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Talk about magic...

In 1986, for the first time in my life, I visited a village in the Chinese countryside. It was in northern Jiangsu, but the location is unimportant. As sober Dutchman and non-believer, having spent most of my life up till then in a Western secular environment, I remember being deeply impressed when I was confronted for the first time with the ritual customs and the rich religious imagery of a local Chinese peasant community. Here in Rudong county magic still worked! One way for the villagers to fend off evil spirits was to create trails of round patches of rice meal along the paths leading to their front doors and into their houses. The idea was that the spirits would mistake the patches for their own footsteps. If the spirits saw such a clear white trail they would surely think that they had already visited that particular house, so there was no need for them to re-enter it.

When I asked one of the villagers whether she really believed that the white footsteps would be of any help, her only reply was a big smile. No, it wasn’t a matter of belief, as her face showed. There is also no ‘belief’ involved in stopping your car at a red light in order to avoid an accident.

Even today, after several lengthy stays in China and other Asian countries, I am still fascinated watching people spread chicken blood on their doorsteps, with much the same matter-of-factness with which they hang their washing out to dry. I find some religious rituals deeply moving; and some overwhelming or rather awesome. But if I have now grown slightly more accustomed to local rituals and to various forms of magic, it is not so much due to going to China, but to the fact that I have returned home and taken a closer look at my own society. There is more belief in magic in Western Europe than I was at first aware of.

The incentive for resorting to irrational practices is probably the same everywhere in the world. Malinowski put his finger on it: magic meets a genuine physiological need by giving people courage in enterprises over which they lack sufficient control. For that reason alone, it will probably continue to play a major role in human culture, not only in China, but also in so-called 'secularized' societies.

What does ‘secularized’ mean, anyway – to turn for a moment to a world that I am more familiar with? The answer certainly doesn’t lie in the United States. According to Noam Chomsky 75 % of the American population believe in religious miracles – unheard of in any other industrialized nation. He also quotes a recent study which reveals that no more than 9 % of Americans believe in Darwin’s theory of evolution. Irrationalism also continues to have a strong appeal in the most 'secularized' of European countries, such as Holland – where less than 57 % of the population believe in God – and Eastern Germany – where fewer than 20 % are believers. A sober view of religion does not save northern (or any other part of) Europe from magic. Skinheads all over the continent believe that they can fend off evil spirits and protect their sacred native grounds by molesting foreigners.

In a recent article in The Guardian, the British journalist Martin Woollacott points to the current growth of irrationalism in industrialized countries, notably in America, but also in Europe. He signals the increase of nationalism and separatism, the success of movements of the extreme right, the growing appeal of New Age ideas and of
numerous religious sects, from the Soviet Union to Japan, and he underlines sect leaders’ skilful use of modern technology. By now magic has probably found its way onto the Internet.

Twenty years ago secularization seemed a natural process that could no longer be halted. With Noam Chomsky, Woollacott now believes that the possibility of a return to pre-Enlightenment times cannot be completely excluded.

What about China, a country where portable telephones and skyscrapers seem to serve as the new totems? There seems to be more to it than just the God of Business. Both in urban and rural areas, Maoism has re-emerged as a popular and talisman-like religion. Whatever Maoism meant in the past, it is hard to predict what its future impact will be.

In a separate development, sinologists have signalled many ‘revivals’ of Daoist and Buddhist practices in parts of the country where such activity seemed impossible in the recent past. Relaxed political tensions and less emphasis on ideological issues have made it possible for many people to return to temple life or to resume numerous other forms of active religious practice. Are Chinese people now massively returning to their kitchen gods and all-powerful emperors? Obviously one has to be cautious here with a word like ‘revival’. Much of what we call ‘revival’ may actually be uninterrupted practice. And the situation varies greatly in different parts of China. The general picture appears to be that there has been much more continuity in religious rituals and ceremonies in the south than in the north, but going from one village to the next – in any part of China – one may always stumble on amazing differences. I have heard stories – but I do not know whether they are true – about Han Chinese villages, not too far from Beijing, where religious rituals continued to be carried out even in the midst of the Cultural Revolution.

