interview with the author, Shanghai August 1999. See: Zhao Shihui (ed.), 1995.
In 1998, New Melody Productions, a Taiwan-Hong Kong corporation, released a VCD with seventeen popular tunes of Zhou Xuan's, including *Heri jun zailai.* The video images that accompany the song are fairly outspoken about what the lyrics are supposed to mean: we get to see pictures of Zhou Xuan, mixed with a love story that is enacted in pure popular karaoke style. We hear the song, the lyrics are given in the subtitles, and meanwhile we are shown Western (red) wine glasses and a sad-looking couple deeply immersed in sentimental fantasies. There can be no doubt: finally, as in the Tang poem of courtesan Zhao Luanluan, the *jun* in this song is once more simply a 'lover' — far removed from any thought of revolution or political ideas. Now that this VCD has become available on the Mainland Chinese market, too, and now that we can hear Teresa Teng's version on the Mainland — I recently heard it in a music store on Shanghai's Tibet Road — we can only conclude that times have really changed. It seems we are finally back where it all started long ago — with commercial considerations, and a love song.

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35th ICTM world conference in Hiroshima, 1999

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In August 1999, Hiroshima City University hosted a week-long ICTM conference on Asian music and dance and a host of other issues, including 'music and peace'. Hot weather, good stuff. Topics ran the gamut from oral mnemonics in Quanzhou puppet theatre to the career of 13th century poet and composer Jiang Kui, and from 'vegetarian' sisters in Minnan to Australian aboriginals singing and dancing towards tribal agreements. A brief report.

The 35th World Conference of the International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM) took place in Hiroshima, Japan, from 19 to 25 August 1999. Hosted by Hiroshima City University, the major themes in this conference included music and dance, musicians and dancers in Asian society, music and peace, and local transformations of global pop. Participants from 42 countries gathered to hear 150 papers. The great efficiency of our Japanese hosts, with their ever-helpful student assistants attending to the hi-tech video-audio machinery, ensured smooth proceedings. The week-long conference yielded many interesting papers and panels on music and dance of different cultures. The intellectual exchange, interspersed with concerts, a tour of the famous city and a sumptuous traditional Japanese banquet, made the conference fruitful and highly enjoyable – despite the oppressive heat and humidity. It was impossible, at a conference so large in scale, to attend every session (there were often as many as five events at once). My report will therefore naturally be restricted to papers that catered to my personal interests.

Need for new approaches
In an opening lecture, Professor Akashi Yasushi, former president of the Hiroshima Peace Institute of Hiroshima City University, argued that music can be a vital tool for understanding a culture, and can help bring about peace and harmony among different peoples. Papers by Stephen Wild, Alan Marett and Linda Barwick in the first plenary session reflected his sentiments. In Australia, conflicts between the indigenous Aboriginal Australians and the non-indigenous White Australians have existed since the late 18th century. These three papers showed how different genres of traditional Aboriginal ritual, music and dance are used to reconcile differences between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians, and how attempts are made on both sides to effect a national reconciliation. Recent developments include the rise of Aboriginal music bands that combine traditional music with rock music, and the promotion of 'building bridges' concerts in the ongoing reconciliation process.

On writing biographies of Asian musicians, Joseph Lam presented a case study on Jiang Kui, 13th century poet-composer of China who left behind a prolific body of poems and
notated music. Through his discussion of biographical writings about Jiang Kui, Lam raised several issues in writing Chinese music biographies and histories. In Chinese biographies, the human side of music history is very often neglected. Thus Jiang Kui was often singled out in biographies as a literati, a poet and not as a musician. The lack of musical data in such biographies makes it difficult for modern readers to understand the musician and his music. Robert Provine, in his paper about historical biographies of 15th century Korean music theorist Pak Yon, outlined similar problems. Provine’s task is to re-examine existing materials and recast them for a Western readership. Both scholars stressed the need for new approaches to contemporary biographies of historical musicians. The presenters suggested that today’s biographers should look beyond official records, treatises, and traditional encyclopedias, turning possibly to hagiographic materials for new sources. This last was indeed also suggested by Peter Micic in his paper on Li Shutong, early 20th century Chinese writer, actor, calligrapher, lyricist, composer, and more widely known in the latter part of his life as the Buddhist monk Hung Yi.

Oral mnemonics

In a panel on oral mnemonics, Odaka Akiko presented her case study on the structure and sound symbolism of mnemonics in the percussion ensemble in the puppet theatre of Quanzhou. This paper gave a good introduction to the percussion instruments used in Mu’ouxi puppet theatre. However, too much of her focus was on the phonemes and tones of the Minnan dialect: she should instead have given the listeners a better understanding of the mnemonics themselves, their use, patterning and raison d’être. Some fieldwork video clips of percussion players in the Quanzhou puppet theatre were shown. Disappointingly, these failed to demonstrate the actual manner of use of oral mnemonics in the learning process. David Hughes introduced his latest research on oral mnemonics as used in the teaching of various instrumental traditions of the world. He discussed and demonstrated some of the common principles under-
lying such systems. He also involved the audience in an interesting experiment to show that there is a certain natural link between vowel colour and relative pitch.

Tong Soon Lee’s paper on Chinese street opera in Singapore gave a stimulating insight into the survival of a traditional genre in transplanted environs. The Chinese in this small nation were largely immigrants at the end of the 19th century, and they now form the largest proportion of the racially mixed population. Chinese traditional culture is deeply rooted among Singapore’s Chinese, but Lee shows that there has been a gradual change in the meaning and value of Chinese street opera following independence in the mid-1960s. In contemporary Singapore, amateur part-time operatic troupes are more in demand and more respected than troupes who perform full-time. Different meanings and values are created due to state-sanctioned ideology in culture. This, I believe, is one of the ways the tradition is able to survive in a rapidly modernized and Westernized young state. In contrast to this, nanyin (or nanguan) – a ballad genre from Minnan – faces a different fate in the Philippines. Shuchichi Lee’s paper showed that although nanyin associations there have been in existence for nearly 200 years, the genre is still struggling to be accepted by succeeding generations of Chinese and the local society.

Vegetarian sisters
An interesting paper in the same vein as Tong Soon Lee’s paper on the creation of new meanings and values for a revived tradition was Helen Rees’s paper about the revival of Dongjing music associations in Yunnan. After a long hiatus during the Cultural Revolution, Dongjing associations have, since the early 1980s, struggled to re-establish their music-ritual traditions. Above all, those associations that were able to tailor their revival efforts to fit state ideology won official support and thus ensured continuity of their tradition.

As for my own paper, let me just summarize: A study of singing styles in Buddhist gongde rituals for the dead revealed the complexity of religious phenomena in Minnan, Fujian. Various factors influence the singing styles of three types of ritual practitioners: monks or nuns in institutional monasteries, who risk the scorn of their colleagues for engaging in such commercial acts; ‘vegetarian sisters’, lay nuns who aspire to institutional values; and ‘incense and flower monks’, lay professionals often unconnected with any temple. For each of these three types, the choice of gongde hymn singing style is influenced by doctrinal ideology, economic motivation, time available, place of origin, self-image and other factors. For example, ‘vegetarian sisters’, who are indigenous Minnanese, therefore use more of the regional style compared to institutional monks or nuns in large monasteries, who tend to come from other parts of China.

Tsao Poonyeh described the progress of current research on Daoist ritual music in China. The ‘Ritual Music in China Research Programme’ initiated by the Music Department of the Chinese University of Hong Kong is already seeing the fruits of labour by native music scholars in China. Numerous articles and music transcriptions have already been published. Having seen one of their recent publications on Buddhist music in Fujian, my feeling is that research in this field would surely benefit even more from co-operation between native and Western-trained scholars.

Many more interesting exchanges and stimulating papers were presented at this conference. However, limited space precludes further discussion. On the whole, this was clearly a very successful and congenial conference.
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REPORT ON 5TH CHIME MEETING, PRAGUE 1999

Music in cities versus music in villages

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The 5th annual CHIME conference was held at the Music Academy in Prague in September 1999. It focused on musical contrasts between villages and cities in China and East Asia. Some eighty participants explored the intricate links between rural and urban music, and examined the many realms of cross-cultural contact, regional and international. Who would have thought that Chinese Buddhists have their own brand of 'metropolitan' music, or that Tan Dun’s ‘Ghost Opera’ is called Hra o zemrelych dusich in Czech?

Judging from the many paper presentations in Prague, it is in the very interaction between urban and rural society that Asia’s musical culture is – and has always been – at its most vibrant. A major concern is that rural genres continuously receive too little attention from scholars. One reason is that travelling and research in Asian rural areas can be a rather demanding experience. Another reason is that, for a long time, the existence of numerous rural music traditions has simply escaped the attention of most (Western) scholars.

Many kinds of music genres in China (notably ritual music) were revived only in recent years. During much of the last century they were hardly described or explored. But times are changing. Tsao Pen-yeh (in Hong Kong) and Wang Chiu-kuei (in Taipei) have initiated major ritual music research projects in co-operation with local Chinese scholars. A growing number of Westerners, too, have begun to explore the rich treasure trove of Far Eastern ritual and folk music. In this respect, every new CHIME meeting has led to surprises and new discoveries. Prague was no exception.

Speakers examined a wide range of genres, from Buddhist ritual to forms of Asian local opera, story-telling, folk songs and pop. In addition to this, there were concerts of Chinese story-singing (nanguan), contemporary symphonic music (with the Moravian Philharmonic), a Buddhist ritual ceremony with the Beijing Buddhists, and some small recitals of string and wind music from China, Korea, and Mongolia.

Complex interaction
Clearly, the lines between ‘rural’ and ‘urban’ cannot and should not be drawn too sharply. Many new hybrid forms of music began life in cities, from Peking Opera to pop and symphonic music, but the ongoing urbanization of rural areas in Asia is anything but a one-way process. Various papers emphasized that there is a continuous interplay between rural and urban music traditions in East Asia. Pop musicians borrow elements from Buddhist
The Moravian Philharmonic played Chinese music in the Martinu Hall. Liu Fang was the pipa soloist in Tan Dun's 'Ghost Opera'.

chants or folk music for their commercial songs, but these songs often find their way back to the countryside, where they are immediately 'recycled' in folk music repertoires, a point raised amongst others by Adam Yuet Chau in his paper on folk music in Shaanbei. The interaction is rich and complex and cannot be captured in simple models, as was also clearly illustrated in the contributions by Daniel Ferguson (Cantonese opera), Tan-Hwee San and Tian Qing (Buddhist music), Mercedes Dujunco (Vietnamese opera), Nathan Hesselinck (Korean percussion music) and others.

Tian Qing highlighted 'metropolitan' versus 'village-like' traditions in Buddhist music. Francesca Tarocco followed suit in her presentation on images of Buddhist music in 20th century China. She emphasized that religious music is no longer solely a domain of worship or of popular or learned ritual, but has also become a market
commodity, with its own customers, its own commercial rules and media policies. Mercedes Dujunco discussed Cai Lu’o’ng Opera in Vietnam, a relatively young genre that emerged as a synthesis of classical Vietnamese theatre, southern string ensemble music, and modern Vietnamese stage performances and music. Daniel Ferguson and Nathan Hesselink explored the grey zone between rural and urban realms in Cantonese opera and Korean Samul nori.

In Asia, music travels ever more easily thanks to an increased social mobility and because of new modes of communication. The greater mobility does not depend on economic and technological factors alone, but also on such aspects as natural disasters (floods, droughts, famines), which drive thousands of people away from their native areas. The ebb and flow of musical cross-fertilization in Third World regions may be partly related to the fluctuating water levels of the big rivers.

The breaching of the urban-rural divide is a continuous process; it can be witnessed in practically every corner of Asia. Rachel Harris showed how urban and rural concerns come together in the Uyghur popular music industry in Xinjiang, in China’s remote west. Håkan Lundström showed videos of a Japanese spring festival caught ‘between small-town pleasure and large-scale show’, as he called it.

Pre-conceived ideas about contrasts between urban literacy/education and rural illiteracy were put to question by Kathy Lowry and other presenters, including myself. I played examples of folk songs and of sung ‘high-brow’ poetry from Suzhou, showing that the two realms are musically and textually related and are not always necessarily situated at opposite ends of the social spectrum. For many centuries, Suzhou incorporated plots of farmland where peasants sang their ‘rural’ shan’ge in the middle of a thriving city.
Chinese music in Prague
Czech and Polish scholars offered various interesting contributions to the Prague conference. One memorable paper was Maciej ‘Magura’ Goralski’s (from Warsaw). He traced the impact of Jamaica’s Chinese community on Jamaican reggae, and presented his paper in the form of a ‘radio show’, complete with amplification and background music. An entertaining performance.

Hopefully, contacts with Central-European scholars can be extended in future CHIME meetings. There are many positive developments. In the wake of the meeting, three students at the CCK International Sinological Centre of Charles University in Prague started preparations for PhD studies on Chinese music. In 2002, the Sinological Centre in Prague will offer its students a special course on Chinese music. In the past, a number of Czech sinologists have built up respectable reputations as experts in Chinese religion or in Chinese oral folklore. This also offers a fine basis for musicological studies, at least in the realms of folk and ritual music. In a way, the Prague meeting paid tribute to what has already been achieved in Czech research – it was dedicated to the memory of Xenie Dvorská (1932-1991), a Czech sinologist and musicologist. The conference was also proud to welcome senior researcher Venceslava Hrdlicková among its participants.

The hosting organization, the CCK International Sinological Center at Charles University, arranged a number of fine and hart-warming concerts and recitals to bolster up participants’ spirits. By doing this, they effectively introduced Czech audiences to a number of Asian music genres that had never been heard in the country before. The Music Academy of the Academy of Arts in Prague (HAMU), where the conference took place, was enthusiastic and felt inspired to programme further Chinese musical events in Prague in the near future, including contemporary Chinese opera. The CHIME concerts were a colourful and strange blend of (mainly urban) music types, perhaps unrelated to the main theme of the meeting, but an adequate reflection of the many changes that are taking place, in the wake of Asia’s fast economic growth, in Chinese and Asian music.

Concerts
The Moravian Philharmonic, led by Wang Jin, played new music from China in HAMU’s splendid Martinu Hall. This included a fine orchestration of Tan Dun’s Ghost Opera, originally written for the Kronos Quartet and pipa player Wu Man. The work was announced in the Czech programme as Hra o zemřelych dusích, ‘pro loutnu a orchestr’. Other items
The group Hang-Tang Yuefu gave a concert of nanguan ballads.

were Qu Xiaosong’s *Huan*, for piano and orchestra, a *pipa* concerto by Zhou Long (*Král ze Cchu světka brnění!*), and Chen Qigang’s *Extase*, for oboe and orchestra.

With three splendid soloists, this was a concert to remember. Ernest Rombouts excelled as the soloist in Chen Qigang’s *Extase*, a brazenly romantic oboe concerto, very virtuosic and emotional, and beautifully written. Liu Fang from Montreal was the young and promising *pipa* soloist in two concertos, by Tan Dun and Zhou Long. Michaela Klagofer from Vienna played the piano in Qu Xiaosong’s beautifully tranquil *Huan* (*The Circle*) of 1985. The concert ended with Wang Jin’s boldly romantic ‘Tibet Impressions’ of 1997. Wang Jin (b. 1960 in Beijing) conducted with great assurance. Eivind Gullberg Jensen from Oslo replaced him as the conductor in Chen Qigang’s piece. The Moravian Philharmonic played brilliantly. The whole concert was a remarkable achievement.

There were also fine concerts by the Beijing Buddhists, Han Tang Yuefu (Taiwan) and a number of solo players. Han Mei and her partner Randy Raine-Reusch played contemporary *zheng* duets, and Inok Paek did two contemporary pieces for *kayagum* and tape by Bennett Hogg and Javier Alvarez. She remains one of Korea’s foremost *kayagum* players, faithful to the high demands of the tradition, but also on the look-out for new sounds. The constant quest for innovation poses a tremendous challenge to Asian string players, for how often can one really succeed in making a traditional instrument speak in new and eloquent ways? The efforts of excellent musicians like Inok Paek, Han Mei and her partner are wholly admirable. On a different note, we were introduced to the Mongolian zither *yatag*, and to *shakuhachi* music, by various excellent soloists. Han Tang Yuefu (Taipei) and the Beijing Buddhists were in good shape, though not as impressive as during their first concerts in Europe, a couple of years ago. Shortly before arriving in Prague, Han Tang Yuefu had concluded a
European tour together with the French theatre company La Péniche Opera. They had combined French Baroque and Renaissance music and dance with Chinese nanguan. ('A rather thin story-line, a lot of charming but insubstantial chattering and hopping around in attractive costumes, judged Dutch newspaper critic Frits van der Waa.) But Han Tang Yuefu's traditional love ballads as we heard them in Prague were much appreciated, and the loud and magnificent wind sounds of the Beijing Buddhists led to a standing ovation. Dr. Lucie Olivová and her colleagues in Prague must be congratulated for their wonderful work in making this meeting possible. Special thanks are also due to Professor Oldrich Král, the director of the CCK International Sinological Centre, for his unflinching support.

Papers
Jaroslav Barinka – 'Comment on the "Inscription On a Zither Without Strings" by Hwadam (Korea,16th century) in relation to musical theory and the Yijing.'
Adam Yuet Chau – 'La Double Vie de Pop: Peasant Pop & Agrarian Musicscape in Contemporary Shaanbei.'
Du Yaxiong – 'Shaonian Songs from Northwestern China.'
Mercedes Dujuanco – 'Vietnamese Cai Lu'ong Opera on Video: Transformation, Transnationalization and the Formation of Modern Subjectivities.'
Arienne Dwyer – 'Covert song forms of the Salars in Amdo Tibet.'
Daniel L. Ferguson – 'Cantonese Opera Performance in the Context of Spring Festival Nian Li Celebrations in Rural Southern Gaangdong.'
Luciana Galliano – 'Shakuhachi, Voice of Bamboo Wind and Qi.'
Maciej Goralski – 'Cross Cultural Influence and Exchange of Ideas: China - West - the Case of Rock and Roll and Buddha-mind Transmission.'
Rachel Harris – 'The Uyghur Popular Music Industry: breaching the urban-rural divide.'
Nathan Hesselink – 'Samul nori on Stage: Strategies in the Creation of an Urbanized Performance Genre.'
Katerina Kabelacova – 'Changes in Japanese society of the Edo period as reflected in theatre and music.'
Veronika Kapisovska – (1) 'The Legend about the origin of Yatag (Mongolian Polychem Zither)'; (2) 'Zithers of Mongolia and the Altai Region.'
Frank Kouwenhoven, A. Schimmelpennick – 'Do Chinese urban folk songs exist ? The case of Suzhou.'
Miriam Lowensteinova – 'Preface writing for kayagum and its interpreters; Huang Byong-gi and his Migung.'
Kathy Lowry – 'Shange as heuristic device for thinking about urban and rural song traditions.'
Håkan Lundström – 'Between Small-Town Pleasure and Large-Scale Show. A Japanese Festival.'
Jubak Marsalek – 'Music in Chinese Prehistory and Early History: Social and Political Implications.'
V. Matousek – 'Kyorei of the shakuhachi Fukezen honkyoku: music theory as a means of music archeology.'
Ulrike Middendorf – 'The dispute on di-pitch-pipe standards between Xin Xu and Lie He in the last year of the Jin Tsii period (274).'
Randy Raine-Reusch – 'Traditional Music of Sarawak.'
A. Steen – 'Zhou Xuan; popular music in war-time China 1937-45; a song between entertainment & politics.'
Hwee San Tan – 'Hymn singing styles in the Buddhist Rite of Merit in urban and rural Fujian.'
Francesca Tarocco – 'Images of Buddhist Music in Twentieth Century China.'
John Thompson – 'Musical selection from the Book of Songs.'
Tian Ying – 'Jingxi and qieyin.'
Tsai Tsz-huang – 'The Chinese Buddhist Ordinary Ceremony in England – From Five classes to Five halls.'
Wang Hua – 'A Survey of Shamanist Tunes and Andal Music in the Horqin Area of Inner Mongolia.'
Marnix Wells – 'Drunken Dotard's Refrain - a relic of Tang metre ?'

Performances
Balásinyma Batsayxan, yutag
Veronika Kapisovska, yutag
Michiyo Keiko, soprano
Michaela Klahofer, piano
Li Fan, pipa
Vlastislav Matousek, shakuhachi
Han Mei, zheng
Inok Paek, kayagum

Randy Raine-Reusch, zheng, guanzi and ichigenkin.
Ernest Rombout, oboe
John Thompson, guqin
Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra, Olomouc
Conductors Wang Jin and Eivind Gullberg Jensen
Ensemble Han-Tang Yuefu, Taipei
Beijing Buddhist Ensemble
A MEETING IN MEMORY OF YANG YINLIU

Musicology in China, Beijing, 1999

Su Zheng & Stephen Jones
(Wesleyan University, Middletown, USA / SOAS, London)

It was a moving tribute to Yang Yinliu, and a fitting end-of-the-century public forum. 'The 20th Century and Musicology in China - International Symposium of Yang Yin-Liu's 100th Birthday Anniversary' was held from 9 to 12 November 1999 in the opulent setting of the Jiuhua shanzhuang conference centre in Beijing. Co-organized by the Chinese Academy of Arts, the Chinese Musicians' Association, the Central Conservatory, the Chinese Conservatory, and the Shanghai Conservatory, the conference drew 73 formal presentations, as well as over 100 participants, from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, the USA, UK, Japan, and Canada.

The main theme was revisiting Yang Yinliu's (1899–1984) achievements as a founder and pioneer of modern Chinese music scholarship. The conference also made a fitting perspective on the whole modern history of musicology in China, before, during and since Mao.

As much as half of the talks was dedicated to the commemoration of Yang Yinliu's unique contribution to Chinese music as historical scholar, fieldworker, musician, and teacher. His unique erudition ranged from archaeology, iconography, acoustics, and temperament, to linguistics, literature, and qin studies, covering elite, religious and folk music, as well as vocal and instrumental genres.

On a personal note, the conference hall was often filled with deeply-felt emotions as a number of speakers shared with the audience their warm memories of Yang Yinliu as teacher, mentor, colleague, scholar, and friend; most moving were the contributions of Yang's own daughter. Yang's cousin and lifelong collaborator, 94-year old Cao Anhe was also able to attend the opening. Several senior scholars from Yang's own generation were as energetic as the middle generation of his pupils, and Yang's spirit was even evident in young researchers. The originality of many of the papers, and the passion of debate, was itself a fitting tribute.

Delightful

Eloquent paeans to Yang as teacher and music historian came from distinguished scholars such as Zhao Songguang and Guo Nai'an. Following the tradition of Chinese music scholarship, a number of speakers summarized accomplishments in their respective subfields during the 20th century. However, Yang Yinliu's profound legacy was perhaps most effectively represented by the dozens of research papers presented.
These included (to mention but a few) Lu Yingkun on the xian-suo diao of the Ming dynasty; Wu Wen’guang on early suzi notation and Cheng Gongliang on the dapu realization of early qin music; Liu Yong relating the concept of sigong key circles in folk music practice to Tang music theory; Zheng Changlin on Chen Yang’s Yueshu, and Wang Zichu’s study of rong-sheng bell chimes. Han Baoqiang made yet another contribution to Abing studies, and Xiang Yang continued his important work, based on both textual research and fieldwork, on the history and modern survival of the yuehu hereditary musicians.

Memorial concert

Chen Yingshi and others gave critical evaluations of methodologies in temperament study. Yu Siu-wah presented a stimulating study of the PRC national anthem from the perspective of Confucian ritual. Speakers such as Wang Yuhe and Bell Yang considered Chinese music education, while Zheng Su deconstructed the concepts of ‘Chinese’ and ‘Western’ musics. Liu Minglan encouraged boundary-crossing between ancient and modern music histories. Yuan Jingfang pursued her theme of ‘music-genre study’ (yuezhongxue). Jing Weigang spoke with commitment about fieldwork and the artistry of folk musicians, a theme also evident from speakers such as Zhou Ji and Xiao Mei.

A delightful high point of the conference was the memorial concert held on the evening of the centenary of Yang Yinliu’s birthday, 10 November, at the Central Conservatory. The carefully selected programme consisted of music ‘discovered’, collected, notated, transcribed, arranged, or composed by Yang Yinliu through his career, several of which soon came to be regarded as part of the core repertory defining modern Chinese music scholarship: Abing’s erhu and pipa pieces, the songs of Jiang Kui (Jiang Baishi), Daoist instrumental music from Yang’s home of southern Jiangsu, and the Buddhist sheng-guan music of the Zhihua temple in Beijing, as well as Yang’s own Protestant choral hymns.
Indeed, the concert featured a long-repressed theme which was explored in the conference, Yang Yinliu’s relationship with religious music. Tian Qing astutely probed Yang’s complex balancing-act with religious music and Party orthodoxy. Apart from his major studies on Daoist and Buddhist music, Yang was not only brought up as a Protestant, but maintained his affinity with Christianity through his final years with his contributions to the revision of the hymnal which he had edited in the 1930s, as Rev. Yang Zhouhuai observed.

The conference was ably hosted by Qiao Jianzhong, Director of the Music Research Institute (who followed in the footsteps of another revered scholar, Huang Xiangpeng, as successor to Yang) and his staff.

The centenary inevitably produced a flurry of publications on Yang Yinliu, and will result in many more articles. Fittingly (since Yang never omitted to focus on music and music-making itself) an important new 2-CD tribute to Yang was released by Wind Records (complementing their fine overview of Chinese traditional music in four sets of 2 CDs), including not only the Jiang Kui, Shifan, and Abing pieces, but rare gems like Yang himself singing Kunqu in the early 1920s and his arrangement of Yangguan_sandie as a Protestant hymn.

As Qiao Jianzhong observed in his closing remarks, the Yang Yinliu memorial conference was filled with ‘multi-disciplinary, multi-faceted, yet reconcilable’ presentations and discussions. It also made a fitting end-of-the-century public forum in which memory, nostalgia, critical thinking, and intellectual stimulation were juxtaposed from Chinese music scholars of all generations, backgrounds, and fields.

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2000 YEARS OF BUDDHISM IN THE EAST

Report on the International Buddhist Music Conference

Hwee-San Tan
(School of Oriental and African Studies, London)

Is the act of performing Buddhist music on a concert stage antithetical to the doctrinal ideal of attaining individual practice and fulfilment? This was one of many questions raised during the Second International Buddhist Music Conference in Taipei, 24 to 27 January 2000, held under the auspices of the Fo Guang Shan Cultural and Educational Foundation, Taiwan. Following the first conference (which had taken place in February 1998), the theme of the second meeting was extended to include Japanese, Korean and Tibetan Buddhist music. Twenty papers were read, and scholars from the People’s Republic of China, Korea, Japan, USA, UK and Taiwan bravely defied language barriers, engaging in lively debate.

This was a meeting with room for learned exchange as well as for performances. The evenings of the 26th and 27th featured two public concerts of Buddhist music at the prestigious Sun Yat Sen Memorial Hall. The concert on the first evening was by the Fo Guang Shan Buddhist Seminary. Students from the Seminary, both monastic and lay, presented a unique programme based on a day in the life of the monastic community. It portrayed ritual and non-ritual activities from the moment of waking up to the end of the day, providing a glimpse of monastic life. The concert on the second evening was of Japanese, Korean and Chinese Buddhist music.

An interesting contrast between the Japanese and the Chinese groups is that the former consisted of six of the most accomplished Bombay singers (age 50 years and above) from the Japanese Pure Land Sect, while the latter were second generation practitioners (comprising novice monks ranging from age 12 to 17) of Shanxi Wutaishan temple music. The Japanese group presented a selection of traditional vocal liturgy from the Pure Land sect, while the Buddhist music of Wutaishan consisted of both instrumental and vocal pieces, some of which date back to around the 8th or 9th century. Indeed the programme, also including Korean monks from the Songgwang monastery in Seoul, was the first of its kind in Taiwan. It was an experience for many who had not heard these kinds of Buddhist music.

Papers were presented over a tightly scheduled three days. In this brief report, discussion will be restricted to only a selection of papers.

Fieldwork and source studies
The topics covered in the conference were: historical surveys (6 papers), studies on aesthetics (3 papers), ideology and practice in Buddhist music (3 papers), regional studies (6
papers), ritual (1 paper), and musical analysis (1 paper). (See list of papers appended to this report.) On the development of Buddhist music, we heard papers from Chinese scholar Tian Qing, who illustrated the process of the sinicization of Buddhist music in China during the Wei and Jin dynasties (317-589) through the examination of compositions quoted in historical and Buddhist sources. Kamata Shigeo’s paper broadened the scope of Tian’s paper with his review of Buddhist fanbai in the Tang dynasty.

For music in the Tibetan ‘Tantric vajra’ dance, Bian Duo’s paper was a good introduction to this genre. Based on in-depth fieldwork by the author in monasteries spread over seventy counties in Tibet, this paper introduced the historical development, content and form, music and instruments, including instrumental makeup and playing techniques of Ka’er jiangmu music.

Two papers on the lesser-known Buddhist traditions of Yunnan province were Yang Mingkang’s study of the musical instruments and instrumental music of Theravada Buddhism among the ethnic minorities, and Zhang Wen’s paper on the azhali (acarya, Saaskrit word meaning ‘teacher’) Tantric ritual music of the Bai minority in Jianshui. In China, Mahayana Buddhism predominates; however, among the ethnic minorities of Yunnan province, Theravada and Tibetan Tantric Buddhism are practised. Buddhist music research in this area, particularly by Western scholars, is still relatively limited; thus the two papers are valuable sources for research in this area. My only criticism of these three papers, as was indeed voiced by many who attended the conference, was the lack of audio or video, or even pictorial examples. It is wonderful to hear from the authors about the instruments and type of music of these musical genres, and indeed, all three seem to have carried out extensive fieldwork. Yet the audience had no opportunity to experience the music or dance discussed.

Innovation and cultural transmission
Kim Ungki’s paper on ‘The form and development of Korean Buddhist vocal music (pompae)’ introduced Korea’s traditional liturgical hymns and dances. Kim also briefly touched on new Western-style compositions of Buddhist music, an endeavour which was opposed by more conservative members of the monastic community in the early decades of the 20th century but found favour from the 1950s as a useful tool for propaganda. Today many such compositions are produced by Western-trained composers and widely sung by Buddhist believers. Kim Ungki, a rare combination of an academic and a practitioner himself (he is a Buddhist monk), provided an eloquent demonstration of the vocal styles of traditional pompae.

My own paper on ‘The dissemination of Fuzhou-style Buddhist hymns in Minnan and Taiwan’ was a comparison of hymn styles in Minnan (known locally as Fuzhou style) and Taiwan (named Gushan style), with that sung in Fuzhou today. In Taiwan, this hymn style is said to have originated from Yongquan monastery on Fuzhou’s Mount Gushan. Musical analysis revealed that the Taiwanese ‘Gushan-style’ hymns bear no melodic resemblance to hymns of the same name sung in Fuzhou or Minnan, while those that are related seem closer to the Minnan than to the Fuzhou version. Having examined historical, migrational and social developments in these areas, I offered a hypothesis that Gushan-style hymns may have come to Taiwan via Minnan rather than directly from Fuzhou. My research in Taiwan was limited to only a handful of examples, so much more work is needed. But one of my aims was to point out the possibilities to current researchers in Taiwan and, hopefully, to encourage more comparative research in these regions.
Monks of the Fuguangshan Buddhist Seminary in performance.

Papers on the function of Buddhist music and on doctrinal ideology versus practice provided much food for thought and generated a lively debate on the role of Buddhist music today. Gao Yali’s paper on this topic first covered the doctrinal ideology of Buddhist music and ideals in its practice, a subject cited extensively in the Buddhist canon. She then tried to reconcile what is stipulated in the doctrines with performance practice in modern-day monasteries. In citing the example of Fuguangshan Monastery’s efforts to popularize Buddhist liturgical music by producing numerous recordings, and performing fanbait on stage with musical accompaniment, she opined that such acts are antithetical to the doctrinal ideal of attaining individual practice and fulfilment since emphasis is placed on propaganda and proselytizing. She also felt that staged performances result in artificial uniformity in fanbait singing, and that orchestral accompaniment restricts freedom in expression as the notated music predominates. Some of her criticisms may indeed be valid, though I feel that consideration should also be given to the fact that religion has to adapt to change in modern society. Furthermore, I, and indeed many among the audience, felt that she was not discriminating between what is presented by Fuguangshan in a performance context and in a monastic ritual context, and the difference in function served by such performances. Some of the issues discussed in her paper are indeed more complex than meet the eye and deserve careful thought.

The conference was a very stimulating one for both the audience and participating scholars. There was last-minute re-scheduling of papers which caused some inconvenience to some presenters, but this was due to circumstances entirely beyond the organizers’ control. Indeed they must be commended for making the conference a success. On a final note, I hope that the next conference will see a greater number of non-Asian participants.
Conference proceedings will be published later this year; the proceedings of the last conference, *1998 Nian Foxue Yanjiu lunwenji: fojiiao yinyue*, were published by Caituan Faren Foguangshan Wenjiao Jijinhui, Taiwan in 1999.

**Papers presented**

Bian Duo (Tibet, China) ‘Zonglun zangchuan fojiao ka’er jiangmu yinyue.’ [A general study of the ka’er jiangmu music of Tibetan Buddhism]

Gao Yali (Taiwan) ‘Fojiiao yinseng gainian yu yinyue xiuxing.’ [Buddhist doctrinal ideology of music and its practice]

Guo Yuju (Taiwan) ‘Qianlu yujia yankou: cong foguangshan yujia yankou fahui tanqi.’ [A preliminary review of the Yogacara ritual of ‘releasing Flaming Mouth’: a study of the ritual performed at Foguangshan monastery]

Hong Yansik (Korea) ‘Hanguo fojiiao yinyue he yishi de fazhan.’ [Korean Buddhist music and development in its rituals]

Kamata Shigeo (Japan) ‘Tangdai fanbai de liuxing.’ [Buddhist fanbai in the Tang dynasty]

Kim Ungki (Korea) ‘Hanguo fojiiao yinyue ‘fanbai’ xingshi yu zhanwang.’ [The form and development of Korean Buddhist poetry]

Liang Chanying (Taiwan) ‘Fojiiao yinyue guan: foyue gongneng yu xiuxing zhi guanxi.’ [A view on Buddhist music: its function and practice]

Lin Gofang (Taiwan) ‘Chanyue hezai: chan yu yishu de yidian siso.’ [Traces of Chan music: some thoughts on Chan and Chinese arts]

Lin Renyi (Taiwan) ‘Dunhuangben wutaishan quzi zhi yanyi yanju.’ [A study of the performance style of Wutaishan Buddhist music from the Dunhuang scrolls]

Nakanishi Kazuo (Japan) ‘Riben jingtu jiaoyi de yinyue texing.’ [Musical characteristics of the music of the Japanese Pure Land Sect]

Pak Peomhun (Korea) ‘Hanguo xiandai fojiiao yinyue.’ [Contemporary Korean Buddhist music]

Song Seokku (Korea) ‘Fojiiao yinyue zhi meixue de jiejin.’ [The aesthetics of Buddhist music]

Tan Hwee-San (UK) ‘Fuzhou fojiiao yinyue zai minnan diqu yiji taiwan zhi liuchuan.’ [The dissemination of Fuzhou-style Buddhist hymns in Minnan and Taiwan]

Tian Qing (China) ‘Weijin nanbeichao fojiiao yinyue lun.’ [Buddhist music in the Northern and Southern dynasties period]

Tsai Tsanhuang (UK) ‘Cong minzhu yinyue de liliu ye fanfa tan zhongguo fojiiao yinyue zhong niansong de caipu yu fenxi.’ [A transcription and analysis of Buddhist chanting based on the theory and methodology of ethnomusicology]

Wang Xiaodun (China) ‘Gudai riben senglu suo jihu de fojiiao yinyue.’ [Buddhist music in the records of early Japanese monks]

Wu Limin (China) ‘Zhongguo fojiiao yinyue fanbai de xingshi ye fazhan.’ [Form of Chinese Buddhist music and their development]

Yang Mingkang (China) ‘Zhongguo nanchuan fojiiao yuexi, faqi ji qiyue yinyue de kaocha yanjiu.’ [A survey of musical instruments, ritual instruments and instrumental music in the Theravada Buddhist tradition in China]

Yip Mingmei (USA) ‘Qinchuan de meixue tezheng he shenmei neihan.’ [Aesthetics characteristics in the music for seven string lute and the profundity of its Chan Buddhist attributes]

Zhang Wen (China) ‘Yunnan Jianchuan baizu azhali fojiiao yinyue.’ [The music of Acarya Buddhaism of the Bai minority in Jianchuan, Yunnan]
AN IIAS–CHIME MEETING FULL OF VARIETY

Asian theatre, hobby horses and throat singing

Frank Kouwenhoven
(CHIME Foundation, Leiden)

‘Audiences, Patrons and Performers in the Performing Arts of Asia’, organized jointly by IIAS and CHIME at Leiden University, from 23 to 27 August 2000, was one of the largest meetings ever on the subject of Asian theatre, with substantial contributions on Indonesian and Indian genres. It incorporated the 6th international CHIME meeting and featured numerous Chinese activities: teahouse music, Mongolian chant, workshops on qin and Peking Opera, and many presentations, initiated with Colin Mackerras’s useful overview of the Chinese cultural diaspora. The question what actually constitutes ‘Chineseness’ was debated by many.

As a co-organizer I attended only a few presentations. It may not put me in the best position to report on what happened – I even missed some of the wonderful parties – but my impressions, gleaned from concerts, corridor life, and snippets of presentations, do not seem to differ much from those of other participants: this was a fine meeting – excellent food, splendid results.

The usual problems and setbacks of large-scale gatherings were in attendance – an overall theme too broad to provide even a general sense of direction, an overcrowded programme, and panel ‘discussions’ that often boiled down to successions of individual statements. But on the positive side, with over one hundred papers and close to 180 participants, this was one of the most productive meetings ever held on the topic of Asian theatre – as keynote speaker James Brandon and others pointed out – a substantial meeting that gave those present a chance to sample the whole field. Asian music, dance, storytelling, rituals, ancient and modern theatre (including spoken theatre) have already featured in many previous conferences, but the combined focus and the resulting chemistry, with an audience of such varied backgrounds, were new. Viewpoints were not only discussed but also played, sung, danced, or turned into ad hoc cabaret acts. Ideas were not just contested or defended, but also frequently translated into plans for action. The net results of the meeting – apart from a high number of ad hoc romances, not a subject for this report but certainly a measure of the electric spirit of the event – are four books in the making, two follow-up conferences, and new plans for a number of cooperative research projects.

Hobby horses
What was it all about? The relationships between audiences, patrons and performers – a broad topic, specific enough if applied to a particular genre, but comprising anything and
An increasing number of children liven up CHIME meetings in recent years. Childcare is not in the regular package of European conferences yet (less so than in the USA).

everything for those who needed to make the shoe fit their own theoretical heel. At the start, the air was perhaps a bit too thick with fashionable words of the ‘global era’, like cultural identity, hybrid culture, globalism, change, diaspora, and creativity. But there was also room for nonconformity, unusual approaches and intriguing sidetracks.

The formal structure was set by sessions on ‘the role of the media’, ‘interculturalism and transnationalism’, ‘hybrid theatre’ and so on. In practice, other themes surged up and sometimes took on leading roles, for example an impressive series of presentations on Indonesian theatre (hidden under the umbrella of ‘hybrid theatre’). So much attention for Indonesia hardly came as a surprise, given the Dutch connection.

In the corridors, Jody Diamond and other delegates started a whisper on the topic of ‘participation’ – i.e. scholars joining in with performances they study – a whisper that soon grew to a roar. What might be the advantages of participatory research, what the disadvantages? Again, this dissident theme was hardly a surprise, with so many people turning up at the conference in double roles, as actors, dancers, players, singers, and researchers at the same time. Some formally introduced topics received a less rewarding treatment. The panel question whether Asian performing arts could be ‘translated’ led to some well-balanced statements, but there was no tackling of sensitive issues.

The range of the meeting was tremendous. A slightly exasperated Felicia Hughes Freeland, who illustrated her talk on dance patronage in Java with examples from Jaran
Suriname-Javanese gamelan music featured next to Chinese teahouse music during the opening ceremony. (Members of the Gotong-Rojong Society from Delfzijl.)

*kepang* and a number of other genres, discovered that her audience had already made its acquaintance with practically all her examples – either in the evening concerts or in preceding papers. The programme was a bit like the gorgeous buffet on the first day. The fact that many speakers carried a flute or a mask or something else in their pockets to divert the academic community was specifically gratifying since the PAAI (Performing Arts in Asia: Tradition and Innovation) research project of IIAS was keen on promoting the idea of ‘learning by performing’, of scholars joining the ranks of performers.

So that topic was there from the start. No doubt the many workshops and stage performances helped to galvanize it. Musicians, dancers and actors kept popping up, scheduled or unscheduled, and they contributed much to the lively atmosphere and to the sense of experiencing an academic/artistic double bill.

It’s not every day that you can be mesmerized by a gang of loud banging Surinamese-Javanese gamelan players, members of the Gotong-Rojong Society in Delfzijl, who fearlessly confronted the freshly arrived (still jet-lagged) participants with a huge wall of ritual noise. After the obligatory round of opening speeches, these people (a band of twenty) marched out of the Sinology building in Leiden in the attire of ‘horse trance dancers’ and carried out an awesome open-air ritual, dropping from their (hobby) horses, falling to the ground with bodies shaking, frothing at the mouth as they fell into trance, while numerous bystanders videoed and clicked their cameras. I am grateful to fellow-organizer Matthew
Tran Quang Hai teaches bi-phonics singing.

Cohen for bringing in John Emigh who, the next evening, gave his audience of ethnотourists a piece of their own cake. His *topeng*-inspired stage act, an ironic comment on what academics (and others) bring about when they ‘study’ a foreign culture, was delightful and well-timed.

Let me try to report on it all with some sense of order. The workshops are a good starting point, although they came at the end. With people watching, taking part as performers, audience and patrons all rolled into one, the workshops were as illustrative of the main theme as many of the papers.

**Throat singing**

The seven workshops were allotted such a generous amount of time that they could hardly be seen as subsidiary activities. Tran Quang Hai rode the waves with his crash course on overtone singing. Nearly half the conference went to that one. An exuberant scholar and all-round entertainer and musician from Vietnam, residing in Paris, Tran first demonstrated his vocal abilities – plus a bout of rhythmic juggling with spoons – in an evening concert which warmed everyone to the idea of throat singing. In the past few decades, large numbers of people have heard Tran’s extraordinary vocal feats. He has featured in music conferences all over the world. While some mumbled that it was ‘all tricks and little music’, most delegates were elated and found Tran enjoyable and very inspiring. This time he tackled a fresh audience of performance theorists, anthropologists and theatre specialists who had not heard or seen him before. The workshop-goers really pulled it off – they managed to produce
overtone sounds individually, sometimes after no more than a few minutes of practice. Of course you had to be willing to have your jaw rigged into the right position by the maestro.

In a different room, for a more choosy audience, John Emigh (Brown University, Providence, USA) offered a practical introduction to the topeng masked dance theatre of Bali. John is an excellent teacher and an inspired talker, who guided his students on a veritable ‘journey’ through the world of topeng. Starting with the plain ‘walking routine’ of topeng dancers, and only gradually moving on to specific postures and their meanings – masks were involved at a late point – he managed to convey, in a short time, something of the elaborate training process which lies at the basis of this genre.

Lovers of guqin music obtained instruction in the art by Chinese masters Wu Zhao, Ding Chenyun and Lin Youren. Three hours sufficed to get acquainted with the instrument, to feel its touch and decide if there was something in it for future pursuit. One delegate bravely attempted to follow Master Lin’s instructions while at the same time videoing him with a hand-held camera – an unsurpassed feat among qin students, I would guess.

Other workshops offered introductions to Indian and Indonesian dance and Kattaik-
kutu Theatre. Comfortable clothes and lots of energy did half the job. Pudji Astuti taught her audience the ‘Dance of a Thousand Hands’ (Rampai Aceh) of North Sumatra, with complex interlocking movements. Zhou Qinru from Los Angeles, editor of the newly founded journal *Music in China*, gave an intimate workshop on Peking Opera, and Kalpana Raghuuraman demonstrated dances in Bharata Natyar style.

The workshops served as a fine synthesis after four days of conference talks. Many experts of Indonesian or Indian culture had their first dive into Chinese genres, and vice versa.

**Diaspora or not?**

James Brandon’s talk on ‘The performance Triangle’ and Colin Mackerras’s presentation on the Chinese diaspora were fine papers, but they also showed the pitfalls of ‘keynote lectures’. Brandon, a longtime expert on Japanese theatre and other genres, brought up many good points, but did not offer the synthetic perspective on Asian theatre that conference-goers had hoped for. Colin Mackerras (in a plenary session talk) provided an excellent overview of the many faces of the Chinese Diaspora, but mainly limited himself to a cautious summing-up (though the fact that he chose a sample of Tan Dun’s music as the single practical illustration of ‘Chinese music in diaspora’ did provoke a stir among Chinese participants in the hall: ‘why did this guy pick such an unrepresentative example?’)

‘Diaspora’ was dealt with in a series of special sessions. Very successful on the whole, though many must have wondered if ‘diaspora’ was really a topic, or rather a collective name for many different issues: transnationalism, local minorities, ethnic politics, aesthetics, identity, hybridity, and so forth. The position of the Chinese minority in Singapore (the subject of Fred Lau’s talk) hardly invites comparison with that of, say, the Koreans in northern China, who constitute a local economic majority in that region. Likewise, the Nagi people, a small minority of Malayan descent on the isle of Flores, eastern Indonesia (discussed by Paula Bos), differ entirely from the large Asian communities in North America who have adopted pan-Asian identities and who can hardly be discussed in terms of ‘minorities’. Yet it was
worthwhile to bring all these different examples together, and to ponder their implications from a shared hypothetical viewpoint. Fred Lau’s paper culminated in a heated discussion about what actually constitutes ‘Chineseness’, and whether the Chinese in Singapore could be viewed in terms of ‘diaspora’ at all. A selection of papers on ‘Asian diaspora’ will be edited by Hae-kyung Um and published under the auspices of IIAS by Curzon Press.

Chineseness

Several papers on Indian theatre will find their way into a special issue of an Indian journal, guest-edited by Hanne de M. de Bruin. Papers on Indonesian theatre will be selected for a book publication in the USA (editor: Matthew Cohen), while more specific books are currently under consideration (e.g. one on Kethoparak). Still other papers on Indonesia will find their way into the journal Oideion, edited in the Netherlands by Wim van Zanten.

John Emigh

My own panel, on the subject of ‘Creative processes in Chinese and East Asian folk music and culture’ was interesting, but crowded with too many papers to allow sufficient time for discussion. Along with some very good presentations, such as Mercedes Dujunco’s paper on creative moments in Chaozhou music – she introduced the useful notion of a ‘tipping-point’, where new elements find their way into an existing music structure – there were also some disappointments and a few heady theoretical papers. But let’s face it: ‘creativity’ is the most ghastly of topics. Aspects like novelty, beauty, and ‘profound logic’ – so often promoted as main criteria for creativity – are essentially byproducts of art and of artistic performance. They can be analysed in aesthetic terms within the self-referential framework of any specific culture, but they do not lend themselves to empirical study, or to intercultural comparison. What remained, in this specific meeting, were impressions of the amazing variety and playfulness one finds within specific genres and realms. Irene Wegner gave a terrific overview of Chinese painted opera faces and masks, but showed so many slides that, towards the end, her audience began to look a bit like her masks. A number of the ‘creativity’ papers will be incorporated in due course in the CHIME journal.

For the rest, I followed a haphazard trail through the programme. I saw Kelly Foreman, who became a geisha for two years to study this world from within (fascinating!), and I heard Gloria Lee on affect and the body in Korean folk music. She presented controversial views, defended with great ardour and insight – her paper would have made an ideal topic for a ‘keynote’ lecture. I dropped in on Elizabeth Wichmann-Walczak’s paper comparing
Peking opera in Shanghai, Nanjing and Honolulu. Too bad Europe is (as yet) without such a fine scholar in this field! I received instruction from Mark Bender on the use of the left hand in Suzhou tanci, and got entangled in a discussion with Yang Chunwei about Zhu Jian'er's Tenth Symphony (1998). Sadly, we couldn't bring the composer to the conference to give his own ideas on the work; Yang's paper once again tackled the subject of 'Chineseness'. She felt that Zhu had made improper use of the guqin, and concluded that the symphony did not represent 'true' Chinese culture.

**Concerts**

The conference featured a number of mainland Chinese scholars currently stationed at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, as well as visitors directly from the mainland. Some Chinese presentations were in such poor English that nobody could follow them. A pity, because the chances for exchange are already so very limited. Poor understandability was also a flaw in some Western speakers' presentations. Few ethnomusicology programmes pay attention to ability in lecturing and presenting papers, which I find hard to understand. Simha Arom in Paris occasionally requests his students to give mini-lectures in which they explain the gist of their research: if they can't do it successfully in two minutes, they are unlikely to be more convincing in two hours. Arom's training yields excellent results; I have never seen any presentation by a student of his that was not perfectly timed and well-organized.
Notwithstanding problems of this kind, the present meeting was a stimulating event, including interesting ethnographic films and a number of good concerts. The Huang He ensemble from Paris gave vibrant performances of teahouse music. Perhaps even more vibrant was the spontaneous *sizhu* playing by Fred Lau, François Picard, Alan Thrasher, Stephen Jones, Helen Rees and other ‘old China hands’ who, at one point in the past, had already joined forces in a ‘Silk and Bamboo’ competition in Shanghai. Marinx Wells blew the *suona* and frightened party-goers out of their wits, and Vayu Naidu told a delicate Indian story. Actor Boedi Otong nonplussed spectators by ‘releasing himself’, and cellist Hugh Livingston fought an uneven battle with *qin* players Lin Youren, Wu Zhao, John Thompson and Ding Chenyun. Livingston treated Bach’s cello suites like *qin* scores, and re-invented their rhythmical and dramatic flow, which earned him admiration as well as irritation. But I’m glad his recital was captured on video, because it was an intriguing experiment. The *qin* players had a less inspired day, but made up for it with fine concerts during a *qin* festival in Amsterdam, in the wake of the conference.

Follow-up conferences are planned in Venice (CHIME) in September 2001, and (on the wider topic of Asian performance) at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok in December 2002.

**A selective list of papers (presentations on China and East Asia only)**

Bender, Mark (Ohio State University), *The role of the lower-hand in performances of Suzhou Tanci*

Benson, Carlton (Pacific Lutheran University), *Onto the air waves: storytelling for radio fans and commercial sponsors in 1930s Shanghai*

Berdahl, Vibeke (Nordic Institute of Asian Studies), *The storyteller’s manner in live performances of Yangzhou storytelling*

Cross, Ian (University of Cambridge), *Cognition and creativity*

Dujunco, Mercedes (New York University), *Creativity and change in the performance practice of the Changzhou Xianshi string ensemble music*

Dwyer, Arienne (Johannes Gutenberg-Universität), *Performance and regeneration in Hu’aer-like song texts of the Salars and their neighbors*

Everett, Yayoi Uno, *Mirrors of West and mirrors of East: Elements of Gagaku in postwar art music*

Foreman, Kelly (Rikkyo University), *Patronage, performance context and meaning for the Japanese Geisha and their performing arts*

Fritsch, Ingrid (Universität zu Köln), *100 years of Japanese Chindon-ya: from street advertising to pop*

Fukuoaka, Shota (National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka), *Javanese Gamelan in Japan*

Gales, Fred (Sound Reporters), *Chang Saw*

Giuriati, Giovanni (University of Rome), *Idealization and changes in the music of Cambodian diaspora*

Goodman, David G. (University of Illinois), *Patronage and professionalization in Japan’s postmodern theatre*

Hashimoto, Yamiko (Univ. of New South Wales), *The role of audiences in contemporary Japanese theatre*

Hosogawa, Shuei (Tokyo Institute of Technology), *Dancing in the Tomb of Samba: Japanese-Brazilian presence/absence in São Paulo carnival*

Jiang, David (Columbia University), *A shifting society and a changing theatre: modern theatre in Taiwan*

Kagaya Shinko (Williams College), *Japanese traditional and modern theatre during the time of modernization: Chinese patterns of reception.***

Kapinosvka, Veronika (Charles University Prague), *East-Mongolian musical theatre*

Ke Yang (Lanzhou Univ.), *The interplay between audience and singers in Taemin Hua’er love song dialogues*

Kei Hibino (Seikei University), *Managuni Shibai’s theatricalism and postcolonialism*

Killick, Andrew P. (Florida State University), *Ch’anggut: A hybrid-popular theatre of Korea.*

Kouwenhoven, Frank (CHIME), *On the creative process in music: mechanistic versus vitalist views*

Lau, Frederick (California Polytechnic State University), *Morphing Chineseess: the changing image of Chinese music clubs in Singapore*

Lee, Gloria (New York Univ.), *Han and Shimnyong: An aesthetic of affect and the body in Korean folk music*

Li Ruru (University of Leeds), *Interrogating the Chair: An illustration of Mao Zedong’s instruction ‘Class struggle should be dealt with every day, every month and every year’*
Livingston, Hugh (Yale University), Building audiences for contemporary music in China
Lundström, Håkan (Lund University), Recreation and creation in Kammat Teem singing
Mackerras, Colin (Griffith Univ.), Performing arts among diasporas: Background ideas from the Chinese case
Mahasarinand, Pawit (University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana), Young traditional artists at a crossroad of cultures: A future of traditional Asian performing arts?
McCurlay, Dallas (Queens College-CUNY), Wen and Wu: associative thought in early China and its impact on the aesthetic development of musical ritual
Müldendorf, Ulrike (University of Heidelberg), The fate of the Spring Willow Society and the ‘Enlightened Theatre’ Movement
Norton, Barley (School of Oriental and African Studies), Individual creativity and musical taste: forces of change in Vietnamese ritual music
Omakaeva, Ellara (Kamlyk Institute for the Humanities of RAS), Traditional culture and environment: Kalmyk music and ritual
Paek, Inok (U.K.), Composition to performance: stories of two kayagum players
Pringle, Patricia (U.S.), How patronage by intellectuals transformed Bunraku puppet theatre from a marginal genre to a national treasure, 1900–1994
Rees, Helen (University of California, Los Angeles), How great men are made in Nazi music
Salz, Jonah (Ryukoku Univ.), Japanese actors in a homeostatic system: towards a theory of hierarchy in the arts
Schierer-Kohl, Greet (Martin-Luther Universität), Interactions between audiences, patrons, and performers in the Nat Pwe of Burma/Myanmar
Tarocco, Francesca (SOAS, University of London), Re-tuning the Dharma: issues on the popularisation of Buddhist music in China
Tran Quang Hai (Musée de l'Homme), What music do the Vietnamese diaspora perform, like, and listen to?
Wegner, Irene (Universität München), The structural system of painted faces in Chinese opera: its creation process in history and its partial transformation through the influence of individuals
Wells, Marnix (SOAS), Awesome array (hyoejegong): a Korean martial tattoo of the 15th century and Chinese-style ritual
Wichmann-Walczak, Elizabeth (University of Hawai'i), Jingju (Beijing/Peking ‘Opera’) as international art and as transnational root of cultural identification: processes of creation and reception in Shanghai, Nanjing, and Honolulu
Wong, Deborah (University of California, Riverside), Taiko in Asian America
Xue Yibing (Chinese Univ. of Hong Kong), The source and the stream: narrative singing Hou Su Bao-juan
Yang Chunwei (Chinese University of Hong Kong), An issue arising from the 10th symphony of Zhu Jian er
Yang Minkang (Chinese University of Hong Kong), A study of Dai’s ritual performance Wetsundawn of Theravada Buddhism in Yunnan, China
Zhang Zhengtao (Chinese University of Hong Kong), Patrons of the Yinyuehu
Zhou Qinru (Journal of Music in China), Changing without varying the essential form: a discussion of the creative process of vocal music in traditional Peking Opera

Performances and workshops
Pudji Astuti, (Sluiski, The Netherlands), Indonesian dance
Urna Chahartugchi Trio (Berlin), Mongolian chant
Ding Chengyun (Kaifeng), guqin (Chinese zither)
John Emigh, (Providence, USA), Balinese masked theatre
Gotong-Rojong Society (Delfzijl), Surinamese-Javanese galungan and terbang music
Huang He Ensemble (Paris), Chinese teahouse music
Lin Youren (Shanghai), guqin (Chinese zither)
Hugh Livingston (Berkeley, California), violoncello
Vaya Naidu (London), Indian Story Telling
Boedi S. Oting, modern Indonesian theatre
Kalpana Raghuraman (Leiden), South Indian dance
P. Rahajopol, Kanchipuram (India / Leiden), Kattaikkuttu Theatre
John Thompson (Hong Kong), guqin (Chinese zither)
Tran Quang Hai (Paris), bi-phonc singing and spoon playing
Wu Zhao (Beijing), guqin (Chinese zither)
Zhou Qinru (Los Angeles), Peking Opera

This volume on Southeast Asian music in the Garland series is ambitious in its coverage, varied in its approaches, and aimed at a broad readership, from high school students to professors to interested readers from all backgrounds, as the introduction states. The book explores overall musical characteristics of different cultures and provides insights into social and musical processes of specific, often lesser-known ethnic communities. It also demonstrates different historical and systematic approaches in the study of Southeast Asian music.

The book is divided in three parts. Part 1 is an overview of Southeast Asian musical culture and a brief survey of scholarship in this field. Part 2 explores a number of major social issues and how they are reflected in, and enacted through musical traditions. Part 3, the largest part, focuses on specific musical cultures and consists of three sub-sections. ‘Majority Cultures of Mainland Southeast Asia’ examines the music cultures of Cambodia, Thailand, Laos, Burma (Myanmar), Peninsular Malaysia, Vietnam and Singapore. ‘Upland and Minority Peoples of Mainland Southeast Asia’ explores the music of Vietnamese minorities, upland minorities in Burma, Laos and Thailand, indigenous peoples of the Malay Peninsula, and lowland Cham communities in Vietnam and Cambodia. Finally, ‘Island Southeast Asia’ offers an overview of music in Sumatra, Java, Bali, Nusa Tenggara Barat, Nusa Tenggara Timur, Sulawesi, Maluku, Borneo (Sabah, Sarawak, Brunei, Kalimantan), and (selectively) certain genres from the Philippines.

‘Southeast Asian Musics: An Overview’ in Part 1 looks at music in social context. It discusses aspects of regionalism, distinctions between upland and lowland sections, between rural and urban areas, and between court and village styles, as well as concepts of classical, folk and popular musics and issues of power, knowledge and social status – a good orientation to key issues of Southeast Asian music and society, useful for all students in this field. The authors list several unresolved questions (10-12), offer suggestions on how to
listen to Southeast Asian musics (12-16), and delineate musical characteristics of various genres in numerous Southeast Asian countries (17-22). The chapter concludes with a list of representative types of music (22-23). Interestingly, these four sub-sections focus almost exclusively on 'traditional' (or 'historical', 'classical') Southeast Asian societies and music cultures that pose the least ambiguity in regard to contextual identification. For example, in the discussion of the 'overall sound of island Southeast Asian music' (20-22), the primary source of musical evidence are the performance practices of gong-chime ensembles from the Philippines (kulintang) and Indonesia (Javanese and Balinese gamelans). So what about popular music? Are genres like pinoy rock or kroncong any less illustrative of historical and political processes in the Philippines or Indonesia, and any less characteristic to those regions? One also wonders about the omission of Singapore's musical culture in the overview; it raises critical questions about the traditional canon of Southeast Asian musicology as delineated in Part 1. This overview pays no attention to contemporary social processes in Southeast Asia and how they influence music. Newly developed urban societies such as Singapore, and popular culture in other areas are not taken into consideration. Some of these issues are discussed later on, in Part 2, in 'Popular Music and Cultural Politics' by Deborah Wong and René T. A. Lysloff (95-112), but the fact that they are ignored in the overview at the beginning of the book is unsatisfactory.

The chapters on 'Southeast Asia in Prehistory' by Karl L. Hutterer and 'Bamboo, Rice, and Water' by Robert Wessing (in part 2) provide an informative context for understanding cultural ideologies and ecological beliefs that influence Southeast Asian music, theatre and ritual. Succeeding chapters focus on historical and social processes which shaped — and which continue to inform — musical cultures of the region: Indian influences, such as Hinduism and Buddhism, but also Chinese immigration, colonialism, and more recently, nationalism, globalisation and commercialism. The chapter on 'The Impact of Modernisation on Traditional Music' is important in several ways. It surveys modernization in relation to shifts in landscape and social space, changing patronage, war, and Westernization. It also explores revivalist movements of both 'traditional' musical genres supported by state institutions, and most importantly, the emerging trend of new compositions in traditional or in western-oriented musical idioms. And it examines the power of tourism on Southeast Asian musical cultures. However, as with the overview chapter mentioned above, the section on 'Representation' (132-135) is simplistic in its description of so-called representative musical forms of various Southeast Asian countries, and does not critically examine issues of musical representation in modern social contexts.

The chapters on individual musical cultures in Southeast Asia (part 3) range from in-depth discussions of particular cultures, their history, language, society, musical instruments, musical genres, styles and structures — and this is what most of the chapters are like — to brief overviews of a particular country or ethnic group, e.g. the chapters on 'Singapore' and 'The Lowland Cham.' Most essays offer citations within the body of the text, with bibliographical references at the end of each chapter; an extensive guide to publications on Southeast Asian music (arranged by country) is appended at the end of the book (as well as similar guides to sound recordings and film and video). A glossary of terms is regularly placed within the body of each essay, thus facilitating a convenient reference to foreign terms.

The division in topical essays contributes a lot to its overall usefulness of this encyclopedia as a study resource. But in spite of the impressive wealth of information there
are some unfortunate omissions. Given the significant amount of literature on music in Singapore, particularly on popular music and Chinese opera, it is curious that only one reference is given at the end of the chapter on Singapore (plus one more in the extensive bibliography at the end of the book), and that it is inaccurately cited in the text!

This volume is indispensable for anyone who studies Southeast Asian musical cultures. It is unsurpassable in its extensive discussion of the varied contexts of Southeast Asian music and will remain a significant resource for Southeast Asian research for many years to come. It is accompanied by a CD with a broad range of interesting music and sound examples, from frog sounds (!) to gamelan to shadow play music.

Lee Tong Soon


This is the first study in German – or indeed in any Western language – concentrating on a (comprehensive) musicological analysis of Chinese Buddhist liturgical material. It is a reworking of a PhD study in ethnomusicology. The book relies primarily on audio- and video-material and on other data collected in the field during two visits to the Chinese-Buddhist Aryamularama Monastery in Indonesia in 1993 and 1994. Apart from musical aspects, the book addresses the role of Buddhist liturgy in one specific ethnic group, the Peranakan-Chinese, who have largely assimilated into Indonesian culture.

The author starts by explaining her fieldwork methodology. The main content of the book is divided into three main parts plus an appendix. Part I (pp. 9-51) offers a short general history of Indonesian Mahayana-Buddhism, and an introduction to the specific development and impact of Chinese Mahayana-Buddhism in that country. This is followed by a description of temple life in the Aryamularama Monastery in the Puncak area in Jakarta. Part II (pp. 53-83) starts with a discussion of socio-cultural and religious functions of liturgy, and marks liturgy as an important factor in shaping and stabilizing cultural identity among the Overseas Chinese community in Indonesia. The author’s survey of the historical development of Chinese Buddhist liturgy reflects the present scarcity of information on Chinese Buddhist music and rituals in secondary literature in European languages. The author has not been able to consult materials in Chinese, and sadly, this leads to some misunderstandings in what is otherwise a helpful introduction. For example, the author seems to be unaware that Tsaur Jyr, Chao Shi and Ts’ae Tche, as mentioned in different (Western) sinological studies, all refer to one and the same person Cao Zhi (192-232 AD), who is regarded in Chinese history as the earliest composer of Chinese Buddhist music (see p. 59ff.). At the end of part II, a distinction is made between several forms and means of liturgy. The author’s categorization of different types of liturgical texts and her descriptions of the music are partly set off against texts and music in Tibetan Buddhism and in shamanistic religions, which helps the reader to put Chinese Buddhism into a wider perspective.

Part III (pp. 85-200), the central part of the study, contains an elaborate analysis (liturgical and musical) of twenty-two distinct excerpts from the liturgy as practiced in the
Aryamularama Monastery: twenty representative songs from the traditional Buddhist liturgy and two modern ones. These songs are not arranged according to their textual categories (such as sutras, mantras/dharanis, diverse formulas, gathas, and stotras, which are discussed in part II), but according to the occasions when they are sung (morning and evening liturgy, special ceremonies etc.). For general purposes, a list at the end of the book provides a helpful survey of the overall characteristics of these different pieces.

Each of the twenty-two pieces is analyzed in detail, usually paying attention to the following points: religious meaning, liturgical sequence, tunes/motifs/form, range/scale/intervals, tempo/time value of the notes/agogics/articulation, rhythm/prosody and ornamentation. Melodical motifs are shown in Western staff notation. The musical pieces in their entirety can be found in the appendix. There they are shown, again in Western staff notation, together with a percussion part (in a notational system devised by the author). In her conclusion, the author lists what she considers to be the most important aspects of the traditional pieces analyzed in this study. Let me summarize some of her findings:

- the tunes differ in character; they range from purely syllabic tunes to fairly melismatic forms. Mixtures of these two forms also occur. These differences are not related to specific textual categories;
- not surprisingly, melodical motifs and overall forms are more varied and complex in the melismatic pieces, while the syllabic pieces usually have more simple forms;
- the pitchrange usually suits non-professional singers, e.g. monks and laymen who haven’t had special training;
- pentatonic scales dominate all the traditional pieces;
- melodic motion usually takes place along small intervals (for example steps of a major second, or a minor or major third), but there may be occasional jumps to a significantly higher tone when the syllable Fo (Buddha) is sung. This may be interpreted as a ‘musical bow to the Buddha’;
- the tempo is usually moderate to slow;
- percussion rhythms do not always necessarily correspond to the melodical or textual rhythms, and partly operate on an independent level.
- muyu (temple block) and dagu (big drum) are used to lead the main beat while bo (cymbals), yinque (handheld metal percussion instrument) and zhong (suspended bell) follow on the second (“light”) beat.
- The daqing (metal bowl) does not have a rhythmic function, but it signals the beginning or the end of a piece and also serves to emphasize text syllables.

The author is usually careful about interpreting the musical expression of the pieces, but sometimes she provides qualitative descriptions like “a catchy tune like that of a folk-song”, music of an ‘intensely-implying character’ or of ‘appealing character’, glissandi ‘like those typical of Southern Chinese Opera’, ‘a trance-like mood’, or mantras containing ‘mystical components’. A further study will have to evaluate, in particular, how tunes and rhythms relate to the texts.

At the end of part III, the author presents two modern Buddhist songs by Sek Hui Song and Bikkhu Girirakhite Mahathera. The first one, a pop-musical arrangement with a tune which I actually doubt to be an original composition by Sek Hui Song, is based on conventional Chinese pentatonism. The other tune is a re-arrangement of the Christian song ‘Silent Night’, with the Western words substituted by a Buddhist Indonesian text.
In her conclusion Claus-Bachmann states that no influences of Indonesian music can be traced in the liturgical music of the Aryamularama monastery. She suggests that, over a long period, Chinese immigrants deliberately fended off such elements in their efforts to sustain their own identity in a strongly Indonesian environment.

This study of Chinese Buddhist music in Indonesia will fascinate any researchers working on Buddhist music in China. Meanwhile, the scarcity of current Western research on liturgical musical practice in present-day China and Taiwan remains a problem. More fieldwork in those regions is very welcome. Such fieldwork could supplement or reinforce the results of the present study. Judging from Chinese studies in this field, I would estimate that more than ninety percent of Claus-Bachmann’s musical analysis is fairly representative of Chinese Buddhist liturgical music also in China and Taiwan. (See for example Lin Jiuhui’s Buddhist Music in Taiwan – Studies on the Music of the Main Texts of Morning and Evening Liturgy, Taipei 1983, unpublished BA Thesis completed at the Normal University).

The repertoire and the musicological analyses presented in Claus-Bachmann’s study make this book a valuable contribution to studies of Chinese Buddhism. It offers the basis for further comparative ethnomusicological studies of Buddhist music in China and in other Asian regions. The book is not only useful for musicologists, but also for sinologists and buddhologists who study liturgical and sociological aspects of Chinese Buddhism.

Carsten Krause

Zhongguo yinyue wenwu daxi [Compendium of Chinese Music Antiquities], (eight volumes published: Hubei, Beijing, Shaanxi and Tianjin, Xinjiang, Shanghai and Jiangsu, Sichuan, Henan, Gansu; still in press: volumes on Shandong, Shanxi, Hunan, Jiangxi.) Wang Zichu, et.al., (eds), Zhengzhou, Daxiang chubanshe, 1996-2006?.

The publication of Compendium of Chinese Music Antiquities (hereafter Compendium), as the editors write in the foreword, ‘is a major milestone for musicology and archaeology in China’. Indeed, this is a magnificent tome. As I glanced through the Hubei volume – the first volume in the series – I was (and I still am) awestruck by the breath and vision of the project. The foreword gives us some idea of the ten-year gestation period. In early 1985, Lü Ji, chairman of the All China Musicians Association, suggested compiling a book entitled A Comprehensive Pictorial Guide to China’s Musical Antiquities plus a series of accompanying volumes. In mid April that year a forum was organized by the Chinese Academy of Arts, the National Relics Bureau, the Archaeology Institute and the Acoustic Institute attached to the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences to discuss the project. In 1988, a name was chosen – Compendium of Chinese Musical Antiquities – and Huang Xiangpeng was elected as head of the Editorial Committee. The project was listed as a major state key project during the Seventh Five Year Plan (1986-1990) and received financial assistance from the State Council, the Ministry of Finance and the National Relics Bureau. Shortly after an editorial meeting was held in Kunlun, Jiangsu Province in late June 1995, the Henan Educational Publishing House (now the Daxiang Publishing House) signed a contract to publish the Compendium.

These volumes are a first-class guided museum tour to musical artefacts in China. They are guidebooks, but not the kind of tourist guidebook that you can carry round when travelling. The instruments depicted in the books are like rare botanical specimens with
accompanying labels. The Hubei volume includes sets of chimebells, stone chimes, held-hand clapper bells, bronze and wooden drums, globular and bone flutes, panpipes, sheng, five- and ten-stringed zithers, figurines and music iconography on brocade, paintings, combs, pottery, porcelain and stone carvings. Entries give an approximate dating of instruments (in the case of some pre-Qin bronze bells dates can be determined from the inscriptions or typological analysis of the assemblage in which they were found), where they are housed (including accession numbers), place of excavation, structural characteristics, decorative patterns, motifs, bibliographical references and – in many but not all entries – the musical range and pitch intervals of instruments. One section in the Hubei volume is devoted to the array of musical instruments found in the tomb of the Marquis Yi of Zeng at Leigudun, Suizhou, Hubei province in 1978. The appendices include tables of the dimensions of bronze bells and stone chimes (width, length, height, etc), frequencies and pitches obtained from bronze bells in the tomb of the Marquis Yi of Zeng, biographical references on musical instruments from the tomb and a map of musical relics distributed in Hubei Province.

The magnificent colour prints of individual yongzheng bells, bronze and wooden drums, the burial pits and the set of bianyong in the Marquis Yi of Zeng tomb, suspended or positioned on a large frame conjures up a battlefield, a landscape of havoc and ruin, armies on the march and legions of the dead lying across the red-brown earth. As ancient texts relating to music amply illustrate, bells and drums marshalled the advances and retreats of troops in battle. In the Rites of Zhou [Zhou Li], it is recorded that in warfare, the drum signalled the attack and the zheng bell signalled the retreat. In the Weiliaozi, a book on the art of war compiled during the Warring States Period, ‘the drum beat signals the advance and the repeated drum means attack; the tocsin’s clang signals a halt and a repeated clang means retreat’. Music and ritual were also essential elements of rulership and the bronze bell in particular became the quintessential ritual instrument and a potent symbol of power, authority and control.

These volumes are an invaluable reference tool for archaeologists, musicologists, historians and as coffee table books, they are also ideal for the general reader. If your library cannot afford the entire set, I recommend the Hubei volume.

Peter Micle

REFERENCES


The title of this book sounds like a Chinese warrior movie. The wealth of (black-and-white and colour) photos inside can furtively give the impression of a popular book on operatic cinema. But no, look again, these are rural actors on makeshift stages, ordinary villagers dancing in the streets or marching in processions, worshippers in temples. *Gastar, Generaler och Gäckande gudinnor* is a lavishly illustrated journalistic account of popular theatre and stage life in urban and rural China and Japan. It's not the sort of major comparative theoretical study that rides the waves for a decade, nor a rough guide to China's major music and theatre venues, but a substantial collection of journalistic writings on Chinese and Japanese popular and folk theatre genres, dance and narrative traditions, full of interesting details and observations. The major setback (for those who are not Swedes) is that the book is in Swedish.

The author is a sinologist and researcher of drama. In the last ten years she has carried out an impressive amount of fieldwork in various parts of China and Japan. Christina Nygren is an undaunted lady who does not shrink from Chinese formal barriers like 'no' or 'don't-have-it' or 'can't go here', one who travels on until she finds what she is looking for. The tone of the book is light-weight and gleeful, and there are some unnecessarily long digressions on purchasing tickets or finding entrance doors, but the author is also a keen and critical observer who knows what she is talking about.

Roughly half of the book is dedicated to Chinese genres, with emphasis on itinerant rural opera troupes and local theatre forms (difangxi) in Shanxi, Anhui, Guizhou and other areas. Ritual genres run the gamut from exorcism to ancestor worship. There are also chapters on Spring Festival activities, popular temple ceremonies, teahouse music, urban theatrical amusement (e.g. in *The Great World* or in the Workers' Cultural Palace in Shanghai, or in Beijing's traditional amusement quarter *Lao Tianqiao*) and opera on television. We get no more than cursory glimpses of each genre or topic discussed, but Nygren has a clear overall focus: she examines basic aesthetic, practical and religious-moral views on the part of performers, local audiences and (to a lesser degree) native scholars, and she asks the right
questions. Why are people watching this? Who is participating, and why? What does it mean to people? What does it mean for a man to play a female role, traditionally, and in contemporary society (where it is formally forbidden)? What is it like to grow up as an actor from when you were a kid? What has changed, what has remained the same? And so forth. Plain questions, plain answers. Nearly every chapter contains snippets of interviews, and from this Nygren builds a rich and caleidoscopic perspective of China’s traditional performing arts. The absence of any attempt on her part to ‘upgrade’ information by casting it in high-brow academic language is refreshing. Her book is weak on synthetic views—although she has some interesting points to make, for example about the marked contrast between official appraisals of popular culture in China and Japan—and her’s also weak on literature: major studies by Malm, Brandon and others are not referred to (although I guess she knows them), and the silently flourishing undergrowth of Chinese (local) writings, for example on difǎngxì, is practically ignored. Never mind, Nygren’s strong points are clear: her wide-ranging fieldwork, and her basically sound observations are worth taking note off. (For a sample of Nygren’s writing, see the article on pp. 61-69 of this issue of CHIME).

Frank Kouwenhoven


Any scholar discussing the development of the pipa—a Chinese four-stringed lute—and of pipa music immediately faces two major difficulties. Firstly, for an instrument with such a long and still living tradition, there is relatively little published scholarship about the pipa, its music or the practitioners of its art. Secondly, there are many aspects involved in a comprehensive study: issues of classification, construction, interval structures in the music, notational systems, publications, manuscripts, tuning systems, fingering signs, performance techniques, repertoire and tutorials, but also pipa players, pipa schools and other social aspects.

John Myers, originally a guitar instructor, has been investigating and researching the historical and stylistic development of the pipa and pipa music for many years. In an attempt to deal with one confined aspect of the pipa tradition, he has concentrated his 1992 study upon one nineteenth century handbook, Nanbei erpai miben pipapu (The Secret Pipa Music of the True Traditions, Southern and Northern) by Hua Wenbin. The book is based on Myers’ PhD dissertation on this subject of 1987, supplemented with new materials. For anyone interested in Chinese music, ‘The Way of the Pipa’ can serve as a valuable introduction to important aspects of the instrument, and of Chinese musical culture.

The book is divided in three parts: 1) the historical development of the pipa and its repertoire; 2) music analysis and comparison of xiban (a category of short pipa melodies) and daqu (suites) from Hua’s handbook; and 3) conclusions. Each part contains several chapters.

In the first chapter, the author briefly outlines the history of the pipa, divides it into four periods, and then introduces Hua’s handbook. Hua was a medical doctor who wrote several books on medicine and composed many pieces of (sung) poetry. He played the pipa as well as the qin (a Chinese seven-stringed zither). Together with his brothers and friends, Hua published the abovementioned collection of pipa scores in gongche notation—a Chinese
notational system in which Chinese characters represent the notes of the scale – in three volumes around 1819. The individual repertoires of two master players were included in this collection: Chen Mufu of the southern style, and Wang Junxi of the northern style.

Chapter two introduces two distinct types of classical pipa music: the pacific wen and the military wu. Both refer to programmatical aspects: wen is associated with calm, peaceful and elegant music, wu with martial music and with war. Most traditional pipa pieces belong to one of these two categories. The titles of individual pieces give further clues about their extra-musical content.

The music of Hua’s collection was already old by the time of its first publication, around 1819, but most of the pieces still feature in today’s players’ repertoires. It is a very significant document, even apart from the abundant extra-musical descriptions and allusions found on its pages. Myers explores the musical structure of the pieces in Hua’s collection in chapter three. Furthermore, he compares in detail three versions of the solo piece ‘Zhaojun’s Lament’, one version taken from Hua’s handbook, the second from a 1895 handbook published by Li Fangyuan, and the last one a present-day performance version (not identified in the book). The author concludes that the melodic contour and metrical proportions of ‘Zhaojun’s Lament’ have been maintained basically unchanged for over 150 years.

Chapter four engages with theory, and introduces five (analytical) ‘levels’ in the melodic structure of Chinese traditional instrumental music: 1) tonal material (pitch collections); 2) generative structure (phrase divisions, targets of linear movement, skeletal melodies and other determinants of melody form); 3) motives; 4) interpolations (interpreted by players); 5) microtonal embellishment. Following a discussion of musical elements transcribed or omitted in gongche notation, Mayers takes musicology to task for having focussed on the first three levels of melodic structure while ignoring levels four and five.

In chapter five, eighteen short pipa melodies from volume two of the Hua’s handbook are analyzed in some detail. The author concludes that these melodies are closely related to the 68-measure form of the Chaozhou and Hakka ensemble repertoire, and notes that there is a tendency for the melodies to cadence at measure 16, and for this cadence to rest the fifth scale degree in the low register of the instrument. More short pipa melodies from Hua’s handbook are investigated in chapter six. These melodies come from the two major pipa schools. Classical pipa players divided them into four different sub-categories wen (pacific), wu (military), suilhou baban (a melodic grouping of pipa repertoire) and za (miscellaneous). A detailed discussion of these short melodies is followed by comparative musical analysis.

Chapter seven focuses on musical analysis of the six suites in Hua’s handbook, and how they differ from the short pipa melodies. The title and sub-titles of the suites are introduced, followed by musical analysis, a comparison of the three levels of musical structure within each suite, and comparison of the suites with the short pipa melodies. In chapter eight, the author discerns basic patterns in the titles of the short melodies and points of correspondence between subject matter and music in the suites. He concludes that the suites are musically independent, while the 68-measure short pipa melodies tend to emphasise either ‘crying sound’ or ‘happy sound’; the suites exhibit a sequential morphology of extra-musical themes, while the short melodies exhibit a sequential morphology of musical structure.

Myers’ book offers unique insights in the treasure-house of Chinese pipa music, and in the imagination and interpretative talents of classical pipa players. In chapter nine, the author concludes that ‘with such wide-ranging connections in mind, it is relatively easy to accept the notion of music as a model of both natural and social reality’. Unfortunately, citations in the
book are sometimes inadequate. For example, the han pipa, played by Xi Jun, is a round-shaped lute (Yu Shinan c. 610, v.110, 3; Fang Xuanleng c.630, v.47), not a pear-shaped instrument (Myers, p.8). Furthermore, Jü Shilin’s pipa music collection is described as an eighteenth-century manuscript (p.19), but to my knowledge that manuscript is a fabrication by Lin Shicheng (Chen Zemin 1989, 116-23; Cao Anhe 1991). Nevertheless, Myers’ book is a welcome achievement. It illustrates important aspects of the reform of nineteenth century pipa music by scholars and players alike. It also describes how pipa music has experienced fluctuations in social status as a result of these changes. I can strongly recommend this book to readers interested in pipa and in Chinese traditional music.

Feng Wei

REFERENCES

CAO Anhe 1991 Interviewed by Feng Wei, Beijing.


Festschrift for Rulan Chao Pian presented to her in manuscript on the occasion of her seventieth birthday in 1992, *Themes and Variations* is a multifaceted volume indeed, containing a heterogeneous assemblage of essays by numerous leading North American scholars and a smaller number from East and Southeast Asia. The themes of the title, as the Introduction suggests, are Pian’s research interests in notation, tune identity, and change and continuity (p.7), while the variations are each contributing researcher’s individual response to these. The range of variation is wide: from David G. Hughes on matters of Gregorian chant notation to Margarita Mazo’s spectographic study of Russian lament and Bonnie Wade’s discussion of issues raised by the creation of a new, twenty- [plus]-stringed koto. China is represented by Joseph Lam’s case study of notational contextualisation in kunqu, Bell Yung’s essay on the intent of qin notation, Yu Siuwah’s analysis of the adaptation on a Hakka instrumental melody in Cantonese opera and Han Kuo-Huang’s study of khapsaibi narrative singing among the Dai in Xishuang Banna, Yunnan. A further six contributions address musical genres, practices and concepts from North America, Hawaii and Britain, and inter-Asian gong culture. Several of these essays are outstanding, and deserving of a wide
 Audience. This heterogeneity lends much charm to the collection – reading the book is rather like browsing through a bumper issue of a well-established musicological journal.

A Festschrift does not lend itself to the usual modes of review for a multi-authored collection, in that the real point of contact between these essays is their authors’ personal association with the volume’s dedicatee, not some collectively agreed focus on a particular musical issue or repertory which can be re-interrogated by the reviewer. The aspect of personal association is perhaps particularly salient in Pian’s case, in that it is probably fair to suggest that her major impact as an ethnomusicologist has occurred not through scholarly publication (even in this collection of essays on ‘her’ themes, Pian’s writing is referenced only in Yung’s chapter) but through her work as dedicated supervisor of a small number of pupils, such as Bell Yung and Robert Provine, several of whom have since gone on to publish widely and influentially. Pian also established the Conference of Chinese Oral and Performing Literature – Chinoperl (1969), thereby setting up a forum for the interdisciplinary study of a wide range of Chinese narrative genres, and again facilitating the research and communication of many other scholars. As such, this wide-ranging and elegantly produced volume, with its tightly drawn, inclusive themes seems a highly fitting tribute to its dedicatee.

Jonathan Stock
CD Reviews


Chine / Fanbai / Chant liturgique bouddhique / Leçon du Matin à Shanghai. 1 CD, 1995, total time 72'10''. Recorded by François Picard at the Longhua Si (Shanghai) in 1992. Ocora Radio France C560075, Paris, distr. by Harmonia Mundi. Sleeve notes by Tian Qing (Fr., Engl., Germ.)


The French ethnomusicologist François Picard and Ocora have produced many valuable recordings of traditional Chinese and non-Chinese music. Picard’s long-standing interest in Buddhist music, which dates from the time of his doctoral thesis, lies at the heart of the publication of the 3-CD series headed Fanbai/Chant liturgique bouddhique. There is much to be praised in these recordings. The first and the second CD contain versions of the daily liturgy (zaowanke) as it is carried out at two important Buddhist monastic institutions, the famous Kaiyuan Temple in Quanzhou and the long-suffering Longhua Temple in Shanghai. It must be remembered that Chinese Buddhist liturgical chant (fanbai) has not received the same amount of scholarly attention as, say, its Japanese equivalent shomyo. To the best of my knowledge, the only previous release of similar materials on a Western label was a Lyricchord LP, recorded by the indefatigable John Levi in the 1960s in Hong Kong and Taiwan (Lyricchord LLST 7222, 1969, sleeve notes by Laurence Picken). Therefore, any attempt to supplement our knowledge of Chinese Buddhist liturgy is very welcome. (See also my field recordings of fanbai in the monasteries and nunneries of Sichuan province deposited at the National Sound Archive, British Library, London).

Musicologists interested in Chinese Buddhist ritual often face overwhelming problems as they have to study the doctrinal background and aesthetic principles almost from scratch. They do not find much helpful information in the works of scholars of Buddhism who concentrate on the philological study of texts rather than on religious practice (cf. Donald S. Lopez Jr., Buddhism in Practice, Princeton University
Press, 1995). Two early 20th century French scholars, Paul Demièville and Sylvain Levy, are among the very few exceptions to this rule. In their writings they do refer substantially to music. Picard duly mentions their work in his sleeve notes.

The CD booklets of the Fanbai series constitute an effort, if not always an accurate one, to describe the intricate meanings and functions of Chinese Buddhist chant to a Western audience. The booklet of the Shanghai CD contains a particularly useful introduction, written by the Chinese scholar Tian Qing, (English adaptation by Tan Hwee San). All the titles of the pieces in that booklet are given in Chinese, and the texts are briefly introduced. There is also an example of musical notation, a percussion score, written alongside the text of the Hymn to Weitu (Weituo zan).

Although scholars still disagree about its earliest occurrence in Buddhist sources, the term fanbai certainly has a very long history. Etymologically, the word fan derives – through a series of phonetic modifications – from the Sanskrit brahm-, which is used to describe sacred things of Indian origin. Bai could be a phonetic approximation of an Indian word, derived from the Sanskrit root bha- 'to say, to recite'. In performance practice, the current types of vocal delivery of Buddhist texts in China can be described as chanting, recitation and singing. For example, hymns (zan) are said to be sung (chang) whereas sûtras (jing) are chanted (nian). Heightened speech, cantillation and recitation are also found. The first two CDs offer a sample of the possible differences in performing practice found in Chinese Buddhist monasteries. In particular, they offer a sample of the choice of liturgical materials, the vocal styles and performance tempi which are used, and the rhythmic patterns favoured by the ritual percussion ensemble (faqi).

The first CD, Leçon du soir à Quanzhou, contains many of the elements of a typical daily lesson. It was recorded during the Chinese New Year celebrations in January 1987; in addition to the monks’ voices, one can clearly hear the noise of firecrackers. Two fixed microphones capture the flow of chanting and recitation. In track 6, one can hear the individual voices of monks, acolytes and lay devotees circumambulating the hall during the recitation of Buddha’s names (fohao). Two interesting features of this recording are the general slow tempo and the remarkably long instrumental introductions played by the liturgical percussion orchestra (faqi, lit. ‘dharma instruments’), such as I have rarely heard in my visits to Sichuanese monasteries. It may also be instructive to compare the characteristic vocal delivery of the preceptors (weino) who intone the first phrase of every hymn or incantation.

The third CD, Hymnes au Trois Joyaux, is not only on sale in the West, but is also commercially available in Chinese monasteries as a cassette tape. Its recording circumstances are quite different from those of the other two CDs in the series. As Picard acknowledges in the notes, the music on this disc moves away from liturgy in a monastic context. If I understand it correctly, the recording was realised during a ceremony named Fojiao fanbai yinyue fahui (‘Dharma assembly of Buddhist fanbai music’), the last in a series of celebrations organized by Master Citing, a high-ranking monk of Changzhou’s Tianning Temple (cf. Picard, ‘Time, Sound and the Sense of Beauty’, IIAS Newsletter, 1996/10, 30-31). The most striking feature of this recording is the use of accompanying melodic wind and string instruments played by professional and semi-professional musicians. Moreover, the choir, which has received some formal musical training, uses scores written in staff notation, which are based on a ‘standardized’ version of the music (cfr. Tian Qing, ed., Hanzhuan fojiao chaomu kesong guiyi puben, Zhongguo fojiao wenhua yanjiusuo, Kaiming wenjiao
Picard explains that these controversial choices were made by the local sponsors and the performers themselves. Venerable Citing and the Shanghainese musician Chen Zhong, a practicing Buddhist, approached Picard and asked him to collaborate in the recording, post-production and editing of the CD. The recording, which was essentially their idea, was conceived as 'a work of piety practised as a ritual' (p. 11). The initiators' aim was to 'resurrect Buddhist hymns' (p. 10) and 'not to let Buddhist chant be reduced to some vestige of by-gone days or to a means of expression reserved to specialist monks' (p. 14).

Therefore, the recording is viewed as a product of Buddhist piety. But it is also a product consciously processed for a an audience of musical consumers. Picard writes that the project deliberately exploits 'modern techniques to record and publish, if only to rival with the ever-increasing influence of popular music and karaoke' (p. 10). Track 7 and 8 are versions of two songs (Sanbaoge and Luohua liushui) written by the 20th century Buddhist monk Hongyi Dashi (1880-1942). Hongyi's compositions raise many complex questions on which I have commented elsewhere (cf. a paper which I presented at the 5th CHIME Conference, and forthcoming articles). In conclusion, although the three CDs are presented as a unified corpus, they are different in many ways. Nevertheless, with all their idiosyncratic merits, they represent an important contribution to our understanding of Buddhist musical practice in Mainland China.

Francesca Tarecco


Musician Jean-Christophe Frisch and researcher of Chinese music François Picard have joined forces in an attempt to recreate the music of a Jesuit mass in 18th century Beijing. How did a Jesuit mass in Qing-dynasty China sound, what kind of music was played, and who participated in the performances? Frisch and Picard have carried out extensive archival research and study of scores. The attractive and academically important result is an Auvidis CD called Messe des Jesuites de Pekin.

The two Frenchmen combined 16th and 17th century French and Italian religious works current in the Jesuit repertoire of that time with a selection of canticles and instrumental pieces in Chinese style, compiled by Father Joseph-Marie Amiot in 1779, which were reportedly used in the services. It was not unusual to insert chamber sonatas in the liturgy, and the CD also features some church sonatas by Teodorico Pedrini, a missionary who, like Amiot, spent numerous years of his life in China.

The varous pieces are put together in an order which roughly respects the sequence of the liturgy, and which results in a musical mass of nearly 80 minutes. There are no spoken parts
or sermons. The music, performed by a Chinese catholic choir, Chinese instrumental musicians of the ensemble ‘Fleur de Prunus’ (Meihua) and French baroque players, was recorded in Paris in 1998. The performances take full account of what we know about French baroque, Jesuit and Chinese traditional musical performance practice in the 17th and 18th centuries. Frisch and Picard also produced another CD with (European / Chinese) secular music of the Chinese court in the 17th century: Concert Baroque à la Cité Interdite, which is partly based on the same historical sources.

Both albums are of major interest. Judging from an eyewitness report by Father Cibot, the original Jesuit services in Beijing must have been highly emotionally charged events, with lots of sobbing and sighing. Frisch and Picard don’t say it in their programme notes, but Christian services in some parts of present-day China still feature such extrovert displays of emotion. With some exceptions, emotional theatricality is rare in Christian services in contemporary Europe, and it is also not evident in the energetic and superbly controlled performances recorded on the album Messe des Jesuites de Pekin. For obvious reasons, musicians in France cannot very well duplicate the emotional impact of a Christian mass held inside China! But the results are pleasing to the ear, and of major academic importance: the CD brings back to life an almost forgotten aspect of the widely studied and publicized Jesuit presence in China, a presence that began in 1589 and that continued for several centuries.

The two main sources for the CD are Amiot’s canticles, currently in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris – they were never published – and the baroque psalms and hymns of Charles d’Amberville (d.1637), a French composer who wrote pleasant vocal / instrumental works in a style that combines renaissance polyphony with elements of baroque verticality. Amiot’s canticles are sung in Chinese, to music that was presumably composed by native Chinese: Picard associates the style of the music with that of two Chinese Christian converts, Wu Yushan and Ma André. The scores of the canticles have survived in two versions, one in Western staff notation and one in the Chinese notational system gongche pu, which seems to suggest that the vocal parts – sung in unison by a choir or by soloists – were traditionally accompanied by Chinese instruments. Some of the tunes are reminiscent of Kunqu opera, and indeed, this is
where François Picard and the other musicians look for their ideas about instrumentation. They also draw inspiration from Chinese Buddhist ritual music and from classical Chinese court music. The resulting performances of the canticles are with drum and clapper, *pipa*, bamboo flutes, Chinese mouth organ, *guanzi* and percussion. The vocal parts are sung by a female choir (replacing what was originally a boys’ choir) and by solo voices (baritone Shi Kelong and soprano Wang Weiping).

This album is the result of an admirable work of research, and the music comes as an artistic surprise. Picard and Frisch wisely ignore the term ‘reconstruction’ and speak of ‘restitution’ – that is, they would like to hand back to present-day Chinese catholics a repertoire which celebrates Christian thought, and which, in musical terms, belongs to the more traditional layers of their own culture. It remains to be seen whether this repertoire can ever truly embark on a ‘second career’ in the Chinese Catholic liturgy, but the idea is fascinating.

The other album – with instrumental music – was recorded in 1996 in a Benedictine Abbey at Saint-Florent-Le Vieil, as part of a festival bearing the explicit name of ‘Asie-Occident’. Again, it presents music originally performed by European missionaries and by (probably) Chinese musicians in China – this time at the courts of the emperors Kangxi (r. 1661-1722) and Qianlong (r. 1736-1795). Once again, we find two very different approaches to the idea of intercultural contact through music, personified by the Lazarist father Teodorico Pedrini and by Joseph Marie Amiot.

Pedrini (1671-1746) lived in Beijing from 1711 till his death. He was not only a priest but also a musician and composer. He taught musical theory to the emperor’s sons; he instructed them how to play and how to keep in good order the spinets, organs and harpsichords owned by the Chinese imperial court. By this time, court concerts of Western music had already become a well-established tradition. Western music possibly began its influx in 1601 with the arrival of the Jesuit priest Matteo Ricci, who brought a spinet to Beijing. In the decades that followed, numerous other instruments were brought to China. Pedrini’s set of *Sonate a Violino Solo col Basso del Nepridi Opera Terza* – ‘Sonatas for Violin Solo with Bass by Nepridi, Opus 3’ – was probably composed for one of the frequent concerts of Western music held at the Chinese court. The emperor appreciated these concerts very much, while the court Mandarins still eyed them with some suspicion.

‘Nepridi’ was an anagram of Pedrini, probably adopted for reasons of decorum, to distinguish clearly between the role of the priest and that of the composer. (It was not formally forbidden for monks to write music.) In these Sonatas, Pedrini follows the model of Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713), whose set opus 5 for violin and bass was a major success in Rome at the time when Pedrini was studying there. They are in the form of solo sonatas, already a common genre at the time of Biagio Marini and Giovanni Battista Buonamente. Pedrini applies the common three-part structure Allegro – Lento – Allegro, and bases each of his brief sonatas – of which some last less than ten minutes – on a few themes only; the music is ‘through-composed’.

In spite of Pedrini’s long-term residence in China, the sonatas are not (audibly) influenced by Chinese music. They are fully in line with Italian baroque, and mainly pose problems inherent to ‘authentic’ performances of baroque music: best suitable choice of instruments, correct manner of playing, correct way of ornamentation etc. Frisch and his ensemble modified the instrumentation (which in itself is in accordance with baroque practice) and selected Western instruments which, according to historical documents, were
common at the Chinese court: violin, flute, cello, theorbo (played with a plectrum) and harpsichord.

It is interesting to compare the baroque style of Pedrini’s sonatas with the subtle melodical lines of Amiot’s *Divertissements Chinois*. Joseph Marie Amiot (1718-1793) lived in China from 1749 until his death. Instead of proudly teaching his own European musical tradition to the Chinese, he spent his time at the emperor’s court studying Chinese music. In his writings, he introduced Chinese music to a Western audience. Numerous Europeans made their first acquaintance with Chinese music through Amiot’s works, notably through his major study *Mémoire sur la musique des Chinois* (Paris 1779), still a ‘classic’ of Chinese musical history. But Amiot also compiled several anthologies of Chinese music, the *Divertissements chinois ou Concerts de musique chinoise*, which were never published. They contain forty-one tunes, transcribed by Amiot in a synthesis of Western staff notation and Chinese signs. Amiot used special signs for embellishments, ties and rests, but did not indicate tempo and ‘movement’, which is in accordance with Chinese notational practice.

According to François Picard, these pieces are not transcriptions by ear made by an European who heard them played and jotted them down as he listened, but Western renditions of Chinese music manuscripts – manuscripts that were used by professional musicians at the Chinese court in Amiot’s time. The pieces were meant for entertainment, unlike the ceremonial and religious pieces that were also performed at the court on special occasions. Picard was unable to trace the original Chinese scores which Amiot made use off, but some of the tunes are apparently still played in contemporary Chinese folk music.

Amiot’s *Divertissements chinois* are a historical document of major importance, since no equivalent collection of scores from the same period seems to have survived in China itself. On the CD, the charm of the pure, elaborate melodical lines and the free breathing and flexible tempo of the Chinese pieces stand out even more clearly in contrast with the rigid rhythms of Pedrini’s baroque style. Still, they mix very nicely. The Amiot pieces (actually only a small selection from Amiot’s set) are played mainly on one solo instrument, for example traverso or cello, sometimes joined by one or more other instruments in the ensemble (in unison). In addition to ‘Chinese flavour’, the pieces also betray an attitude prevalent among Western missionaries to ‘improve’ Chinese practices by adding European elements. Frisch and his ensemble happily follow suit, for example with some delicate chordal progressions towards the end of the second divertissement. Very folksy! The well-known ‘Chinese’ tune that eventually found its way into Weber’s *Turandot*, is also included on the CD. (Weber did not pick it up from Amiot, but from Rousseau’s 1768 music encyclopedia, which quoted the tune as transcribed by another Jesuit, Du Halde.)

These CDs are of major interest to anyone fascinated by China’s musical history and by the country’s early musical and religious contacts with the West. The performances are first-rate, the Jesuit mass in particular is beautiful music, and the documentation in the accompanying booklets is excellent.

Luciana Galliano
Frank Kouwenhoven


This twin release by the Mukam Art Troupe (established in 1989 for the performance, preservation and research of the Uyghur Muqam) is a mixed bag of styles and aesthetics, typical of professional troupes in Xinjiang today. The vocal collection Don't Torment Me, Dear runs the gamut of vocal styles. There is one excellent traditional-style rendition of the baş muqam opening section of Raq Muqam sung by the talented Memet Tursun, accompanied on the satar bowed lute. I would have loved to hear more like this. At the other end of the aesthetic spectrum there is the Uyghur folksong Maila, rendered in full operatic, open-throated voice, in Chinese, accompanied by large ensemble. There are several songs for solo male voice and dutar two-stringed lute, reflecting the current popularity of this genre in the bazaars of Xinjiang, which are awash with locally-produced cassette recordings of popular singers like Ömerjan and Abdurehim Heet. There are even, oddly in the Mukam Art Troupe, a couple of Kazakh songs. Some beautiful lyrics are translated into Chinese and English in the liner notes, but it would have been nice to know a little more, for example which area the songs hailed from. The Red Rose instrumental collection is in itself a rather artificial way to present a tradition which is based on alternating instrumental, and instrumental plus voice, pieces within a suite form. The several large ensemble versions of the Muqam included here are not really to my taste. Ted Levin's comments about 'socialist grandomania' in the Uzbek shashmaqam spring to mind. It is nice to find two tracks of naghra sura included. These drum and shawm bands are probably the most common type of music in Xinjiang but they are rarely included in CD recordings. The soloists on Red Rose are extraordinary virtuoso players, and there are some wonderful tracks, like the popular piece
*Shadiana* played by Dawut Awut on the *rawap* plucked lute. But in spite of the virtuosity, many of the performances are somewhat lifeless and dry, all too clearly these are college-trained musicians, working from written scores. There are some useful liner notes in Chinese and English accompanying Red Rose. As always it is somewhat painful to see Uyghur names pulled through the hoops of transliteration via *pinyin*. There are people in Xinjiang now who could do this properly.

These CDs are a compromise selection, they contain some beautiful tracks, and they are much better than any recordings of professional Xinjiang troupes I’ve heard previously, but for people seeking a good introduction to Uyghur music, the double CD recording by Jean During and Sabine Trebinjac (Ocora C559092-93) remains the essential buy.

Rachel Harris

**NO - Missing Master.** 1 CD, Modern Sky, Beijing. ISRC CN A26-99-332-00/A.J6, Total time: 44'07''.

**Sober - Very Good!!** 1 CD, Modern Sky, Beijing. ISRC CN-A26-97-355 00/A.J6, Total time: 46'32''.

**Supermarket - The Look.** 1 CD, Modern Sky, Beijing. ISRC CN-E04-98-379-00/A.J6, Total time: 53'40''.

In 1997 many singers and journalists complained about the development of Chinese rock, or rather, the lack of it. It seemed that no new rock acts could take root in the ground broken open by the first generation of Chinese rock: Cui Jian, Tang Dynasty, Hei Bao, Dou Wei, Zhang Chu, Cobra and He Yong. Some releases that appeared after 1993 seemed quite promising, like the alternative guitar rock of Zhou Ren from 1996. Yet they failed to attract much audience attention and thus did not have sufficient impact to speak of a rebirth of Chinese rock. DJ Zhang Youdai became more and more disillusioned and nearly turned his back on Chinese rock, in favour of Western music. Cui Jian tried to invent a new sound, but his latest release, *The Power of the Powerless*, merely displays a confused eclecticism. Gone are the melodies that immediately grab the listener. With the exception of a couple of sophisticated compositions, like his rap song ‘Beyond That Day’, Cui Jian does not manage to push Chinese rock much further. The title of Cui Jian’s CD is emblematic for the rock spirit of his generation – a spirit characterized by discontent and confusion, and by a music pregnant with ideology (dreams, hopes, ideas): Dou Wei vocalizes his ‘black’ dreams (as in his 1994 album Black Dream), He Yong sings about living on a rubbish dump (the title song of his 1994 album) and Cobra lives, as stated in one of their lyrics, ‘in confusion’. For this first generation, rock is a medium for exploring feelings of frustration and confusion, and for searching for individual freedom. The music is heavily loaded with messages, and over politicized (see also Jones 1992, Steen 1996).

The search for new directions may have been hampered by the Asian economic crisis, which affected the local and regional music industry. Record company Magic Stone gradually withdrew from the market after disappointing revenues from their rock releases from Beijing. Red Star, a Hong Kong-financed company, is still struggling to survive. No company dares to invest huge sums of money in Chinese rock, as Magic Stone once did. Furthermore, Chinese rock is not considered as hip as it used to be; it cannot capture the
attention of Hong Kong or Taiwanese youngsters anymore; Cui Jian has become a voice belonging to the 1980s. Audiences prefer the more contemporary sound of Cantopop and Mandapop.

However, during the last two years the tide has turned again. Three Beijing-based companies, Jingwen, New Bees and Modern Sky, have contracted bands and singers that hit new sounds. Since the revival of Chinese rock is still at its beginning, it remains unclear what the future prospects for these companies will be. Suffice it to observe that some of their releases pull at the limits of the semiotic univocality of the earlier generation. In this review I will discuss three such releases under the Modern Sky label. The NO album can be positioned at the beginning of the trajectory of a new breed of Chinese rock, whereas the releases from Sober and Supermarket move still further away from the achievements of the first generation.

NO’s Missing Master
NO’s album Missing Master is far from easy-listening. The CD presents a bricolage of noise, grunge, and post-punk. It takes energy to listen through to the end of this album. NO’s vocalist Zu Zhou combines the sound of guzheng – at times distorted by a pair of scissors stuck between the strings – with electric guitars, violin and drums. Some songs start peacefully but gradually evolve into a soundscape that is far from comforting. The first (the title song) track uses a grunge sound; noisy parts are intertwined with slow fragments – as if anger competes with sadness. The band is inspired by Nirvana, certainly one of the most influential bands for the Beijing scene in recent years. Zu Zhou’s voice is at times dark, with an emotional intensity that reminds me of Joy Division’s Ian Curtis. In a review of the music, mainland critic Kong writes: ‘Zu Zhou’s uniquely penetrating tenor, like a knife stained with blood and sperm, tears everything to pieces. His purely despondent bass divulges the loneliness towards the future and the destruction of the will to live’ (Kong 1997: 88). But this loneliness can also feel like a comforting blanket, just as the desire for destruction may generate a lot of energy. In track five, ‘Let Me See My Doctor Once More’, we are offered a peaceful illusion of tradition via the sounds of the guzheng. Gradually a drum joins in, merging with the serenity of the music. When the singer joins in, it all becomes more moody, the tranquillity evaporates and is replaced by a voice that sings:

Let this rickshaw take me to the home of the surgeon  
Let him fucking see the green smoke beneath my groin  
Let me see you once more, doctor  
I want to recover my  
Left thigh, left rib, left hand, left lung, and my right-wing dad.

In its reference to the singer’s lost right-wing dad, this song is obviously political, but at the same time it is alienating and confusing. What is meant by ‘the green smoke beneath my groin’?
Listening to NO causes pain, but the sensation is both intense and pleasant, in the way that pain can be a pleasurable experience. Zu Zhou’s voice is full of anger and at times it soars into the falsetto register. When I heard Zu performing an old Mongolian song in a bar, I was immediately gripped. I always lose myself when listening to Zu Zhou, he brings me into a desired state of ‘non-being’, if only for a second. Good music gives one a feeling of ‘becoming’, an experience that can reside as much in the body as in the mind. This is certainly what NO’s sound does – the listener gets a physical sensation of ‘becoming’, a process without a sense of finality, of reaching one’s goal. Through direct sensual and painful pleasure – which this music carves into the pores of one’s body – it secures a temporal space in which the listener can experience and ‘perform’ his or her own identity. After all, the meaning of music does not reside in the musical score as such, but can only materialize in the living dialogue between the musician, the tradition that he is a part of, and the audience for whom he is performing. The act of listening can be defined as a performance in its own right (see Frith 1996). While listening, I am dragged into NO’s music world, and I experience, through the music, a never-ending process of becoming; I perform an identity that is always in the making, always rudimentary, never finished. Different genres result in different types of performances on the listener’s part; what makes some releases remarkable is the power by which they manage to draw one into the sound narrative – a power that pushes the listener towards a new level of intensity, and for a brief moment annihilates everyday life, that domain of predictability, routine and boredom. In short, NO represents a departure from the musical styles known from the first generation of Chinese rock; yet, in its sharp critique of contemporary life in China the group remains within the semiotic parameters of that generation.

Sober
Sober’s album explores an entirely different, certainly more pleasant, more up-to-date, more expressive realm of music, a realm that signifies a much more explicit break with the first generation of Chinese rock. The producer’s introductory words to the Sober CD are telling. In sweeping terms, the band ‘is no longer concerned with boring complaints and irresponsible screams. They ask questions and try to change things. Let’s start loving life and living, let’s begin a new era together!’ The music is a (post-)modern reappropriation of the Beatles sound, in ways reminiscent of the music of so-called Britpop bands such as Oasis and Blur. Before we begin to ask Sober if their music is influenced by Britpop, we should be aware that many tracks were written in the early 1990s. As such, Sober can be considered Britpop avant la lettre. To accuse Chinese bands of pure imitation misses the point; it seems more appropriate to think of rock as a worldwide music culture in which everyone selects and explores bits and pieces of the global musical heritage. Fair enough, this heritage is mainly dominated by Western bands, but everyone
translates the sounds into a suitable idiom of their own, within a specific socio-cultural context. What makes Chinese rock Chinese is perhaps not so much its sound, or its content — if we insist on pursuing the illusion of a meaning inscribed into the musical score itself — but merely the fact that it is produced in China.

Sober’s singer Shen Lihui has become a key figure in Beijing rock circles. He is also the manager of Sober’s record company Modern Sky and chief editor of their music magazine, and he has recently opened a bar in Sanlitun, the bar street of Beijing. Shen Lihui can be considered typical of contemporary Chinese youth, that is: pragmatic, down to earth and eclectic. He once told me that for him, doing business is as creative as making music. No wonder that, in the title song, he sings about how his identity changes by the day. Gone is the diehard rebel, with the angry voice filled with discontent; what we hear now is a radically different attitude towards modern life:

Your TV set breaks down and your eyes will be cared?
Your watch stops, does this mean that you are happy?
Does this mean that you are happy?
Very good!! Indeed very good!! Very good!!
To whom do I give Monday and Tuesday?
To whom do I give Wednesday and Thursday? (…)
All right! All right! All right! All right!

The refrain ‘All right! All right!’ is sung in English, as if a foreign language is best suited to comfort the listener by cheerfully telling him that it’s all right amidst all the trivial changes in our daily lives. The accompanying video clip depicts the band in Beatles-style suits; we see four young Chinese in a British look with ironic smiles drawn on their faces. It is precisely irony and pastiche that make this such a good pop-rock album. No wonder this is one of the very few releases from the mainland that has sold reasonably well in Hong Kong. This is music to play when travelling; after a few times one can sing along with the catchy melodies. And the songs are quite different from one another. Apart from the light-hearted funny songs, there are sad songs in a slow tempo, such as the last track, ‘Walking into Sleep’. And there are songs such as the seventh track, ‘Radio Person’, where the lonely voice of Shen Lihui wanders through a restless soundscape. This music invites the listener to embark on an emotional journey. At times we share the performers’ happiness as we imagine how we can constantly invent ourselves anew, in an urban setting. At other moments the sad voice of Shen leads us back to a different kind of insight, that maybe the choices for re-inventing ourselves are not as open as we would like them to be, confined as we are by society.

Sober is currently about to release another album, their second one. Few Chinese bands ever manage to surpass the quality of their first release. Sober now faces the difficult challenge to succeed in this, and to outdo themselves.

Supermarket’s The Look
‘Sometimes I feel that there is something amusing in the air,’ is stated on the jacket of Supermarket’s album The Look. Their CD is more coherent than Sober’s, but it is not what I would call an amusing sound. This is synthesizer pop as we know it from Depeche Mode or, to a lesser extent, Pet Shop Boys. That is, the melancholic and sad sounds evoke feelings of distancing oneself from, and thereby reflecting upon, daily life. The voices of Zhu Yuhan and Yu San strengthen that feeling, but they also give the music a mythic quality rare for Chinese rock. The video clip of Supermarket amazed me, because the singers’ appearances —
long hair, leather jackets – suggested a stereotypical ‘hard rock’ performance, while the music struck me as being anything but that! There are no electric guitar solos, only an electronic soundscape that leads one to a kind of virtual, computerized reality. Depending on my own mood, I interpret these sounds either as easy-listening background music – music for ‘supermarkets’, one might say –, or as a brave new world that I am consciously drawn into. The sounds bear the foretaste of a Beijing future, as yet unknown but already hinted at (and somehow incorporated) in the present. Gone are the Confucian myths and communist rhetoric. It feels as if we are stripped from the past, and forced to live life naked. Indeed, Supermarket’s sound is a vulnerable one. In the linguistically shortest song of the album, ‘Explode’, Supermarket sings:

Right now I’m afraid time may explode
If I’m embarrassed, please don’t mind

Pop sociologist Simon Frith’s comments on the Pet Shop Boys seem equally appropriate for Supermarket. What is significant in this music style is ‘their emotional fluency, it’s as if the spaces they occupy are actually frozen moments in time, the moments just before and after emotion. (...) They know that in this sort of music it is such surface noise that resonates most deeply in our lives’ (Frith 1996: 8). The repetitive synthesizer sound of Supermarket resonates well with the moments in life when almost nothing seems to happen. It is a background noise that moves to the foreground the importance of everyday routine; it gives a sound to our fragile daily wanderings. If NO confronts me with the imagined boredom of everyday life, Supermarket leads me to life’s complex, kaleidoscopic and phantasmagoric potential. Their music evokes new ways of seeing and feeling, hence new ways of being.

The music described in this review signifies a departure from the first generation of rock from China, a generation of which Cui Jian can be considered the godfather. NO explores new musical territory by appropriating a distorted, experimental sound, but their critical, avant-garde semiotics still resemble the earlier rock from China. Sober and Supermarket both present a more explicit semiotic rupture; the overload of meaning has dissipated into a fragmented and diffuse field of possible interpretations. Whereas the earlier rock from China seemed to rely on some grand ideological principle (such as: ‘we ought to be true to our inner selves, rather than being led by the forces of communist society’), the new breed of rock bands have a lighter, more playful and fluid attitude. Entering their soundscape, we are confronted with the complex and sometimes contradictory trajectories which our real and imagined lives actually consist of. There are no answers, there is no crisis, there is just the daily struggle for meaning, no matter how artificial or superficial that at first sight might be.

Jeroen de Kloet

REFERENCES


In Brief


With its dark sliding sounds and bell-tone-like harmonics, the Chinese zither qin is among the most ‘vocal’ and impressive of all Chinese stringed instruments. The qin repertoire partly dates back to the fifteenth century but sounds remarkably modern, with overtones of blues and avant-garde.

The instrument is soft-toned and often comes across better on CD than in concert halls. Yang Lining, a former student of senior qin master Li Xiangting, demonstrates her skills in the reflective pieces in this album. Brightly recorded, technically as good an introduction to qin music as any. The flashy cover suggests an unconventional approach, but Yang Lining has shunned true adventure and plays nine standard pieces, famous titles recorded many times before by prominent masters like Wu Jinglu, Wu Wenguang, Guan Pinghu and others. Sadly, hundreds of rarely performed ancient qin scores still await re-discovery, so why not include some of those, or programme a few contemporary pieces to stress the qin’s hidden potential? Yang is a respectable player, though not so brilliant or profound as to offer serious competition to the best qin players. ‘An old friend’, always a powerful tune, has the right touch of melancholy, and there are fine moments in ‘Flowing waters’. Yang is assisted on some tracks by François Picard (percussion and bamboo flute) and Wu Suhua (Chinese stick-fiddle), whose contributions are somewhat uneven. For alternatives, try Li Xiangting (Ocora), Dai Xiaolian (Avudis), Lin Youren (Nimbus, see below) or one of those excellent Hugo or ROI discs (Hong Kong) with elder generation players. (FK)


For newcomers to the Chinese seven-stringed zither, Lin Youren’s latest album for Nimbus offers an excellent introduction to the instrument. Lin is counted in China among the ‘middle-aged’ performers of the qin, but he has in fact become a ‘grand old man’ of the genre – one of China’s greatest masters. He is known in Shanghai as a formidable drinker and talker, but in his music we encounter a very different man, whose playing is marked by emotional restraint, superbly contoured gestures, beautifully warm timbres, and moments of strange remoteness and ice-cold beauty.

Playing speeds in qin music have generally slowed down over the past fifty years, partly due to the transition from silk strings to the more resonant steel strings. Steel makes it possible for qin players to linger longer on a single tone and explore its embellishments more fully. Lin Youren
singing of English football fans! The football element is not audible in the music – the piece is really more a demonstration of odd and interesting new sound effects that Lin has invented on his instrument – effects and techniques which he has worked on for many years; he even wrote articles about them in Chinese journals. The main value of this disc lies in the powerful lyricism of Lin’s playing – he has become even more mellow and soft-toned in recent years. Collectors will want to purchase this CD for the fine singing qualities of Zuiyu changwan, or the warm timbres of Yi guren. The album is every bit as exciting as any of Lin’s earlier recordings, such as his tape Zhong Tian Zhen Wei of the 1980s, recently re-released on CD with a few additional tracks. (FK)

Embracing the Autumn Moonshine. ‘Remains of Qin Master Rong Tianqi’. Qin solos by Li Kong-yuan. 2 CDs, total time: 52’25” plus 51’12”. Rec.1996-97, Taiwan. ROI Productions RA-981001-2C.

Here are two discs with fine and radiant qin performances by Taiwanese master Li Kong-yuan (b. 1959), in recognition of the great art of his master Rong Tianqi (Rong Qiu’an). Well-recorded (although with a sound ambiance which varies a lot from one track to the next), neatly produced, very much in line with the earlier impeccable sets of qin discs published by ROI. The only problem is the cover photo of Rong Tianqi and the prominence given to his name, which may lead (especially Western) purchasers to believe that they have bought historical recordings of Rong. While this CD claims to present the ‘heritage’ of Master Rong – mistranslated on the CD cover as his ‘remains’ – we can safely assume that what Rong’s student plays sounds somewhat different from the music of his master, not only because great
masters are unique by definition, but also because their students are often more Catholic than the Pope.

Rong Tian-qi was born as Rong Qiu'an in Fuzhou in 1936. He studied with master Hu Yingtang who based many of his performances on a manuscript with little known versions of qin pieces like Kai gu yin, Ping sha luo yan, Yi gu ren and Pa an zhou. Rong studied the qin all his life but always considered it a secondary activity. He was first and foremost a painter and calligrapher. Shortly before his death in Kaohsiung in Taiwan in 1994 he still dismissed the idea of recording his art. Some private recordings of his playing did survive, but they are so poor in sound that they cannot give a reliable impression of his playing. On the CD-set Li Kongyuan attempts to recreate the pieces faithfully, the way he learned them from his master. He adds one piece in an interpretation of his own (Dongting qiu si).

One thing to regret about qin CDs is the perpetual recurrence of the same pieces, as if there were really only twenty or thirty qin pieces worth playing in the whole repertoire. Adventurousness is not the average qin player’s concern. Of course one could argue – as I believe Yao Bingyan did – that half a qin piece suffices for a man to go around the world and to make his life meaningful. The other side of the matter is that qin music does represent an element of escape from the normal constraints (or liberties!) of life, and pretends to give access to the experience of a metaphysical world, a world which we cannot define except in terms of ‘otherness’. In that sense, some of the best qin players of the past century were bold explorers, a good deal more adventurous than their modern counterparts. Those who really managed to transform the qin tradition into something new and exciting (like Wu Jinglue) did not restrict themselves to a handful of pieces, but tried their hand at new pieces and unusual combinations of instruments or sounds. There is no reason why a new generation should be any less adventurous, or why a tribute to a great master of the past should strictly consist of copying his playing style or of presenting his established interpretations. But let’s also face the obvious merits of the present album: Li Kong-yuan is a master in his own right, an excellent performer, and his tribute to Rong Tian-qi, next to some standard pieces, contains several seldomly recorded items, such as Gui qu lai ci, Xiang jiang yuan, and Yu lou chun xiao, and some little-known versions of famous pieces (like the ones already mentioned above). This set is a must for all qin freaks. (FK)

Moon on Guan Mountain. / Ode to Time. Two albums of qin songs. Fan Li-bin, qin and voice. Zhang Yicheng, xiao. Wind Records SMCD 1014, and SMCD 1015, produced 2000, total time 42'26" and 46'32". Fan Li-bin is the first performer of Chinese zither music who has produced an entire disc with qin songs. His albums ‘Moon on Guan Mountain’ and ‘Ode to Time’ certainly fills a gap; one can only deplore
that the singing is somewhat disappointing and the presentation – Fan has ‘attained the essence of a deeper reality’ – a bit pretentious. Most CDs of qin music are restricted to instrumental music, and the very fact that songs with qin accompaniment exist is little known except in circles of connoisseurs. Fan Li-bin, born in Taiwan in 1965, learned the trade from a well-known guqin master of the Mei’an school, Wang Haiyan. Later he also studied with Zhang Qingzhi and began to take inspiration from Buddhist chant (Fanbai) when performing the ancient qin poetry. Some of the lyrics (dating from the 17th and 18th centuries or earlier) must have lain dormant for a very long time.

Fan has a light and pleasant voice, but his performances are too slick and too colourless to provide real contrast and to bring the lyrics alive. He has the habit of introducing in his longer tones a sudden dynamic stress, sometimes an excessive cresendo towards the end of a tone, possibly derived from Kunqu or from the affected appoggiaturas of some Chinese flute players of the ‘conservatory’ style. (But surely this doesn’t apply to Zhang Yicheng, the xiao player who supports some of the songs so modestly and delicately.) The incomplete and crippled English translations of the texts also do little to endear this genre to a Western audience.

In the absence of a widespread oral tradition of qin songs there is obviously no standard for how one should sing this repertoire, but I wonder if it is really supposed to sound so affected and uninspired. Is this another case of ‘re-invented tradition’, or just bad luck with the example of Wang Haiyan? (There may still exist private recordings of Wang’s singing to check this?) Hopefully a Chinese record company decides to publish the radiant qin song performances of Zha Fuxi from the 1950s, which are currently kept under layers of dust in the archives of the Music Research Institute in Beijing. Zha’s is an old man’s voice, admittedly, but his singing is wonderful all the same, immediately appealing, a good deal more convincing than the present albums. Admittedly, Fan Li-bin has supplemented his collection of qin songs with some performances of Taiwanese folk songs, also to qin accompaniment, presumably as a tribute to the on-going tradition of oral composition in the realm of qin music. And ‘Ode to Time’ has a rare vocal version of Pu’an zhou. But we are still dealing here with two discs of documentary value, mainly. (FK)

Li Feng: Xiao Yue Qin Yun. 2 CD set. Chenxi Wenhua Record Company Ltd. CT-991, published Jan., 2000; 2-25, Section 3, Xin Yi Road, Taibei; tel. +886 02 2705 2382, fax +886 02 2755 4871.

Of the one hundred or so guqin CDs recorded in the past decade, only four (aside from historical recordings) have been on qins with silk strings: one each by by Lau Chor Wah and John Thompson, one featuring various players in Hong Kong, and the present recording; the others all use the steel/nylon strings popular with most qin players since the 1960s. Only about
eight CDs featuring players based in Taiwan have been published. The present recording, published in January 2000 in Taipei, is the first silk-string qin CD by a Taiwan-based qin player and as such is of considerable interest and importance. Li Feng is a highly accomplished (female) performer and teacher whose own mentors included Wu Zonghan, erstwhile head of the Mei’an qin school and Sun Yuqin, who also taught the American guqin player John Thompson. The latter is well known for his reconstructions of early Ming dynasty qin music from the Zheyin Shizi Qipu on his CD ‘Music Beyond Sound’, and is now preparing his reconstructions from the Shenqi Mipu.

This is a double CD set, 16 pieces in total. All the tracks on Disc 1 are from the standard repertoire; disc 2 contains a number of more unusual pieces, some of which have rarely been recorded. All are played with gentleness and restraint and with an individual style which I find very appealing. The overall effect is quite different from what is usually recorded by qin players from the Chinese mainland, to some extent reflecting the general differences between qin playing in Taiwan and on the Chinese mainland. The Mei’an influence is clearly evident in some of the pieces. For example, the Ping sha luo yan played here is the Mei’an version and not the Guangling version usually heard. It is difficult to choose favourite pieces, but I do particularly like Ze pan yin and Zhuang zhou meng die. Both are Li Feng’s own realisations (dapu), as are most of those on Disc 2. Some of them are her own interpretations of old standards, others are less widely known pieces.

The cover notes, in Chinese only, give an eloquent introduction to the music, the performer and the instrument. Most importantly, they cite the sources for each piece (sadly lacking in some commercial recordings) and much interesting background information, such as Ms. Li’s discovery that the 1596 piece Cang wu yin is actually an earlier version of Liang xiao yin (the second piece on Disc 1), usually ascribed to Shu Yantian (1614). The Chenxi Wenhua record company has done an impeccable job of recording this CD. It captures well the sound of Ms. Li’s Song Dynasty qin and is a real pleasure to listen to. This is a gem of a recording by a highly talented artist and I unreservedly recommend it. (JJ)

Tiananmen Echo. Music for guqin and xiao, by R.I.P.Hayman. 1 CD, total time 8’30”, p. 1990. Earmedia (ASCAP), 326 Spring St. New York City, 10013 USA, phone 212-966-0791, email: riphear@aol.com

The American Rip Hayman has worked in China for many years. He has taught at the Chinese Conservatory in Beijing, and he studied guqin there. The present mini-CD features an improvisatory piece for qin and xiao (vertical bamboo flute), dedicated to the victims of the crackdown on the democracy protest movement in China in June 1989. It incorporates a qin version of the revolutionary tune Dongfang hong, as
well as sound excerpts of the Tiananmen protests (shouts, gun shots, brief statements by an Australian eyewitness and by former Premier Zhao Ziyang taken from radio broadcasts, etc.) The qin music in this composition is contemporary in style, but still very close to the classical spirit of the instrument. The CD is an uneerie reminder of China’s saddest and bloodiest event in recent history. ‘Tiananmen’ is likely to remain taboo for public discussion in the People’s Republic for a while longer, but in the long run a revision of the government’s views and more openness about the facts of the period seem inevitable. (FK)


Here are two important sets of historical recordings, issued by Wind records in Taiwan. One is a compilation of examples of Chinese story-singing, mostly from the late 1950s and early 1960s, the other an anthology of excerpts from Chinese local opera performances, with more than half of the recordings dating from 1952-53. The original recordings are kept at the Music Research Institute in Beijing. The CDs were compiled and edited by Ruan Guijuan (_shuo chang_) and Yao Yijun (opera) of the MRI in Beijing.

These two albums – no more than a tiny selection from the vast wealth of recordings kept at the MRI – offer the listener a splendid four-hour tour of popular local narrative music (and some of its most famous representants) in the China of the pre-Cultural-Revolution-years. There are also a few excerpts from the late 1970s, and one from 1983. The sound quality is good, at least if one bears in mind the poor equipment and the unfavourable circumstances in which most of these recordings must have been made. (On a few tracks the sounds are somewhat muffled or one hears a soft din of a tape or wire recorder.) The music is definitely worthwhile.

The _shuo chang_ excerpts vary from domestic tales about everyday events to stories on classical themes (Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai, episodes from the _Shuihu zhuan_, _Bai shi zhuan_, etc). Only some of the lyrics have been printed in the accompanying booklets; all information provided is in Chinese. Examples of political texts – the MRI archives must have loads of recordings of “politicized” opera and narrative singing from the same period – are happily missing. Communist propaganda texts are unpublishable in Taipei. A rare case of political considerations coming to the aid of Chinese traditional culture!

The _shuo chang_ CDs contain many examples of genres from Tianjin, Beijing and surroundings, but quite a few lesser
known genres are also presented. For example, there is some story-singing from Gansu (Lanzhou guzi, track 4 on CD 1, with a marvellous lazy 'blues' by Duan Futang), and an example of Qinghai pingsxian (track 10 on CD 2, with clearly audible Central-Asian influences in the instrumental accompaniment). The music on the shuochang CDs varies from plain song or rymthical recitation by a solo singer with simple percussion accompaniment (as in Hubei drum singing, track 3 on CD 2) to near-operatic-like singing with two vocalists or with a more elaborate accompanying ensemble (as in the genres from Guangdong and Guangxi on CD 2). For Western listeners, the association with American country-and-western music is never far away. Most of the recordings were made in location, in teahouses or local theatres, not in a studio. Most of them give no clear impression of audience response (except, in some cases, polite applause). One real exception is Ma Zengfen's wonderful tongue-in-check rendering of a comical story about food theft (track 2 on CD 1) which leads to repeated laughter.

Even after listening to half a CD, the basic idea of Chinese shuochang - a solo voice supported by a 'background' of strumming and/or plain percussion - is already clear enough; the longer excerpts on the two CDs emphasize the limitations of the genre: if you don't know what the story is about, your attention is likely to drift away after a while, no matter how lively the performances. Yet there are some musical surprises, even if you don't expect them any more: meanderings in a voice which suddenly become reminiscent of Indian or Indonesian chant, or a drum rhythm which briefly (quite coincidentally, I'm sure) evokes Turkey, as in the beginning of track 8 on CD 1. But it's also interesting to discover the remarkable degree of homogeneity in all these Chinese story-singing genres, in spite of vast musical differences between different regions. A rich and wonderful collection. The question remains who will buy these CDs: the two sets are documents of major importance for Chinese opera and shuochang freaks, especially for musicologists. But for local Chinese, discs entirely dedicated to their own favourite genre will remain more interesting. I hope to discuss the opera set in more detail in the next volume of CHIME.

'The best collection of Nanyin', 1 CD, Hugo sampler, HRP 7125-2, 1996. Also produced as a more elaborate series of CDs: Wei-zhi recalling Xue Tao, HRP 7123-2 (TT 71'58''); Autumn Elegy by the Chu River, HRP 7122-2 (TT 76'54''), both with Kun Ming-chiu as the soloist; Denouncing Provincial Officer Mei, HRP 7121-2 (TT 75'12''), and A Wanderer's Autumn Grief, HRP 7120-2 (TT 60'46'') with Au Kwan-cheung as the soloist.

This is not the familiar Nanyin from Fujian (Nanguan) but a lesser-known style of narrative singing from the Cantonese area, also known as Muyu, still performed in Hong Kong, Though it has much in common with Cantonese opera and the instru-
mental 'Cantonese music', this set valuably expands our acquaintance of styles in the delta. ‘The best collection of Nanyin’ is a sampler for four CDs, available separately. The fine singers Kum Ming-chiu and Au Kwan-cheung are accompanied by Tong Kin-woon (zheng), Cheung Kwok-hung (yehu) and Ng Wing-mui (qinlin). The recordings were made in Tong’s Art Studio in Hong Kong, a weekly centre for the appreciation of the music; Tong Kin-woon’s notes for the booklets are informative, opening up a further world of Chinese literati elegance. (SJ)

Chaozhou drums music. Linhai Ensemble, Shantou. 1 CD, total time 60'05". Hugo, HRP 7149-2, 1997.

Less well known than the Chaozhou string ensemble, the outdoor Chaozhou 'greater gong-and-drum' music (with shawms and strings providing a strong melodic component) is widely performed in the countryside for temple fairs and processions. While many recordings are available locally, this CD of a Shantou ensemble led by Lin Yunxi is a rare airing in the West. Though the group is guided by distinguished senior musicians in the Chaozhou music scene who have not distanced themselves from the tradition, the sound is slicker than one will hear in traditional contexts, and most of the pieces recent compositions or arrangements which are more predictable than their folk cousins; it at least allows us to perceive regional variation and negotiation in conservatory influence. Closest to the traditional end of the spectrum, and of greatest complexity, is the lengthy final suite, Fengxiang, charmingly rendered as 'Be Made Prime Minister'. The notes, translated from Chinese, are erudite but conventional; in such cases I wonder if Hugo and other such companies might commission separate English notes to address issues of relevance to a wider international audience. Photographs of the distinctive percussion are provided. (SJ)


After a century of political harrassment, massive destruction of temples and prohibition of rituals and ritual music, folk musicians in China have gradually returned to their instruments and age-old musical practices. In recent years, many groups have resumed their ritual and semi-ritual activities, sometimes after decades of silence. Some of them have even visited the West for concert tours. Nimbus made recordings of two such groups who played in Britain in the 1990s. The resulting CDs are now combined in a very fine double album, with excellent liner notes by Stephen Jones and Helen Rees. The age-old music has stood the test of time, and is well worth exploring if you are interested in discovering 'new' sounds.

The concerts of the Tianjin Buddhists in the autumn of 1993 in Europe are unforgettable. The musicians – most of them

What a wonderful initiative to publish a series of recordings of children's songs from around the world! Volume 5 in this series gives an impression of songs sung by children of Bai, Miao, Dong, Naxi and Tibetan ethnic groups in Yunnan and Guizhou. They were recorded in 1995 by Francis Corpataux from Canada. Most of the recording was done in rural areas and small towns. The singers are on average between nine and twelve years old. The CD shows that young children are exposed to (and become involved in) a vast range of musical forms and genres, such as local traditional songs of the grown-ups (from love songs to religious chants), songs composed for special occasions – for example political songs taught in school, mainly in Han Chinese – nursery rhymes and other songs sung while playing games, and even the odd pop tune picked up from

depthly devout and spiritual. Both discs have excellent recording quality. (FK)

The music of the Dayan ensemble on disc two is frequently reminiscent of the refined silk and bamboo music of teahouses in southeast China, albeit with a more prominent role for various types of percussion, and with (in some pieces) the added element of solemn vocal hymns. This group's repertoire is rooted in an amalgam of Daoist, Buddhist and Confucian ritual traditions. Beautiful and remarkably sophisticated music, at once 'folky' and

in their seventies and eighties! – were greeted with spontaneous ovations. Not even in China had they met with such elated responses to their attempts to reconstruct and revive ancient repertoire. The group plays reed pipes, bamboo flutes, Chinese mouth organs and a variety of loud percussion. Audiences were struck by the unexpected vitality and sturdiness of the music, while newspaper critics praised the group for its 'swinging' sound and even noted sporadic relationships with free jazz and the orchestrations of pop singer Kate Bush! One undisputed star performer is 70-year old guanzi (double reed-pipe) player Li Jinwen, whose plaintive solos in Lan hua mei. and Xing Dao zhang can't fail to make a deep impression. This is profoundly moving music, that is, if you can adjust your ears to the slow tempi and the otherworldly atmosphere of the ritual pieces. The piercing qualities of the guanzi are reminiscent of those of a trumpet and make the instrument perfectly suited to its leading melodic role – it can be heard even when the noise of the accompanying percussion becomes quite deafening. Xing Dao zhang ('Music for practising the Way'), with its haunting introductory section, may be viewed as a characterization in sound of the Buddhist vision of life: a slow and difficult journey from darkness to light, from suffering to salvation and enlightenment. This is balanced by some quick and exuberant folkly pieces.

The music of the Dayan ensemble on disc two is frequently reminiscent of the refined silk and bamboo music of teahouses in southeast China, albeit with a more prominent role for various types of percussion, and with (in some pieces) the added element of solemn vocal hymns. This group's repertoire is rooted in an amalgam of Daoist, Buddhist and Confucian ritual traditions. Beautiful and remarkably sophisticated music, at once 'folky' and
the radio. The disc also features a number of lullabies, sung by grown-ups.

The sleeve notes (in French and English) by Francis Corpataux give brief introductions to the minority groups included on the disc, and summaries of the lyrics with some added explanations. The many lovely pictures in the booklet visualize the relaxed and spontaneous atmosphere in which most of the recordings were made.

One third of the songs is sung in Han Chinese, the rest in the various languages of the minorities involved. It is a pity that no full translations of the lyrics are given. One or two explanations are off the mark: track 28 is explained as ‘a word game in which the words have no meaning’, but the words refer to the handkerchief game played during this song. The words of the song on track 14 are said to have ‘no relationship to one another’, which may be true in terms of their semantic meanings, but the words are related in terms of sound – they always share one syllable and form a playful chain.

But this is nit-picking. The whole project must have been a wonderful work to undertake – I’m quite jealous! – and the resulting CDs are a must for anyone with a heart for music and for children. Don’t forget to play these song to (your own) kids, and be ready for some unusual comments! (AS)


This CD of Thai lullabies and nursery rhymes is a rare reminder of a rapidly disappearing repertoire of songs. Swedish ethnomusicologist Håkan Lundström and Achara Jaiaqam Stone, a librarian with Unicef in New York, joined forces to publish these recordings which Stone made during her fieldwork in four different parts of Thailand in the early 1970s. Precious material, at times very entertaining and rich in atmosphere (with animal and village sounds in the background). The 21 tracks feature a total of some 50 items, sung by both women and men. As Lundström and Stone write in their brief notes, the lullabies serve a variety of functions, from lulling the child asleep to learning it elements of language, numbers or social games. The Thai songs also contain less predictable elements, such as references to ghosts and fearful animals, which are believed to frighten children so much that they will close their eyes and fall asleep. The accompanying booklet is informative and includes some lyrics in English translation. Among today’s musicologists, there is a renewed interest in lullabies and nursery rhymes: they feature as special topics in a number of conferences (including the forthcoming ESEM in Norway in Sept. 2001). For obtaining copies of the CD, contact H. Lundström, tel. +46.40. 325451, e-mail: Hakan.Lundstrom@mhm.lu.se. (FK)


This CD accompanies Du Yaxiong’s article ‘Shaonian: Courtship Songs from Northwest China – The Singers, the Songs and the Music’, published in Wellington as Asian Studies Institute Working Paper 15 in 2000. (For a slightly different version of his article, see DY’s essay on Shaonian in Chime 12-13). The article introduces the genre of shaonian (alternatively called hua’er), courtship dialogue songs sung
during big summer festivals in northwest China. The ‘working paper’ includes an introduction to the singers recorded on the CD, as well as English translations of the lyrics and musical transcriptions of the songs. The two singers are from Yongjingtun, Gansu province. They were invited to New Zealand in 1998 to sing in Jack Body’s Opera Alley (see several reports in Chime 12-13), and the present CD is a spin-off of the opera project. Both singers have had previous recording experience in China. Li Guizhou, a village doctor, co-operated in a large recording project of folksongs which brought him wide recognition in Gansu. He also sang in ‘new-style’ Chinese operas. Ji Zhengzhu, originally a farmer, has been singing semi-professionally in Lanzhou, Gansu’s capital, ever since he won an important provincial song contest in 1996. Consequently, the repertoire presented on this CD is a mixture of traditional and arranged shanqiang. The two singers are veritable throat jugglers, very much in line with traditional practice. Both of them also have a considerable stage experience, and the price to pay for this is that their performances (especially those of Li) sometimes sound slightly affected (with carefully calculated changes in tempo and dynamic contrasts etc.). Most of the songs on the CD are solo songs. In the field, most of them would have been sung in the form of dialogues. The songs on tracks 14 and 15 are sung by the two singers in unison, which directly makes them sound more folksy. The CD is recorded in a studio in Wellington. Obviously the clean studio-sound doesn’t bring the natural circumstances of the genre alive, but it does give listeners the opportunity to hear every detail of the performances (which would be far more difficult to achieve in fieldwork circumstances). Many of the performances are outstanding; I am particularly fond of tracks 16 and 17. It is a bit unpractical that the names of the singers are not shown in the list of songs on p. 55 – we have to search for them in the section with English translations. Track 22 is ascribed to Li Guizhou, but I thought I recognized the more earthy voice of Ji Zhengzhu. Given the scarcity of hua’er recordings on CD, this is a very welcome initiative. The CD and the booklet can be ordered free of charge from: The Secretary, Asian Studies Institute, Victoria University of Wellington, 18 Kelburn Parade, PO Box 600, Wellington, New Zealand. Tel: +64.4.463.5098; Fax: +64.4.463.5291, e-mail: asi@vuw.ac.nz. (AS)

The Uyghur Musicians from Xinjiang – Music from the oasis towns of Central Asia. Ace Records LC 05503, 1 CD, 2000, TT 69’39”.

The excellent field recordings of Xinjiang folk and classical music by Sabine Trebinjac (Ocora) and Anderson Bakewell (Playasound) of the early 90-ies remain first-rate choices if you wish to learn more about the ethnic musical traditions of the sandy wastelands of China’s far West. Yet here is an attractive album of studio recordings of Uyghur folk songs and ensemble pieces
from two particular regions within Chinese Turkestan – the fertile Ili Valley in the north and the oasis town of Turpan in the east – that is also fully worth exploring. The CD features solo singers and an ensemble of (primarily) bowed and plucked long-necked lutes and small percussion. The musicians toured Britain in May 2000 at the invitation of the Asian Music Circuit. Groups from China formally touring Europe will cause many an informed fan to be somewhat on his or her guard. But no, this is not one of those appalling state-supported groups who lull their audience asleep with a fancy repertoire played in fancy costumes. On the contrary, these players are professionals in the good sense of the word, gifted musicians with roots clearly in the oral practice of pre-Communist days. They ‘walk the traditional road’, but not excessively so, that is, not as a vehicle for patriotic sentiments or demonstrations of ‘Uyghurness’. They manage to bring to life the festive, ceremonial and dance pieces of their native grounds as if they play them for the first time, with a freshness that is most rewarding. Naturally the functional sense of the music is largely lost when it is transferred to a sound studio in London, but what remains is the sheer joy of playing and singing well. One of the performers, Usanjan Jami, already made his appearance on Sabine Trebinjac’s double-CD of field recordings of 1990. Here he sounds just as expressive and powerful as he did ‘in the field’ ten years ago. The present programme includes excerpts from three muqam (suites of songs and instrumental pieces) as well as some vivid solo pieces for shawm and for tambur (lute) and four folk songs. The element of improvisation in Uyghur muqam can hardly match that of Arabic or Persian suites of the same name (maqam), but there is still a lot to enjoy in the Uyghur music, notably in the warm and forthright vocal performances of Riyazdin Barat, Aziz Nyaz and Tursun Simai. Despite China’s political control of Xinjiang and the massive influx of Han Chinese, this repertoire displays little Chinese influence if any; its style is closely allied to the ceremonial and dance music traditions of Uzbekistan and other parts of Central Asia. The album is a worthy sequel to the recordings of Trebinjac and Bakewell. The sound quality is good, and there are excellent liner notes by Rachel Harris (whose help was instrumental in bringing this group to the West). (FK)

(Japanese) CD-books of Chinese field-recordings: Narrative Music and Shadow Puppet Theatre in Rural Northern China (2 CDs, 58 and 61 minutes), Music in the Yellow River Valley (1 CD, 49 mins.). Published by Dr Iguchi Junko, Osaka College of Music, Japan, 1992.

Three fine CD-books of Chinese field-recordings have been produced by Japanese
scholar Iguchi Junko, vols. 60, 61, 62 of the series *Music of the Earth: Fieldworker's Sound Collection* (Victor, Japan, 1992). All are high-quality field recordings made on digital tape recorder. They are available directly from the editor: Dr Iguchi Junko, Osaka College of Music, Toyonaka, Osaka, 561-8555, Japan, fax: 81-726-89-5195, e-mail: ssasaki@minpaku. idc.ac.jp. The price for each CD-book is US$30 / Euro30, including postage; the order will be sent after receiving an international money order.

Dr Iguchi Junko (b.1961, currently lecturer at the Osaka College of Music) studied ethnomusicology, graduating from Osaka University. Since 1988 she has carried out intensive rural fieldwork in Hebei and north Shaanxi (Shaanbei) Provinces, focussing on narrative music and oral literature. Her PhD dissertation on oral tradition in rural northern China was published in Japanese in 1999. The three CD-books are:

**Vol.60 Sho wo kataru** ('A Narrative Music in Rural Northern China') (58 min.) In rural areas of northern China, traditional long stories are not read but listened to through regional opera, narrative music and other oral cultures. *Laoting dagu* is a genre of narrative singing found throughout Laoting and Luannan counties in eastern Hebei province. The performer sings and narrates the *xiaoduan* short verses and *dashu* extended tales, accompanied by *gu* drum, *tieban* metal concussion instrument and large *sanxian* plucked lute. On this CD the *dashu* Qingyunjian (The Blue Cloud Sword) was recorded in a village of Luannan county in 1990. The CD book includes field notes (in Japanese) of 27 pages with ten pictures.

**Vol. 61 Kage ni utau** ('Shadow Puppet Theatre in Rural Northern China') (61 min.) Laoting district is a kind of narrative community in which people own narratives in common. Oral genres of the community, *Laoting dagu* and *Laoting yingxi* (shadow puppet theatre), originated here in the Jin dynasty and are correlated to each other in their repertory, text and musical elements. The players and singers of *Laoting yingxi* (called *Luanzhou ying* in Beijing) are peasants performing to a high standard. The famous drama *Wufengzhui* was recorded in a village of Luannan county in 1990. The book includes field notes of 26 pages (in Japanese) with eleven pictures.

**Vol. 62 Seifu shuchou** ('Music and Performing Arts in the Yellow River Valley') (49 min.) Northern Shaanxi province (Shaanbei) is famous for its wide variety of traditional music. This CD includes folk songs, ritual music, narrative singing, *yangge* and other performing arts recorded in 1990. The field notes (in Japanese) were written by Prof. Fukao Yoko (an anthropologist who stayed in villages in Mizhi county for a year); ten pictures are included. (SI/II)


In China there is no shortage of brilliant instrumental musicians, and no shortage of low-priced CDs to capture their (usually very polished) conservatory-style performances on record. But not all of us live in China and not all of us have access to the many discs published by Chinese companies. For a nice and easily available alternative, you may want to turn to the UK Chinese Ensemble’s CD *Liushui*, which has been issued by the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. The album features a wide range of different instrumental styles, from Cantonese silk and bamboo ensemble music to *qin* (zither) solo, from dazzling 'battle' music for the pear-shaped lute *pipa* to northeastern Chinese wedding music and Peking opera,
all produced by Chinese musicians living or temporarily staying in Britain. What you get here is technical perfection and brilliant playing, but not to the extent that it kills the music (as happens in some recordings produced in China). The UK Chinese Ensemble plays well, with just the right touch of ‘folkiness’ and inexactness to keep the ensemble pieces alive and breathing. There are fine solo contributions by Chen Daican (on two-string stick fiddle) and Cheng Yu (on pipa and qin). The teahouse and opera ensemble pieces all sound fresh and inspired. Too bad that the group’s excellent jinghu player Qiu Zhenghui has just gone back to China. These are musicians to cherish, and to hear more often on the concert stage. (FK)

Tan Dun – Bitter Love. Ying Huang, soprano, other vocal soloists and NChiCa Orchestra conducted by Tan Dun. 1 CD, total time 60’03”, recorded in 1999. Sony Classical SK 61658.


Bitter Love contains excerpts from Tan Dun’s modern operatic adaptation of Tang Xianzu’s classical stage play Peony Pavilion (1598). Tan’s wrote the music in 1997-98, and adapted it for the present CD. The full opera, which was staged successfully by Peter Sellars, lasted four hours. It featured four vocal soloists, four actors/dancers and an instrumental ensemble. This CD is primarily a selection of pieces written for soprano Ying Huang. Sony advertizes the diva (a famous Puccini singer) prominently on the CD’s front cover. But this is not just a vehicle for Ying Huang’s splendid voice. The disc is an artistic statement on the part of the composer; it shows where Tan Dun stands at the beginning of the 21st century. He remains the most eclectic of all Chinese contemporary composers, and probably (next to He Xuntian) the one most keen on flirting with pop music. Tan’s gifts for the collision and synthesis of different musical styles are undeniable. Groovy beats, well-paced shouts and funky synthesizer effects are skillfully combined with lyrical soprano lines, faint reminiscenses of Indonesian kecak (track 6), erotic panting and sighing (track 10), operatic ‘single line music’ – conceptually close to Monteverdi, but stylistically very different – and the familiar square rhythms with dotted notes and syncopations à la Tan Dun, derived from Chinese opera and ceremonial ensemble music. But the most important elements of Bitter Love are the long solo cantilenas for Ying Huang, often supported by brilliant percussion effects and by a male chorus chanting quasi-ceremonial hymns. These cantilenas may sound appealing at first, but as the CD progresses, the basic concept of the soaring high voice against the varied background gradually wears thin, and what remains of Tang Xianzu’s emotionally tense
drama in the end is very little. Tan walks a thin line between ‘postmodern’ composition, pop music and ‘easy listening’. The same is even more true for his CD 2000 today, a world symphony for the millenium, a partial tribute to Bob Marley – it starts with an arrangement of Marley’s reggae hit ‘One Love’ – and a facile mixture of pop music, ‘exotic’ sounds and choral/orchestral Hollywood-kitsch. The lyrics – if that’s the correct word – are isolated lines taken from Laozi, Li Po, Tennyson, Wordsworth, the Bible and Dante, and loosely grouped together – Tan Dun treats ‘world literature’ like he treats ‘world music’: everything fits into the dishwasher. Hard to imagine that this music was written by the same artist who composed works like On Daoism, Orchestral Theatre I and Marco Polo. ‘All things and I are one’, as the chorus sings on track 2 of 2000 today. (FK)

Sit Fast. Twelve pieces for viol consort, played by Fretwork. Includes new works by Tan Dun, Peter Sculthorpe, Gavin Bryars, Barry Guy, Poul Ruders, Simon Bainbridge, Sally Beamish and Elvis Costello. 1 CD, total time 76’16”. Virgin classics, 1997, no. 5 45217 2.

At one time the most prominent stringed instruments of Western music, viols (bowed guitars) were replaced in the 17th century by the more virtuosic violin family. While they made a ‘comeback’ in the 20th century as part of the early music movement, their cool and stern timbre also eminently suits the detached or playful nature of contemporary music. In 1995, the early music ensemble Fretwork celebrated the tercentenary of Purcell’s death (1695) with performances of old as well as contemporary pieces for viols. Some of these pieces are included on the CD ‘Sit Fast’ (1997). The album features eight new pieces written especially for Fretwork, in some cases (as with Tan Dun’s piece for voice and viols, ‘A Sinking Love’) based on material taken from Purcell. There are vocal contributions by tenor Paul Agnew and counter-tenor Michael Chance. The CD also features some original 16th century viol pieces (by Tye and Ferrabosco) and two instrumental arrangements of older vocal works (by Isaac and Ockeghem). No music by Purcell is included (Fretwork already produced excellent recordings of Purcell’s Fantazias and In Nomines.) Yet his spirit hovers over this attractive album. The rich and sonorous sound of the viols dominates both the old and new pieces to such an extent that it becomes a matter of secondary importance whether the pieces played are ‘old’ or ‘new’. Peter Sculthorpe’s and Gavin Bryars’ works are written in quasi-archaic moods, and many of the composers in this album seem particularly keen on exploring the possibilities of cluster sounds and quiet chords built on harmonics, which are again reminiscent of ancient music. Perhaps hearing the entire CD in one go, 75 minutes of viol music, is a bit too much, but there is still a lot of variety to please the ear, and various items in this album merit repeated listening. Barry Guy’s exuberant ‘Buzz’, Poul Ruders’ folky and syncopated ‘Second Set of Changes’, but also Alfonso Ferra-bosco’s harmonically weird ‘Hexachord fantasy’ and Christopher Tye’s complex ‘Sit Fast’ are all very rewarding. So is Tan Dun’s setting for counter-tenor and viols of a poem by Li Po (sung in Chinese). This 6-minute piece will hardly contain many surprises for those already familiar with Tan’s idiom, but it is attractive in its own right. The music is mainly propelled forward by the wavering lines and dramatic statements in the vocal part (the viols being ‘pushed’ to action by the voice, or at best providing dramatic counter-accents). Excellent recording quality. (FK)

In 1992, while he was a composer-in-residence of the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Bright Sheng wrote a one-act opera for soloists, choir and orchestra, based on the traditional Arabian-Persian love tale of Layla and Majnum. A CD of the work was made in 1995, by the Houston Opera Studio who took the opera on their repertoire in that year. 'The Song of Majnum' consists of eight scenes plus an interlude, and was written for two main characters (soprano and tenor solo, respectively sung in this recording by Ana Maria Martinez and Raymond Vassy), their parents, and some groups of villagers. The opera lasts approximately one hour.

The story is about two lovers who are forcefully separated, and who die after they've been denied further access to one another. Layla has been promised by her parents to someone else. To subtitle the CD 'A Persian Romeo and Juliet' is not quite justifiable. The libretto emphasizes no conflicts whatsoever between the two main families, And there is not much sign (if any) of an inner struggle on the part of the main characters. The most noticeable feature of Majnum and Layla is that they don't foster a shadow of a doubt about their own feelings. They just dream and simmer and whither away, each on their own, and that's it. The opera focuses on poetic declarations of love (uttered to the moon or to the protagonists' kin). Life may be like this for some (young) people, but it's thin material to base a drama upon. The two youngsters encounter one another very briefly during a children's game in a forest. They fall in love at first sight but never get to see each other again.

It's too formidable a task for any opera composer to try and convince his audience that these two young lovers really cannot do without one another and must die!

The lyrics are poetical and beautiful enough, but the lovers have no other occupations than sighing, fainting, and falling on the floor. Andrew Porter was infatuated with a Persian version of the folk tale, which he distilled into a series of lyrical scenes. He found a sympathetic musician in Bright Sheng, whom he thought might be able to bring alive the 'exotic' atmosphere of the verses. At heart there is nothing much exotic about Layla and Majnum. Their story simply describes the (rather prosaic) sadness of pre-arranged marriages which reigned supreme in rural cultures practically all around the world (including much of Europe) up to the Second World War. The appeal of the story lies in the sad fate of the girl who is not allowed to chose for herself, a situation still familiar to many women in today's rural China. In the opera it's the growing madness of the man (Majnum) which is emphasized in the first place. Bright Sheng says he identified himself with Majnum, as he identified Layla with his homeland China, for which he felt a strong longing.
From a metaphorical point of view, it doesn’t seem to make much sense to let the lovers die (either as a sign of eternal separation or of unification in death). Bright Sheng and China are still very much alive, the composer can visit his homeland if he wants to.

The composer may be rightly concerned with the tragic fate of the Chinese people (poverty, the Cultural Revolution, Tiananmen 1989, on-going political repression etc.), but the opera is not intended as a reminder of any of that. The music and the libretto are at times dark and passionate, but they hint at nothing much beyond the basic theme of ‘painful separation’.

So much for nit-picking. Bright Sheng’s orchestral writing (particularly the quirky percussion) is sometimes reminiscent of Bernstein, who was Bright Sheng’s teacher and who gave him a lot of encouragement in the early stages of his career. Some of the instrumental effects (e.g. harmonics in the strings and long-held chords of open fifths) may remind one of other Chinese contemporary composers such as Qu Xiaosong. The score moves from overt chinoiserie (pentatonic figuration) to an occasional reference to Stravinsky’s Sacre (shortly before the end) but lyrical and soaring vocal lines dominate most of the score.

The composer was reportedly influenced by Tibetan folk songs, but judging from the melodical figuration we might as well be swimming around in operas by Holst or Vaughan Williams of seventy years ago. There are some fine lyrical moments in this work, and a few real surprises. The work is a show of good craftsmanship on the part of Porter and the composer, and it may well deserve occasional repeats in concert performances. (FK)


Qin Daping, born in Beijing in 1957, studied music at the Sichuan Conservatory and at the Central Conservatory in Beijing before moving to Helsinki in 1984. At the Sibelius Academy he continued his studies in modern composition under Magnus Lindberg and others. He still lives in Finland. The CD Timber of Time, produced by the composer, features five pieces of computer music which Qin wrote between 1991 and 1996. Qin’s electro-acoustic works are frequently overcrowded with loud noises and energetic – or even biting – aggressive – sonic ‘events’. Studio Ostinato, his first essay in the genre (1991) is a thick and continuously rolling wave of metal-like and rumbling sounds. Though created with contemporary means, the piece is often reminiscent of the somewhat dated soundscapes of themusique concrète of the 1960s. Much more inventive is Vocal Gan (1992), a short fantasy on cricket sounds, interspersed with snatches of shouting, wailing and (Sichuanese) chatter. A very entertaining piece, almost like an electronic equivalent of the Inuits’ ‘mouth games’. Melody for guqin (1993) quotes snippets of classical guqin music and superimposes them on one another. The fragments are dissected and electronically modified until the music is almost no longer recognizable as guqin, and full of restless energy and a gleeful kind of malice. In brief, a deliciously provocative work, probably not to the taste of many qin players, except perhaps for the end where deep gusts of wind smother the qin sounds and reduce them to silence. Vox of 1976 is a disturbing evocation of the revolutionary slogans China in the 1970s, too oppressive for my ears! Aniox (1996) is a witty compilation of manipulated animal sounds, culminating in a remarkable brass fanfare before the music ends with a funny
cock's crow. Qin Daping's works are vehement, bold, extrovert, full of irony, with occasional touches of crude brutality or deep bitterness. A composer you may not always like, but who writes music that is difficult not to remember! (FK)

Chamber Works by Hong Kong Composers: Young Shui-ting, Hui Cheung-wai, Victor Chan, Lo Hau-man, Clarence Mak, Doming Lam and Polu Ng. Various Russian performers, rec. 1995 in Hong Kong. 1 CD, TT 62'15", Hugo HRP 798-2


Here are two fine new CDs with contemporary works by composers living in Hong Kong. The one with chamber works is the most rewarding of the two, with seven pieces all very different in character. When listening to Doming Lam's Breakthrough for flute and cello (1975), the work which marked this composer's 'conversion' to an avant-garde style, I have the feeling that, in terms of musical idioms, relatively little has changed in Hong Kong since 1975. The artists who feature on these two discs are respectable craftsmen who write with deep insight and affinity for (Western) instruments, and explore the expressive possibilities of the chamber and orchestral realms to the full, even if there is no urge on their part to cover a lot of new territory. Clarence Mak's Plain Autumn, for flute, clarinet, cello and piano (1991) is a beautiful elegy of deep emotional sincerity. Polu Ng's Desert Places (1992) and Victor Chan's Memories (1989) contain powerful moments, and Young Shui-ting's Walk (1984) for wind trio is a brief and playful pentatonic miniature evoking people at play in a public park. Law Wing-fai's Sphere Supreme (1992) and Joshua Chan's Devotions of Morning Fragrance (1993) are sensual orchestral works of sustained interest. Chan hovers stylistically between the ecstatic scene-painting of Arnold Bax and the bright metallic timbres of (say) Messiaen. The CD also features Daniel Law's Symphony no.2 (1991), dedicated to Rulan Chao Pian on the occasion of her 70th birthday and retirement from the Music Department of Harvard University. The performances are excellent. (FK)


Reconciliation of Eastern and Western culture is a consistent theme in the delicate an thoughtful works of Pan Hwang Long (b. 1945). Pan spent many years of his life
studying composition in Germany where Helmut Lachenmann and Isang Yun were among his teachers. He is not interested in superficial references to Chinese traditional repertoire. Even in a work called *East and West I* (1998), written for a quintet of Chinese and Western instruments, his main concern is a free exploration of different sonic realms, not a deliberate juxtaposition of East and West. With an idiom firmly rooted in German avant-garde of the 1970s, Pan Hwang-Long is one of the few Taiwanese composers who managed to obtain a firm foothold on the Western concert-stage, not by blindly following Western models, but by showing extraordinary talent. His gentle – one would almost say unobtrusive – music, virtuosic without showiness, complex under a cover of childlike simplicity, straightforward in all its aleatoric complexity, emotional behind a stern mask of tranquility and detachedness, could only have been written by an Asian. Only rarely, as in *Tsien Huai I* for flute and piano (1975), does his musical idiom sound somewhat dated. *Tsien Huai* is one of a series of chamber works by Pan issued on two interesting CDs which were published in Taiwan in 1999. The other works on these CDs are more distinguished and are all worth exploring. *Totem and Taboo* for six percussionists (1996), premiered by the famous Kroumata Ensemble in Sweden, sounds like a lucky catch (on tape) by an ethnomusicologist of some weird tribal rite. We hear a gradual unfolding of soft and muffled percussion sounds which seem to adhere to enigmatic laws and rhythmic patterns of their own. The music briefly culminates in a flutter of bird-like sounds, but there is no grand apotheosis, and nobody gets killed. Pan Hwang-Long eschews operatic display and avoids drama, except on the most spiritual, philosophical level. *Labyrinth-Promenade* of 1988/98 – actually one of a long series of works with that name which Pan wrote from 1988 onwards – an aleatoric piece for a variable combination of instruments, in this case flute, clarinet, harp, violin and cello, contains moments of serene beauty. It must count as one of his finest works. Pan’s pieces for Chinese traditional instruments sound pan-Asian rather than Chinese, and again betray his all-pervading interest in a peaceful synthesis of different (actually, ‘parallel’ rather than ‘different’) sound worlds. His music is like a barely visible footprint on the sandfloor of an old cave: the cave’s rock paintings may look more spectacular, but when your eyes turn back to the footprint, you realize that it has been waiting there for you for 30,000 years already, direct proof of a remote human physical presence. Pan’s best music gives the listener a sense of travelling across time and space, and experiencing such a miracle in person. (FK)

Contributors: Stephen Jones (SJ), Julian Joseph (JJ), Frank Kouwenhoven (FK), Antoinet Schimmelpenninck (AS)
The editors of the CHIME Journal encourage readers to submit news about their own research projects and fieldwork trips, announcements of meetings, notices of recent publications, abstracts of papers, theses and dissertations, and news about performance activities, commercial recordings and new compositions in the field of Chinese music.

Composer and musicologist Hsu Tsang-houei dies at 71
Taiwanese composer and music scholar Hsu Tsang-houei has died from illness at the age of 71. Hsu suffered from a brain tumor and fell into coma on the 19th of December, 2000. He passed away three weeks later. Hsu's death marked the end of an important era in Taiwan's music history, and brought to a close his forty-year-long career as a composer, researcher, and ardent promoter of Taiwanese music.

Born in 1929 in Zhanghua County in middle Taiwan, Hsu Tsang-houei spent his youth in Japan from 1940 to 1945. He received his first formal music training at the Taiwan Provincial Normal College (now National Taiwan Normal University) from 1949 to 1953, and continued his music studies in Paris from 1954 to 1959, where he received his Certificate d'Etudes Superieures from Université de Paris in 1958. During his years in Paris, Hsu began to admire and take inspiration from Debussy. He also underwent influence from the writings of Wang Guangqi, and was especially inspired by the example of Bartok – he decided to devote his further life to the creation of 'contemporary Chinese music', that is, music which combines traditional Chinese musical elements with contemporary Western compositional techniques.

After his return to Taiwan in 1959, Hsu quickly became the pioneering spokesman for a new generation of Chinese composers and music researchers. In the 1960s and 1970s, Hsu devoted most of his energy to composing music, founding composers' organizations, teaching composition, and collecting traditional Taiwanese music for compositional purposes. In the 1980s he began to spend more time on doing music research, training musicology students, and organizing ethnomusicological societies and conferences. He was involved in such activities inside Taiwan, but also abroad, in other Asian regions.

His book, Taiwan yinyue chugao (A Draft History of Taiwan's Musical History, 1991), represented the first comprehensive overview of all the various genres of music which can be found in Taiwan. It has become the standard textbook for Taiwanese music and musical history. Hsu also played important roles in the founding of the Asian Composer's League (ACL) and the Asia-Pacific Society for Ethnomusicology. He helped to build important bridges between music scholars across the Taiwan Straits. One of Hsu's life-long dreams was to found a centre for traditional music. This dream finally came true when the Planning Office of the Centre for Musical Heritage was founded in 1999 in Taipei, after twenty years of efforts on the part of Hsu.

During his forty-year career, Hsu taught countless students, he wrote more than thirty books and published numerous articles, and composed more than fifty musical works (several operas and piano concertos, as well as chamber and piano works and solo songs). He also received many awards, both domestically and internationally, and created and led many societies and organizations. His easy-going personality has won him friends all over the world. His life constituted an important part of Taiwan's musical history, and his contribution to Taiwan's musical life will be long remembered.

Wang Ying-fen
National Taiwan University
Amnesty campaigns for Ngawang Choephel

Amnesty International has started an international campaign in support of the Tibetan musicologist Ngawang Choephel (34). Ngawang was punished with eighteen years of imprisonment in China in 1995. He grew up in exile in India and studied in India and the United States. In July 1995 he entered

Tibet with a video camera, a tape recorder and valid travel documents for four months. He wanted to make a film about traditional Tibetan dance and music traditions. His aims were to examine and to document the loss of Tibetan musical traditions, and to preserve their images for future generations. Ngawang was arrested and held in custody in full isolation for fourteen months. No formal charge was made against him and no trial was held. In December 1996 the Tibetan People’s Radio announced that Ngawang had been spying under the cover of musical research. He was punished with 18 years of imprisonment. Only in August 2000 Ngawang’s mother was given permission to visit her son for the first time. She found him in poor health. There is a fear that he has been subjected to torture, Amnesty International has started a campaign in support of Ngawang Choephel’s release. Polite letters asking for his release, and for an end to torture of prisoners in China, can be sent to any of China’s embassies, or to the following address: Acting Governor of the Sichuan Provincial People’s Government, Zhang Zhongwei Daishengzhang, Sichuansheng Renmin Zhengfu, Dayuanlu, Chengdushi 610016, Sichuan Province, People’s Republic of China.

Miscellaneous

Stephen Addiss. Tucker-Boutwright Professor at the University of Richmond, recently curated an exhibition called ‘The Resonance of the Qin in Far Eastern Art’. It featured the literati music, poetry, calligraphy, painting, sculpture and objects that are part of the heritage of gaoju. His catalogue of the same title is available from the China Institute in New York City.

Barend ter Haar, Heidelberg University, has accepted the chair of classical Chinese Studies at Sinologisch Instituut, Leiden University, The Netherlands.

Joseph S.C. Lam serves as chair of the Department of Musicology at the University of Michigan from 1999-2002. He will continue to act as Director of the Stearns Collection of Musical Instruments.

Fred Lau was awarded a six-month fellowship from the National Endowment of the Humanities. He was on leave in the first half of 2000 to complete a book tentatively titled Play a Song for the Party: Music and Musicians of the Chinese Bamboo Flute in the PRC.

Andreas van Leeuwen (Institute of Chinese Studies, University of Heidelberg) finished an M.A. thesis on New Chinese Opera (xin geju, 1940s to 60s) in 1999. Recently, he started a PhD study on modern Chinese theatre, which will cover the period from the 1920s up to the present. E-mail: a.v.leeuwen@t-online.de

Okon Hwang, Associate Professor of Music at Eastern Connecticut State University, conducted fieldwork on Western Classical Music in Korea as a recipient of the Connecticut State University Research Grant and the Visiting Research Fellowship at the Academy of Korean Studies in Korea during the summer and fall of 1999.

Robert Provine, researcher of Korean music, has accepted a teaching position at the School of Music, University of Maryland, College Park, USA.

Christian Utz (University of Vienna) spent the summer of 2000 in Taiwan for field research (in the framework of a PhD study) on relationships between traditional music and new music in Taiwan since 1970. He also finished a thesis on Tan Dun which can be consulted on internet: <http://www.t0.or.at/~utz/dis/>. He wrote the following about his research ‘During my former research trips to Taiwan (1997-98) I had the possibility to talk with several composers (Hsu Po-yun, Tseng Shing-kwei, Ma Shui-long, Pan Hwang-long, Lee Tzyy-Sheng), concentrating on the usage of elements from traditional music-theatre in their new compositions.

A first summary of this research was published in the Austrian Music Magazine. The abundance of possibilities to ‘re-think’ tradition in the process of composing occurred as a main characteristic of contemporary Taiwanese music: Stylized variants of gaoju-music (Lee Tzyy-sheng; Poem of the Nation’s Demise I und II) could be found next to quasi-improvised connections with different vocal
traditions of East-Asiarn music theatre (Hsu Po-yun: Han Shih), the reinvention of local Taiwanese traditions (Ma Shui-long: The Emperor and his Concubine) or Lee Tai-Hsiang's symbiosis of Western experimental music and the music of the Ami-people (e.g. in Dashenji / Wu Feng). The pluralistic compositional approach to languages spoken in Taiwan (Mandarin, southern-Fujian-dialect, Kejia-dialect, idioms of the aborigines) was also discussed (cf. Lo Kii-Ming 1998). The aim of my 2000-research project is to deal with these repeated questions more systematically and more broadly and precisely than it has been done so far, while putting the main emphasis on those trends of Taiwanese music that most explicitly show the tension between Western and Taiwanese culture, and at the same time consciously draw inspiration from traditional music present on Taiwan. Historically, there will be an emphasis on the 70s and early 80s. The present situation, however, also will be considered. For more info, consult <http://www.tfs.or.au/~atz/Taiwan>.

Deborah Wong has been promoted to Associate Professor of Music at the University of California, Riverside, where she continues to serve as Director of the Center for Asian Pacific America.

Rembrandt Wolpert and Elizabeth Markham have joined the newly founded World Center for Research in Ancient Asian and Mid-Eastern Music, established at the Music Department of the University of Arkansas with a US $ 1.15 million gift from G. and B. Billingsley of Bella Vista. In this project they join forces with Sarah Caldwell.

Su Zheng received tenure promotion in December 1999. She teaches at Wesleyan University as Associate Professor of Music and Women's Studies. Since fall 2000 she serves as Chair and Director of the Center for East Asian Studies Program.

Publications

The Journal of Music in China
Chinese Scholar Zhou Qinru, currently based in Los Angeles, has launched a new journal in English on Chinese music. It is called The Journal of Music in China, or simply Music in China. It is published twice a year, in April and October by Music in China, Inc., a nonprofit research center in USA, in cooperation with academic periodicals in China. The first (176-page) issue appeared in October 1999 and featured (amongst other things) substantial articles on ethnomusicology in China (by Shen Qia), ancient Chinese music theory (Chen Yingshi), 'Babun', a well-known form in traditional music (Xue Jinyan, Du Yaxiong), and a series of papers on

Letters

Thanks
It is so very kind of you to pay me the compliment of dedicating Nos 12 & 13 of your magisterial journal – no other word is appropriate: every article in these two issues is outstandingly original in content, presenting some facet of Chinese music never before so treated.

I was surprised to discover that I was acquainted with the 'Alley' of two of your articles. When I lived in Chengqing in 1944-45 in the Zhong-Ying kexue huezoguan, as a member of Joseph Needham's team, Rewi Alley was a not infrequent visitor at mealtimes. I had no special personal contact with him, but we knew each other. I was particularly attracted by his work with the Co-operatives, and the sort of family-life he provided for so many family-less strays – a deeply tragic aspect of Chinese society.

Thank you again, with my affectionate regards,

Laurence Picken

Zhou Qinru

new music, including various items on composer Chen Yi. The second issue (156 pages) followed in April 2000, with substantial contributions on historical topics (by Xiang Yang and Hu Jiauxun), as well papers on Tibetan songs (Jiayong Qupei), the structure of Hubei ensemble music (Cheng Daeda) and contemporary music. Each issue is supplemented with a selected bibliography of major publications in Chinese music journals.
The editorial staff of the journal consists of Zhou Qian, Jonathan Stock, Naomi Javitz (Consultant English: Proofreader), Zhong Zilin (editing coordinator for book reviews), Meng Qiu, Li Xaosheng and Alex Zhou. The journal also includes reviews of books, CDs and other materials relating to its main subject. The journal pursues high academic quality and is intended for musicologists, ethnomusicologists, music theorists, composers, music performers, and graduate students. For more information about the organization as well as the journal, readers can consult the following website: <www.musicinchina.org> OR contact the journal by mail: Editorial Office, P.O. BOX 251737, Los Angeles, CA 90025-9126, USA. Business Office: 1307 Barry Avenue, Suite 3, Los Angeles, California 90025-3945, USA. Fax: +1 (310) 312-1675. E-mail: <editor@musicinchina.org>

**Major series on ritual music**

Eighteen substantial volumes have so far been published in the series *Zhongguo chuansheng yishi yinyue yanjiu jiuhua zilie congshu* [Anthology of the Chinese traditional music project]. This series, expected to comprise a total of twenty-one monographs, is edited by Tsao Pooy-ye and published in Taipei by the Xin Wenfeng Publishing Company, email: lampan@giga.net.tw. The volumes, compiled mainly by Chinese scholars, often cadres of the local Bureaus of Culture, consist of extensive documentation of ritual practice, history, and musical analysis of local ritual (often temple, but also lay) traditions, with transcriptions of vocal liturgy, melodic and percussion instrumental music, all more detailed than what could be included in the provincial volumes of the *Anthology of folk music of the Chinese peoples* (*Zhongguo minzu minjian yinyue jicheng*). Some photographs are included. There are no indexes. The following volumes have already been published:

- *Daojiao yifan* [Daoist ritual]. By Ming Zhiting.
- *Longshanzhong Tianshidao keyi yinyue yanjiu* [Study of Daoist ritual music of the Tianshi sect on Longshan]. By Tsao Pooy-ye and Liu Hong.
- *Guzheng Tujiazu suotan yishi yinyue yanjiu* [Study of Nuo ritual music of the Tuji in Guizhou]. By Deng Guanghai.
- *Chanlin zanji* [Collection of chants]. By Cai Jiacao.
- *Julu xian Daojiao fashi keyi yinyue yanjiu* [Study of Daoist ritual music in Julu county, Hebei]. By Yuan Jingfang.

* Laoshanyuan ji Liadong Chuanzhendao yinyue yanjiu [Study of Daoist ritual music of the Quanzhen sect in eastern Liaoning]. By Zhan Renzhong.
* Qingchengshan Daojiao keyi yinyue yanjiu [Study of Daoist ritual music on Qingchengshan]. By Gan Zhaocen.
* Suzhou Xuanmiao Tiangong keyi yinyue yanjiu [Daoist Tiangong ritual music of the Xuanmiao guan temple in Suzhou]. By Liu Hong.
* Wuxi Daojiao keyi yinyue yanjiu [Daoist ritual music of Wuxi]. By Qian Tieming.
* Yunnan Honghe Yaozu Daojiao keyi yinyue yanjiu [Study of Daoist ritual music among the Yao people of Honghe in Yunnan]. By Yang Mingkang and Yang Xiaoxun.
* Suzhou Xuanmiao guan Daojiao keyi yinyue yanjiu [Daoist ritual music of the Xuanmiao guan temple in Suzhou]. By Tsao Pooy-ye and Zhang Fengting.
* Xinjiang Weiwei Xiyilangjiao chuantong yinyue yanjiu [Traditional Islamic ritual music of the Uighur people in Xinjiang]. By Zhou Ji.

Three more volumes in the series are currently in press:

- *Shanghai jiaou Daojiao keyi yinyue yanjiu* [Study of Daoist ritual music of suburban Shanghai]. By Zhu Jianming and others.

The series appears as an outcome of the *Ritual Music in China Research Programme* (RMCRP), set up by the Music Department of the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 1993. RMCRP is a long-term research program devoted to the study of traditional ritual music traditions of the Chinese Han and ethnic nationalities. The first phase of RMCRP was a four-year project (Comparative Study of Regional and Trans-regional Daoist Ritual Music Traditions of Major Temples in China, 1994-98), funded by the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange. Soon after receiving grant approval from the CCK Foundation, the project was awarded another grant
(HKS 600,000) from the Research Grant Council’s EarMarked Grant (Hong Kong).

This was a team-research project aiming to study major living temple Daoist ritual music traditions within its ritual contexts. Twenty researchers from academic institutions in mainland China and Hong Kong participated in this project. Twenty Daoist ritual traditions were targeted for investigation, covering regional Daoist traditions in Laoshan Mountain (Shandong), Hebei, Longhu Mountain (Jiangxi), Wudang Mountain (Hubei), Mao Mountain (Jiangsu), Qingchenn Mountain (Sichuan), Baiyun Temples (respectively, of Beijing, Shanghai, and Jiakuan of Shanxi), Putong (rural Shanghai), Xiamiao Temple (Suzhou), Baopu Temple (Hangzhou), Dongyu Temple (Wenzhou), Wuxi (Jiangsu), Yunnan (respectively, of Bai and Yao ethnic nationalities). This geographical scope basically covered all the most representative Daoist ritual music traditions in China. (Ritual traditions in Hong Kong and Taiwan had previously been thoroughly studied by Tsao Penyeh (Hong Kong) and Lu Cheekuan (Taiwan). Their data and findings were used for comparative analyses in the present project.)

Fieldwork data of these regional traditions consisted of interviews, audiovisual documentation of rituals, and the collecting of liturgical scriptures. Music repertories were transcribed into cipher notation. The aims of the initial four-year project were to document and compile regional profiles of important Daoist temple music traditions and to study and analyze Daoist ritual music in its ritual and wider cultural and inter-regional contexts.

The researchers found close relationships between Daoist ritual music and secular genres such as folk song, narrative music, and opera. Daoist ritual music not only shared part of its repertory with folk music, but many regional secular genres had their origins in Daoist ritual music. Mutual borrowing between Daoist and Buddhist musical repertories in their ritual performances was also found. On the whole, Daoist ritual music traditions that were ‘temple-confined’ showed less regional variants and affinity with secular folk music than other types of ritual music, such as the Quanzen zhengyun, the ‘Orthodox chants’ of the Quanzhen sect. Daoist ritual music that was only partially confined to the temple (such as that of temple-Zhenyi Daoists), and ritual music of folk-based Daoists (Huoju Daoists) showed much closer relationships to local secular folk music repertories and styles.

Another focus of the research project was the comparison of regional styles. One shared compositional principle in Daoist ritual music repertories is the stringing-together of basic melorhythm patterns. Most of these patterns are region-specific, but some are cross-regionally important.

The repertory of Daoist ritual music is multi-layered, with a tripartite concentric structure of core, medial, and exterior composition. Core repertory is mainly used in esoteric rituals for Daoists themselves, such as the meditative morning and evening prayers and rituals of repent. Music used at this layer shows more trans-regional elements and bears the farthest relationship to secular folk music. Music repertory of the medial layer is largely found in public rituals, such as rituals of salvation for the dead, where some portions or elements of the ritual are esoteric while others show some affinity to secular folk music. Music repertory of the exterior layer can be found in parts of public rituals that are more vernacular in intent, such as the passages in the ritual of salvation describing suffering of various types of hungry ghosts in hell. This tripartite structure therefore gives Daoist ritual music its sacred identity and yet is able to blend well into secular music, thereby spreading the ritual roots deeply in the lay society.

In addition to this research of Daoist ritual music, the Ritual Music in China Research Programme also conducted studies of Buddhist ritual music in Fujian, Islamic ritual music of the Uygur ethnic nationality in Xinjiang, Nuo ritual music of the Tuja ethnic nationality in Geizhou, and ritual music of Dongba (shaman) among the Naxi ethnic nationality in Yunnan. The results are published in the above-mentioned series of monographs. The programme is on-going. Many Chinese ritual music traditions still await discovery, and further trans-regional comparative studies are expected to lead to new insights.

[This text is compiled from two sources: a short note by Stephen Jones, and a longer report compiled in 1999 by Professor Tsao Poon-Yee of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The report was abbreviated and adapted for CHIME by F. Kouwenhoven.]

**Chinese books on instruments and instrumental music**

Yuan Jingfang has published several important books and articles on Chinese instrumental music and on her theory of ‘music genre’ – again referring specifically to traditional instrumental music. One of her recent publications is Yuezhong xue [The study of musical genre] (Huayue cbs, Beijing, 1999). While much of the material in this substantial book has been published elsewhere, it is a systematic exposition of all aspects of the subject. Chapters 1 to 3 cover theory and methodology; instruments, scores, and instrumentation; melody, mode/scale, large-scale structures; and an important section on fieldwork and data collection. Chapters 4 to 6 show Yuan’s concern to develop models for
correlation of data, relating them to social culture. Rich in both detail and theory, this is an important manual, moving on from her classic book *Minzu qiyue* [Chinese instrumental music] (Renmin yinyue cbs, Beijing, 1987).

Another publication of interest is *Minjian gachityue yanjiu: Shoujie Zhongguo minjian gachityue xueshu yantaohui lunwenji* [Folk wind-and-percussion music: Collected articles from the 1st academic symposium on Chinese folk wind-and-percussion music] (Shandongyouyi cbs, Jin'nan, 1999). This important collection includes articles on regional genres of wind-and-percussion music, including shawm bands, as well as lesser known genres from Pu'ian in Fujian and Anhui; reprints of two major recent articles on the 'Music Associations' of Hebei villages; useful collection of historical data on courtly wind-and-percussion bands; and a bibliography. (SJ)

Finally, I would like to draw attention to Xiang Yang's *Zhongguo gongxian yueqi zhi* [History of Chinese bowed instruments] (Guoji wenhua chuban gongsi, Beijing, 1999) This is a major work, combining important new discoveries from excavations, iconography, and fieldwork. The author Xiang Yang has been most industrious in recent years, exploring every nook and cranny of Shaanxi province not only for musical artefacts but also for traces of *yuehu*, the musical castes of imperial times which persisted well into the modern era (for one resulting article, see the volume above). (SJ)

**Japanese monographs on Chinese village life and storytelling**

Three Japanese fieldworkers, Fukao Yoko, Iguchi Junko and Kurishara Shinji, recently published a very interesting monograph in Japanese, *Koudokugon no mura: oto, kuukan, shakai* ('Village Life in China's Yellow Highlands - Sound, Space, and Society'), 2000, Kokonshoin, Tokyo. The authors present different disciplines - ethnomusicology, architectural anthropology and historical ethnography. They have done intensive fieldwork during the last ten years, focusing on a small village on the mountainous 'Yellow Earth' of northern Shaanxi province in northwest China. The detailed descriptions on the daily life in the village's cave-dwellings, Yao-dong, and the rituals, such as funerals and rain processions, and accompanying musical traditions, provide important insights into village life in inland China. The book also stresses the reciprocal relationships between fieldworkers and their informants. The fresh approach to local society and the processes by which the authors have actively taken part in it represents a new type of participant observation for Mainland China. The book includes separate chapters on 'the Changing village soundscape (1949-1995)', the history of the village, the 'living space' (aspects of architecture, cave dwellings), ritual (including prayers and songs), social relationships, temple festivals, and other topics.

Dr. Iguchi also wrote a PhD study of potential interest to researchers of Chinese music: *Chugoku Hopponouomon no Kosyobunka* (Oral Traditions of Rural Northern China: Texts and Performance Aspects of a Narrative Music Genre). This is a study of luoating dagu, a narrative music genre found throughout Laotong and Luannan counties in Hebei Province. For more information on both books, contact the author(s) via e-mail: y-fukao@nifty.com. See also notice on 'Japanese CD-books' in the section CD reviews. (SJ/FK)

**Current bibliography**

The bibliography below is arranged according to subject matter. The subject categories are: (1) History and Theory; (2) Religion and ritual; (3) Oral narrative genres and folk song; (4) Theatre and Dance; (5) Instruments and instrumental music; (6) Ethnic Traditions; (7) New music. Avant-garde; (8) Popular Music; (9) Modern culture & politics; (10) Cinema; (11) Music education; (12) Bibliography & reference; (13) Miscellaneous & conference reports; (14) Tibet and Himalayas; (15) Other parts of Asia.

(1) History and Theory


Announcements


(2) Religion and ritual


YANG Xiao-Xun – Studies on Taoist Ritual Music ‘du jie’ as Practiced Among the Yao Nationality at Shical Village, Yunnan Province, China. PhD (music), Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1998. 168 pp.

(3) Oral narrative genres and folk song


CADONNA, Alfredo, ed. – India, Tibet, China: Genesis and Aspects of Traditional Narrative. Florence, Leo S.Olschki Editore, 1999, 328 pp. For info see www.olschki.it


DU Yaxiong and Jack Body – Shaonian: courtship songs from Northwest China. The Singers, the Songs and the Music. Asian Studies Institute Working Paper 15. 56 pp. Includes CD and music transcriptions. To be ordered free of charge from: Asian Studies Inst, Victoria Univ. of Wellington, 18 Kelburn Parade, PO Box 600, Wellington, New Zealand. E-mail: asi@vuw.ac.nz


(4) Theatre and Dance


on Music in Honor of Rulan Chao Pian. Editions Orphée, Columbus, Ohio, 1994, 31-44.


NYGREN, Christina – Gassar, generaler och gäckande gudinnor; resande teatersällskap, religiösa festivaler och populära nöjen i dagens Japan och Kina. [‘Ghosts, Generals and Gorgeous Goddesses – Travelling theatres, religious festivals and popular amusement in contemporary Japan and China.’] Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm, 2000. [In Swedish.] 437 pp., photos, glossaries, index.


YU, Siuwah – ‘A Hakka zither melody in a Cantonese opera.’ In Bell Yung and Joseph Lam ed., Themes and Variations. Writings on Music in
Honor of Rulan Chao Pian. Editions Orphée, Columbus, Ohio, 1994, pp. 111-144.


(5) Instruments and instrumental music


YUNG, Bell – 'Not noting the notatable: reevaluating the gau in notational system.' In Bell Yung and Joseph Lam ed., Themes and Variations. Writings on Music in Honor of Rulan Chao Pian. Editions Orphée, Columbus, Ohio, 1994, pp. 45-58.


ZHANG Lan, Dai Dingju et al. (Eds.) – Special Bronze Treasure Exhibition: A New Voice for Old Instruments [Exhibition Catalogue]. Shanghai Museum, March 2000, 30 pp., illus.


(6) Ethnic Traditions


(7) New music. Avant-garde


(8) Popular Music


(9) Modern culture & politics


CHEN Fong-Ching and Jin Guantao – *From Youthful Manuscripts to River Elegy: The Chinese Popular Cultural Movement and Political


(10) Cinema


(11) Music education


(12) Bibliography and reference


(13) Miscellaneous and conference reports


BALASA, Marin Marian – ‘Chinese Diary.’ In: East European Meetings in Ethnomusicology (Bucharest) 4, 1997, pp. 91-203.


KOUWENHOVEN, Frank – ‘From Mahler to China: the Heidelberg Concerts & Luo Zheng’s
Announcements


(14) Tibetan and Himalayas


TRAN, Quang-hai – ‘Overtones used in Tibetan Buddhist Chanting and in Tuvin Shamanism’ in: Astrauskas, Rimantas (Ed.) – *Ritual and Music*, proceedings of the International Ethnomusicologist Conference ‘Ritual and Music’ held in Vilnius (Lithuania), December 11-12, 1997, Vilnius, 1999, pp. 129-136. (Book can be ordered from: Rimantas Astrauskas, e-mail: astram@pub.osf.it)


TSERING, Norbu – *Ache Uhamo is my life. The Life of Master Norbu Tsering*. [Collected and edited by Antonio Atissi.] Legenda, Torino, Italy, 1999, 63 pp. The booklet can be ordered from the publisher (e-mail: legenda@tin.it, telephone +39-11-812.1036.

(15) Other parts of Asia (selection)


Composition' by Eugene Lee (37-55), 'Poookchung Lion Dance Music' by Yong-Shik Lee (57-67).


JACOBSON, Mark – ‘For Whom the Gong Tolls.’ Natural History 106 (7), 1997, pp. 72-6. [Cambodia.]


LEE, Riley Kelly – Yearning for the Bell: A Study of Transmission in the Shakuhachi Honkyoku


SESTILI, Daniele – La voce degli dei. Musica e religione nel rito giapponese del kagura. [The voice of the Gods. Music and religion in the Japanese rite of kagura.] Ut Orpheus, Bologna, 2000. (Publisher’s website: www.utorpeus.com; e-mail: orders@utorpeus.com)


UM, Hae-kyung – ‘Food for Body and Soul: Measuring the Dialectics of Performance.’ Oideion:


Websites

Websites on Chinese or Asian Music and Ethnomusicology
For an extensive overview of websites on Chinese music and related subjects, consult the website of the CHIME Foundation: http://home.wxs.nl/~chime. Below we have listed some recent additions. We gratefully acknowledge the help of Sue Tuohey and ACMR Reports in updating our list!

Qin music:

Societies:

Record companies:
Aurélie Astrée: <http://www.concerto.denson.co.uk/Labels/Astree.htm>.

Chinese Pop and Rock
<http://www.hkinfo.com/entertainment/popstars/>. Hong Kong Pop Stars. List of artists with links to sound files; on the Hong Kong iNet information page.

General info on Chinese music / audio clips / musicians
<http://metalab.unc.edu/chinese-music/>. The Internet Chinese Music Archive: The Great Empire of China. Sound files of traditional, modern, folk, and other types of music (including film music, ‘songs of educated youth’, traditional Beijing opera, modern revolutionary opera and speeches); photographs; Chinese and English.
<http://www.melodyofochina.com/artists/artists.html>. Melody of China: Chinese Artists. A database of Chinese artists living in North America, as well as some in other countries; primarily Chinese instrumenta-lists, dancers, composers, musicologists, ethnomusicologists and some non-Chinese musicians who play traditional Chinese instruments; some have links to individual web pages. The site is part of the Melody of China website (main page: <http://www.melodyofochina.com/>) which also includes companies that sell Chinese instruments, and recordings.
<http://www.st.or.at/~utz/Taiwan>. Information on Taiwanese composers.
Foreign students welcome at Qinghai JTC
Qinghai Junior Teachers' College has opened a
programme for foreign students. The College is
located in Xining City, capital of China's
Northwest multi-ethnic Qinghai Province.
Kumbum, a large Tibetan Buddhist monastery and
the birthplace of Tsongkhapa, founder of the Yellow
Sect of Tibetan Buddhism, is near Xining. Qinghai
Lake (Kokonor), China's largest saline lake situated
in northwestern Qinghai, is accessible by public
bus. Established in 1978 with permission from the
National State Council, the College trains teachers
for middle schools. The college has Chinese,
English, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry,
Political Science, Economic Trade, and Business
Management departments. Currently, there are
1,020 formal students and 300 countryside adult
teachers studying in the College. Qinghai's
population of nearly five million includes nearly
one million Tibetans (Amdo and Kham) and
significant populations of Hui, Monguor (Tu),
Salar, and Mongols. Qinghai Junior Teachers' 
College currently has 100 students from Yushu
Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, creating an
excellent opportunity for students desiring to learn
Kham Tibetan to practice their oral skills. The
College offers Modern Standard Chinese (Mandarin)
in the context of such classes as conversation,
reading, composition, listening, calligraphy,
Qinghai customs, translation, Qinghai Chinese
Dialect, and Chinese cooking. Study of minority
languages is possible with advance notification.
For further details, please contact: Ms. Chen Tao,
Foreign Affairs Officer, Qinghai Junior Teachers' 
College, 72 Ba Yi Zhong Road, Xining 810007,
the People's Republic of China. [Phone: (86-971-
8132687) (86-971-8126304)]

CHIME Library Concerts
The intimate journals' room of the CHIME Library
in Leiden is used as a regular venue for small-scale
recitals and brief concerts. The Dutch Society for
Ethnomusicology 'Arnold Bake' has organized
several concerts of Central-Asian, Indian and
Indonesian music. In June 1999, Koustuv Roy,
Sanddeep Battacharya and ensemble (see photo
below) performed an evening raga.

CHIME has now started its own series of
monthly concerts. Admission is free. In the spring
of 2001, the following performances are planned:
Mongolian singer Urna Chahartugchi and morin-
khur player Burintegus (15 April), qin player Dai
Xiaolian (20 May) and percussionists of the
Sichuan Kun Opera (10 June). The CHIME concerts
start at 14.00 pm.

A concert of Indian music in the Chime library, Leiden.
Announcements

SOAS London: Seminar & Concert Series
The Music Department, SOAS, University of London, hosts a number of public seminars and concerts each term, on various days of the week. Phone +44-(0)171-637.6182 for further information, or check the Music Department’s web page: http://www.soas.ac.uk/Music/home.html.

Goldsmiths London: Seminars
Ethnomusicology Research Seminars at Goldsmiths College in London usually take place on Thursdays, 11.00 am to 1.00 pm, in Room 6, 26 Laurie Grove, London SE14. All welcome. Details of next term’s programme can be obtained from John Baily, Music Dept. Tel. +44-(0)171-919.7658, e-mail: j.baily@gold.ac.uk.

Meetings

Chinoperl, Chicago, 22 March 2001
Chinoperl (Conference on Chinese Oral and Performing Literatures) will hold its annual meeting between 9am and 5pm on Thursday, 22 March 2001 in Chicago at the Sheraton Chicago, in conjunction with the annual AAS meeting. Chinoperl welcomes paper submissions on any subject related to Chinese oral and performed literature. 250-word abstracts should be sent to the Program Chair, Margaret Baptist Wan, at the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures, 205 O'Shaughnessy, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame IN 46556, e-mail mwan@nd.edu. Please include audiovisual requirements in your proposal. Send abstracts by February 1, 2001 in order to be considered for the conference program.

Beyond Peony Pavilion, Ohio, 27-28 April, 2001
In collaboration with the Mershon Center and the Office of Research, the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures at The Ohio State University (OSU) wishes to announce an upcoming interdisciplinary symposium entitled 'Beyond Peony Pavilion: Performance, Ethnicity and Cultural Processes in China' to be held 27-28 April, 2001 at the Holiday Inn near campus in Columbus, Ohio.

Co-sponsored by a wider range of departments and centers, the interdisciplinary research symposium will focus on the context and meaning of Chinese performing arts in local, national and transnational arenas. Styles of performance to be discussed include the opera traditions of zaju, kunqu, and jingju; local styles of professional storytelling and music; ethnic minority epic and oral narrative traditions; and spoken drama (kuaiju).

Among the questions to be examined are: At various moments in Chinese history what are the meanings of performance, tradition, and context? How have Chinese performing arts shaped perceptions of culture and ethnicity in shifting local, national, and transnational contexts? How have a handful of local forms become icons of a region, nation, or nationality in modernizing Chinese states? How do performance-related print traditions shape performance and affect other cultural processes? What are the relationships between emergent popular media such as film, video, DVD, the internet, and traditions of live performance and ritual? What are the dynamic processes shaping Chinese performance traditions in China and beyond?

For further information, contact Pat Sieber, Co-Chair (sieber.6@osu.edu) or Mark Bender Co-Chair (bender.4@osu.edu) or Visit our web site at: http://deall.ohio-state.edu/sieber.6/typeset/.

36th World Conference ICTM, Rio de Janeiro, 4-11 July 2001
The 36th World Conference of the International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM) will be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 4 to 11 July 2001. Conference themes include: Moving from the Specific to the General and Back; Immigrant Music; Technology, Mass Media and Performance; Relationships between Researchers and the Communities they research. For more info, consult the ICTM website at: http://roar.music.columbia.edu/~ictm/first01.htm or contact ICTM@compuserve.com

4th Guqin Dapu Meeting, 20 August 2001
The 4th National Guqin Dapu Conference will be held in Changshu, 20 August 2001. It is organized by the Beijing Music Research Institute and the Changshu municipal government.

17th ESEM, Norway, 5-9 September 2001
The 17th European Seminar in Ethnomusicology (ESEM) will take place at the Department of Folk Culture at Telemark University College in Rauland, Norway, 5-9 September 2001. The meeting will include special sessions on topics like musical instruments (history, migration, globalisation), structure, style and performance in traditional music, and comparative perspectives on lullabies. The deadline for papers is 31 March 2001. For more information, contact Bjorn Aksdal, Rff-senteret Dragvoll, N-7491 Trondheim, Norway, E-mail: bjorn.aksdal@hf.ntnu.no, fax +47-73-596573, tel. +47-73-596576.

7th Chime Meeting, Venice, 20-23 September 2001
Preparations for the 7th annual conference of the European Foundation For Chinese Music Research (CHIME) are now well under way. The meeting, on
the subject of ‘Music and Meaning in China and East Asia – Beauty, Power, Emotions’ will be held in Venice from the 20th to the 23rd September 2001, under auspices of the Giorgio Cini Foundation. We have already received many interesting proposals. We look forward to a conference of high academic standards, in the splendid surroundings of the Venetian lagoon.

We expect to organize a couple of chamber music concerts, with pieces from the traditional as well as contemporary repertoires for Chinese instruments. As customary during CHIME conferences, there will also be additional occasions for the participants to enjoy (and make!) music. We have planned a workshop on Chinese percussion and several other events which will take place in enchanting Venetian churches and palazzos.

Since Venice is a small city with only a limited number of beds at affordable prices, we urgently advise those interested in coming to the meeting to register soon. Registration forms can be obtained from the conference organizer in Venice (see below). The registration fee for the conference is US $ 50 for students or researchers with proof of status, $ 60 all others. The registration fee can be paid upon arrival.

We invite papers in relation with fundamental issues of Chinese and East-Asian musical aesthetics: concepts of musical beauty and their historical, textual and practical articulations; the relationships between musical and extra-musical idioms; the links between music and ritual, and the role of music in mediating emotions. If you would like to present a paper, please note that the deadline for sending an abstract is 15th of March, 2001.

Contact: Dr. Luciana Galliano, e-mail: chimevenice @libero.it, fax: +39 041 720 809 [Please note: if you dial the number from abroad, don’t skip the 0 which follows the country code +39] By post: Dr. Luciana Galliano, Universita Ca’ Foscari di Venezia, Dipartimento Studi sull’Asia Orientale, Ca’ Soranzo, San Polo 2169 30125, Venezia, Italy.

Registration for the conference takes places on Thursday 20 September, starting in the morning. The actual conference programme (paper sessions, workshops) starts at 15.00 h. in the afternoon. The ideal time to arrive would either be Wednesday evening or Thursday morning. The conference ends on Sunday 23 September around noon. The conference will take place in the buildings of the Giorgio Cini Foundation, a superb Benedictine Monastery three minutes away from piazza San Marco by ‘vaporetto’. For more information, you can visit the website www.cini.it.

For hotel and tourist facilities in Venice, you can find useful information at the site www.grancanal.it, the travel agent of Venice University Ca’ Foscari. They know about the conference. Contact the person in charge, Antonella, at the following address: antonella@grancanal.it.


The Asian Music Research Institute (AMRI) at the Seoul National University in Seoul, Korea, will hold the 6th International Asian Music Conference (IAMC) on September 26-29, 2001 at the Main Auditorium of the National University Museum. The conference program committee invites papers concerning the theme of the conference: “Historical and Structural Perspectives in Asian Music Research.” Individual paper presentations are 20 minutes long (an equivalent of 8-9 double-spaced typed paper) and will be followed by 10 minutes of discussion.

A selected group of papers will be published in the Institute’s journal, the annual Tongyang Unak, soon after the conference. The official language of the conference is English. The deadline to send a one-page (250 word) abstract is May 31, 2001. Please send electronic submissions to asianmusic@sun.ac.kr or hard-copy submissions to: Asian Music Research Institute, 53-109 College of Music, Seoul National University, San 56-1 Sillim-dong, Gwanak-gu, Seoul 151-742, Korea. For more information, contact Professor Hwang Junyon, Director of the Asian Music Research Institute; tel: +82.2.880.7907; fax: +82.2.885.7907; e-mail: jhwang@sun.ac.kr or asianmusic@sun.ac.kr

Cross-Cultural Exchange, Beijing, 14-18 October 2001

The Institut Ricci (Paris, San Francisco, Taipei) announces a conference on ‘Encounters and Dialogues, Cross-cultural Exchanges between China and the West in the Late Ming and early Qing dynasties’, which will be held from 14 to 18 October 2001 in Beijing. The meeting is jointly organized by the Institute of World Religions, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the China Ricci Institute, University of San Francisco, USA. For detailed information, consult the conference website at: http://www.usfca.edu/ricci

46th SEM, Detroit, 24-28 October 2001
The 46th annual conference of the Society for Ethnomusicology will be held from 24 to 28 October 2001 in Detroit, Michigan. The deadline for submission of abstracts is 7 March, 2001. For submission guidelines and registration forms, consult SEM’s website at www.ethnomusicology.org/sdm01call.html, or contact Alan Burdette, executive director of SEM: tel. 1-812-855.6672, email: sem@indiana.edu.
Composers

Chen Qigang, based in Paris, has written music for the four-act ballet *Raise the Red Lantern*, a production which will be based on Zhang Yimou’s successful film. Like the film, the ballet will be directed by Zhang Yimou. It is expected to premiere in May 2000 in Beijing. It will be performed by the National Ballet of China and the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra. Other artists involved in the production are choreographer Wang Xinpeng (Germany), stage lighting manager Li Shusheng from Hong Kong, set designer Zeng Li from Beijing and costume designer Jerome Kaplan (France). Other works written in recent times by Chen Qigang include a cello concerto *Reflet d’un temps disparu* (1998, performed by Yoyo Ma and the Orchestre National de France conducted by Charles Dutoit), a piece for large orchestra called ‘Wu xing’ fo (1999), and the piano work *Instants d’un opéra de Pékin* (2000). Chen is currently working on a concerto for grand orchestra and traditional ensemble (commissioned by the Koussevitzky Music Foundation and Radio France), an *erhu* concerto (to be performed by the Montreal Symphony Orchestra), and a piece for the group Percussions de Strasbourg. (FK/CTD)

Chen Yi has won the Charles Ives Living, a $225,000 prize awarded every three years by the American Academy of Arts and Letters. The Ives Living is one of several prizes supported by royalties from Charles Ives’ music, the copyrights for which were bequeathed to the academy by the composer’s wife, Harmony. She died in 1970 and wanted the money to be spent on supporting composers. Chen Yi is the second winner of the prize. The first winner was Martin Bresnick. Chen Yi has also received the first $25,000 Eddie Medora King Award for Musical Composition at the University of Texas at Austin. This is the third-largest composition prize in the USA. Chen Yi holds an endowed chair as Professor of Composition at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Her compositions include orchestral works, choral and instrumental music, instrumental solos, and works for Chinese instruments. (CY)

Gao Weijie’s ‘Late Spring’, for wind quartet, was premiered by LOOS Winds during a concert on the 27th of October, 2000 in The Hague. Other recent works include ‘Dreams of Meeting Ili’ for flute/dizi and orchestra (1998) and ‘Dreams from Heaven’ for *xiao* and piano (1998).

Jia Daquan’s ‘Three Movements in Autumn’ for nine Chinese instruments (2000) received its first performance in Shanghai, 13 November 2000. Jia is a teacher of composition at the Shanghai Conservatory. In 1995-96 he was a visiting scholar at the University of Redlands, USA.

Qin Daping, a Chinese composer based in Finland, has won the International Contest of the Choral Composition Competition in Europe. (QD)

Qu Xiaosong recently established the *Qu Xiaosong Music Studio* in Shanghai, aimed at coordinating and promoting activities of Chinese contemporary composers. Concerts were held 13 and 14 November 2000 at the Shanghai Centre Theatre. This included China’s first multimedia theatre concert, *Query in autumn*, a joint project by Qu Xiaosong and record producer and music organizer Li Suyou. There was also a concert with premiere works by Jia Daquan, Gao Weijie, Qin Yi, Wang Xilin, Xu Jianqiang, Yang Liqing, Ye Guohui and Zhou Qing. Qu Xiaosong’s most recent compositions include a Piano Concerto and solo pieces for the Australian pianist Roger Woodward. *Cursive*, a stage production, will be premiered by the Cloud Gate Dance Company in Taiwan in November 2001.

Tan Dun is working on a new opera for the Metropolitan Opera in New York (scheduled for 2005). His recent works include *The Gate* (the ‘Orchestral Theatre’ series, premiered by the NHK Symphony of Japan with Charles Dutoit), the soundtrack for Ang Lee’s film ‘Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon’, the ‘Concerto for Water Percussion and Orchestra – In Memory of Toru Takemitsu’ (premiered by the New York Philharmonic with Kurt Masur) and the ‘Water Passion after St Matthew’. The US premiere of ‘Death and Fire’ took place recently, with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by James Levine. In 1999, Tan served as artistic director of the Tanglewood Contemporary Music Festival. (For more on Tan Dun, see reports below and the section with CD reviews).

Tian Leilei (28), based in Paris, received honourable mention at the 1999 Gaudeamus Competition for Young Composers in Amsterdam for her short piece *Zhan Zidu*, for fifteen strings (1999). Three solo performers in this piece were requested to play in the hall, on the side of or behind the audience, in stead of on stage. According to one Dutch critic, the music – inspired by a ghost story – worked like cinema, with its creaking doors, gusts of wind, culminating in a fearful nauti shout. ‘But its actual effectiveness was primarily due to a very economical score, the gliding Asian melodic contours and a carefully worked-out balance between players on- and off-stage.’ (FK)

Xu Shuya’s ballet *Les larmes de Marco Polo* was premiered 12 September 2000 in Lyon. The music, for tape, bamboo flute, alto voice and percussion, was commissioned by the Centre Chorégraphique National de Grenoble, and was staged by Jean-Claude Gallotta. The ballet was very successful. A CD recording is currently in preparation. Further performances are scheduled in Paris, Tokyo, Seoul,
Peking, Shanghai and major European Festivals in 2001. Xu Shuya’s orchestral work *Nirvana (2000)* will be premiered 19 May 2001 by the Orchestre National de France with Luca Piaf.

**Zhou Long**’s *Rites of Chimes*, for cello solo, bronze bells, chime stones, drums, and wind and string instruments was premiered 17 September 2000 by cellist Yo-Yo MA and the Ensemble Music from China at the Freer Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. Zhou Long is a 2000 Artists Fellowship recipient of the New York Foundation for the Arts.

**Tan Dun festival in London (1)**

A few years ago, following the success of his opera *Marco Polo*, the Barbican Centre invited the American-based Chinese composer Tan Dun to organise a festival in London. The result was "Fire Crossing Water", held over one weekend, 28 September to 1 October, 2000. The rich programme included many different events personally chosen by Tan Dun with the intent to illustrate his own compositional career and creative persona. They ranged from traditional percussion music from Southwest China, to the premiere of the Crouching Tiger concerto, the score he wrote for Ang Lee’s new film, to Bill Viola’s disappointingly uninspiring video comment to Varese’s otherwise compelling Deserts. The availability of space and the many resources of that wonderful monstrosity that is the Barbican Centre invite such large-scale events, which try and often succeed in attracting rather diverse audiences, the young and the old, the posh and the boi polloi.

Tan Dun is the perfect artist for this kind of events. He has become a popular media figure in Britain and the US, and appears to be quite incapable of doing anything unfashionable or small-scale. He is also a prolific composer. During the last three years alone he composed seven new scores, three concertos, one opera, one string quartet and the two major pieces performed at this festival, Orchestral Theatre IV: The Gate and Water Passion after St Matthew.

Tan Dun himself conducted the London Sinfonietta, the BBC Symphony Orchestra, The London Voices and various soloists like Yo-Yo Ma throughout a series of multi-media performances, where his own scores were just one of the elements of the package, and not always the most thought-provoking. Personally, I have found Tan Dun’s earlier works such as *On Taoism* (1985) and *Nine Songs* (1989) more inspired, touching and groundbreaking than these more recent works.

Water Passion after St Matthew is a long and ambitious work. It was commissioned by the International Bachakademie to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the death of JS Bach. The eight movements of the Water Passion illustrate some moments of the life and passion of Christ. The lyrics are based on St Matthew’s gospel, but many of the lines are pure Tan Dun. On paper, the many elements incorporated in the score create a perfect combination of old and new, tradition and innovation, that is appealing to contemporary audiences. The Passion is written for instrumental and vocal soloists, string orchestra, three sets of performance-art percussion, oratorio style chorus, electronic instruments, and seventeen bowls of water in the shape of a cross. As is customary in Tan Dun’s works, the orchestra also includes some Chinese instruments, like *xun* and *erhu*, although here in a rather marginal role. Unfortunately, the overall impression one gets listening to the Water Passion, is that the composer fails to engage in any profound way with the above musical materials.

Tan Dun has always proclaimed the importance of the music of Bach to his inspiration: 'In a way in the festival’s programme we are even reminded of the composer’[s first encounter with St Matthew’s Passion in a Beijing church. Although Bach’s presence is surely felt in some of the best passages of the Water Passion, my impression was that the metaphorical and real water flooding the score or the stage almost succeeds in drowning Bach’s numinous power.

Regarding Tan Dun’s approach to the staging, I found the concept of multimedia potentially very interesting. The formalism of the concert hall and the constraints it imposes upon audiences and performers have been a matter of concern to many 20th century composers. Personally, I find Luigi Nono’s *Prometeo*, to cite an example, a more radical and engaging solution to these issues than Tan Dun’s video work and water splashing performers.

In the optimistic last movement Water and Resurrection, the women sing ‘In water, the sound of innocence’ and the bass calls for ‘A time to love, a time of peace’. Well, it must be said that the audience cheered enthusiastically and quite a few people told me that witnessing the performance of the Water Passion had been a rewarding experience.


**Francesca Tarocco**

**Tan Dun festival in London (2)**

Orchestral Theatre IV: The Gate was another slightly odd experiment which did not entirely come off. Tan Dun, never a witting flower, seemed to be rising to new heights of megalomania as his hugely magnified image was cast onto a video screen behind the orchestra. Combining the roles of conductor and actor, Tan Dun played the part of the judge at heaven’s gate, as three great tragic heroines drawn from Asian and European theatrical traditions pleaded their cases before him. Shakespeare’s *Juliet*, the *Jade Concubine* of the Beijing Opera and *Koharu* of the Japanese puppet theatre were summoned in
turn to explain why they had killed themselves for love. It was a bold conceit, and I could have forgiven the implied arrogance of it had the piece been musically more interesting. But the orchestration was bland, formulaic even, and there was little sense that the Asian traditional theatre styles had been incorporated into the piece as much as tacked onto it. Many of the experimental sound techniques, like the hand dipping into the glass bowl of water, were lifted straight from last year’s far more involving staging of the Peony Pavilion.

It was quite a relief to get away from this grandiosity and stumble upon the Zhangjiadie folk percussion ensemble playing in the foyer. Their complex and brilliant percussion rhythms, straight from the countryside of Hunan, Tan Dun’s home province, were a clear influence on his earlier works. Their most compelling number was a staged version of a shamanic expulsion ritual, conducted with spooky realism by the band’s own shaman who, we were assured, was doing rituals like this for real on a daily basis back home. I asked the group afterwards if they had found any real ghosts in the Barbican to expel. ‘Oh, they’re all foreign ghosts here’, they laughed, ‘they don’t understand what we say to them’. Understand or not, the Barbican can count this event a success, the audiences for the festival were on the whole extremely enthusiastic in spite of the faint moans of the critics. And with the current massive success of Ang Lee’s Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon, Tan Dun’s popular appeal seems set to grow and grow.

Rachel Harris

Music from China played new Chinese and American works
In November 2000, Music From China, a New York-based ensemble specializing in traditional and contemporary Chinese music, performed a concert of Chinese and American music at the Merkin Concert Hall. Five new works by Chinese and American composers were performed on instruments that ran the gamut from bells and chime stones from Bronze Age China to electronic music on tape. The stage was shared by six members of Music From China and six guests (including musicians of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra) playing Western instruments. The programme included Zhou Long’s Rites of Chimes, for bronze bells, chime stones, drums, and wind and string instruments (with a key role for guest cellist Hugh Livingston), Bun-Ching Lam’s Omi Hakkei, for erhu, dizi, zheng and their Western cousins viola, flute, and harp. The concert also featured two American pieces for Chinese instruments: Paul Rudy wrote Fantasy, a piece for erhu and tape, inspired by the sound of the Chinese fiddle erhu, which reminded him of Texas swing fiddle, bluegrass fiddle, Irish fiddle, but also of the Western classical violin. Michael Sidney Timpson’s Chasin’ Bill used the Chinese silk and bamboo ensemble to evoke American culture with references to jazz, hip-hop and pop music.

Musicians

Hong Kong Qin Society visited Shanghai
April in Southern Jiangsu: bright and beautiful sunny spells, occasional spring showers, a gentle pleasantly warm breeze, and magnificent emerald-green scenery. On the 3rd of April 1999, representatives of the Hong Kong Deyi Qin Society travelled to Shanghai and gave a fine guqin (Chinese zither) concert in the Academy Hall of the Shanghai Conservatory. Qin afficionados from Suzhou, Nanjing, Yangzhou, Zhenjiang, Hangzhou, and also from Japan and America, attended the event. The society was founded in 1999. It consists of disciples of Mrs Cai Deyun (Tsar Teh-yun), who is currently aged 95. Mrs. Cai was too frail to undertake the journey to Shanghai. The initiators aim to explore and bring to wider attention the Qin art of Mrs Cai, who is an eminent calligrapher and Qin scholar and performer. Originally based in Shanghai, she moved to Hong Kong in the 1950s, where she carried on her research and practice of the Qin and assembled many talented students. Her presence was the main impetus for the growth of interest in Qin music in the Hong Kong area. Recently, the Chinese University Press in Hong Kong published a facsimile edition of the Yinyinshi qinpu, a hand-

Tsar Teh-yun (Cai Deyun)
written collection of 35 qin pieces which Mrs Cai adapted and compiled from various sources in the early years of her career (ISBN 962-86030-1-9). A double CD of her qin recordings was published on the label ROI, 'The art of Qin Music: Tsar Teh-yun' (RB 001006-2C, produced in 2000).

The concert started with a performance of Zha Fuxi's version of Kai gu yin, played by Ou Zhaoxin, a doctor of traditional Chinese medicine. This version is based on a copy of a score owned at one time by Robert van Gulik, and currently kept in the Simological Institute at Leiden University (see my report in Chime No. 5, pp. 30-41, and my CD L'art de la cithare Qin, Auvidis B 6765, Paris 1992). The difference between Van Gulik's and Zha's versions is that Van Gulik one includes words which can be sung. Mrs Cai played and passed on to her students an instrumental version. Other players in the Shanghai concert included Wu Yinghui (Ou lu wong ji and Shan ju yin), Zhang Lizhen (vocal versions of Chang men yuan and Yang guan san die), Su Sidi (Jing guan ling and Shui xian cao), Xie Junren (Tie Chun-yan) with two newly composed pieces (Luo hai and Shuang yi fan diao), Ma Xicheng (Yu qiao wen da), Shen Xingshan (Shum Hing-shan) (Xia qie yin and Gao shan), and Liu Chuhua (Lau Chor-wah) with Ping sha lao yun and Chang qing.

Hong Kong qin players differ in many ways from their mainland counterparts: their clothes, ways of sitting, finger techniques, performing methods and instruments contrast in interesting ways with those of PRC qin players. The primary difference is probably that Hong Kong qin players advocate a return to a more plain and more traditional playing style. They perform on silk strings, in contrast to the current tendency in Mainland China and Taiwan to use nylon-wound metal strings. Silk strings wonderfully capture the 'silk and pinewood' sound of ancient qin, but they are more vulnerable in use than metal strings and easily affected by changes in temperature and humidity. In public concerts, many qin players prefer the brighter and more resonant and stronger metal strings. One could still envisage a renaissance of the use silk strings, for instance if their durability can be improved. The Hong Kong players will certainly continue to promote them.

The Hong Kong qin players also differ from many of their colleagues in Shanghai in that many of them play on instruments built by themselves - a remarkable achievement. It was true for all the HK qin players who came to Shanghai in April; a fact much appreciated by everyone present. These players built their own instruments to achieve a better understanding of their qin, and a broader scope on the entire qin tradition. On the second day of their PRC visit, the Hong Kong players joined forces with mainland players in a fine qin gathering at the Shanghai Conservatory.

Dai Xiaolian
(Shanghai Conservatory)

Glenn Gould Prize for Wu Man

Pipa player Wu Man received The City of Toronto Glenn Gould Protege Prize as chosen by this year's Glenn Gould Prize recipient Yo-Yo Ma. The awards were presented at a ceremony and concert at the Glenn Gould Studio in the Canadian Broadcasting Centre Building. Wu Man and Yo-Yo Ma performed at the ceremony which was broadcast live by CBC across Canada and elsewhere. The Protege Award rounds out a year of very prestigious events for Wu Man. In April she performed with Yo-Yo Ma at the White House. In May, she completed her year appointment as a 1998-1999 Bunting fellow at the Mary Ingraham Bunting Institute of Radcliffe College in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Recent appearances have included several world premieres: Law Wingfi's Pipa Concerto at the Tanglewood Music Festival directed by Tan Dun; Lou Harrison's Pipa Concerto with the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra for the Lincoln Center's Great Performer Series; Bun-Ching Lam's Sudden Thunder at Carnegie Hall with the American Composers Orchestra directed by Dennis Russell Davies; Tan Dun's Ghost Opera with the Kronos Quartet at the BAM; and Zhou Long's Tian Ling with the Los Angeles Philharmonic New Music Group directed by Esa-Pekka Salonen. (WM/press release)

The Narrative-singing scene in Beijing

While Beijing is doubtless a far less active scene for dagu narrative-singing than Tianjin, several pleasant qushe venues are now established which are not overrun by tourists paying through the nose:

- Most delightful is the Jixian chengyuan club at the splendid home of Mr Qian Yadong (90 sui next year, and looking wonderful on it) and his wife, where aficionados meet every Monday evening. They have just celebrated the 20th anniversary of the club. Gifts of fruit or suchlike recommended.

I know of three other venues which are tea-houses, charging a standard couple of kuai for tea-money, and meeting in the afternoons from 2 to 5 pm:

- The Jingwei chaguan', just west of the Huacai Music store in the west section of Liuichang, on the south side of the road in an area of market stalls, has dagu performers on Tuesday afternoons from 2 to 5 pm.

- The dagu club at Xicheng qu Wenhua guan, near the Xidan market, meets on Thursday afternoons.
Prince Claus Award for Cui Jian
Chinese Rock musician Cui Jian’s latest work, *Show Your Colours*, is currently under production. An experimental dance-musical produced in collaboration with Willy Tsao’s Hong Kong Modern dance company, and long-time collaborator Zhang Yuan, the show will premiere February 2001 in Kwai Fung, Hong Kong. On the 12th of December, 2000, Cui Jian was presented with The Prince Claus Award by the Dutch Ambassador to China. The ceremony took place in Beijing at CD Cafe between sets by Buddhist blues masters Wold Child. Cui Jian accepted the award pledging its significance for the future of rock music in China. A European tour of Cui Jian was planned for the spring of 2001, with concerts in Paris, Amiens, Amsterdam and Zürich. Cui Jian’s latest CD, *The Power of the Powerless*, recorded in his home studio, was issued by Hilltop Services in 1998.

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Cui Jian in concert
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About the Authors

Blandina Brösicke (b. 1973 in Potsdam, Germany) studies Chinese at the Sprachen- und Dolmetscher-Institut (SDI) in Munich. She spent two years in Xiamen studying Chinese language and music, and carried out fieldwork on nanyin (1996-98). Before this, she was a student of (ethno-)musicology, sinology and East Asian art history, first in Bonn (1992-94), later in Berlin (1994-2000). Address: Strassberger Str 2, D-80809 Munich, Germany; e-mail: bblandina@hotmail.com

Dai Xiaolian, born in Shanghai, studied with qin masters Zhang Ziqian, Wu Jinglue, Yao Bingyan, Wu Wenguang, Gong Yi and Lin Youren. From 1981 onwards she studied qin at the Shanghai Conservatory. Later she also spent some time teaching the instrument at this institute. She made numerous CDs in China and abroad, and gave many concerts in Asia and Europe. She now works in Shanghai as a co-editor of Yueju yishu, journal of the Shanghai Conservatory. Address: Shanghai Conservatory, Editorial dept. Art of Music, Fenyang Road 20, 200031 Shanghai, P.R. China. Tel/Fax: +86-21-6482 1695, e-mail: xilidai@sh163.net

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