Talk about magic...!

FRANK KOUWENHOVEN

A NOTE ON CHIME NO.8

There has been a lapse of nearly a year in the publication of CHIME, mainly because the editors were overburdened with other tasks. Most of the articles have been lying on our desks for over twelve months, and we duly apologize for not having been able to bring out the current issue any sooner. The future, however, looks much better. We expect to publish a further volume before the end of the year, and vols. 10 and 11 will be out in the course of 1996, with a selection of papers from the forthcoming Chime meeting in Rotterdam. A revision of the lay-out of our journal is currently under consideration, and we will probably decide to change our format to something more practical and in line with other academic journals. This is not to say that we want to become more academic. CHIME will continue to accommodate journalistic reports and practical descriptions of fieldwork as well as scholarly contributions. We will also continue to look beyond the borders of Han Chinese culture – as, for example, in the article on Tibetan music by Mark Trewin. We are happy to include writings on any musical genre, on any musical subject, even the tiniest one. You must read Yang Zenglie’s fine report on the wowo! And don’t forget Jack Body’s marvellous interview with Zhang Xingrong. Both will be guests at the forthcoming Chime meeting ‘East Asian Voices’, which promises to be a biggie. See our announcement section.
ON THE HISTORY AND ORIGIN OF ‘GAR’

The Court Ceremonial Music of Tibet

A. MARK TREWIN
(University of Edinburgh)

Since the early 1980s there has been a revival, both in the Tibet Autonomous Region and among the Tibetan exile community in northern India, of Gar, a unique instrumental genre associated with drum and reed ensembles formerly attached to the Dalai Lama’s court and certain monasteries of Central Tibet. According to Tibetan traditions, its origins lie in Ladakh and Baltistan on the Western periphery of the Tibetan cultural area. The author, who has studied the ceremonial music of apparently related ensembles in Ladakh, examines historical and musical evidence which supports this claim.

Among the various types of music that existed in Tibet prior to the Chinese intervention in 1950, those which were supported by the ruling élites have, not surprisingly, changed the most radically since the demise of the old social order. Of these, the ‘party’ repertory of accompanied songs and dances associated with the former lay aristocracy in Lhasa – such as nang-ma and stod-gzhas (‘töshé’)

1 has been maintained by refugee musicians, and their performances have been recorded and studied. By contrast, gar, the instrumental music used in the official ceremonies and public functions of the semi-clerical government, all but completely declined after the Dalai Lama’s flight to India in 1959. Even outside Tibet, it is only in recent years that gar performances have been revived, in the service of the official ceremonies of the Dalai Lama’s government-in-exile in Dharamsala, India, and as part of concert programmes presented by its cultural body, the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts (TIPA). Prior to this renewed interest, very little had been written about gar

2 But in 1981, one of the key figures in this revival, Jamyang Norbu, TIPA’s Director (1980–85), set about gathering together the available information on the genre from oral and

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1 Tibetan and Ladakhi words (italicized) are transliterated according to the Wylie system. Phonetic spellings are given in inverted commas where considered to be helpful, and are intended to be only an approximate guide, following either Central Tibetan or Ladakhi pronunciation as appropriate. Other foreign terms (also in italics) follow the romanizations (e.g. Chinese pinyin) given in the sources consulted. The precise transliteration of proper names, given only in their phonetic forms in the main text, appear in the glossary.

2 See Samuel (1976), who also provides a useful discography.

3 Brief accounts are given by Tethong (1979:6–7) and Crossley-Holland (1980:806–7).
written sources, and subsequently published his preliminary findings. One of his most valuable historical sources was a Tibetan treatise (The Joyous Feast...) on gar attributed to Sanggye Gyatso, Regent to the Fifth and Sixth Dalai Lamas, 1679–1705. This difficult text has since been published and deserves a thorough examination, not least because it contains a syllabic notation which is now obsolete.

The subject of this article, however, is the work’s claim that gar was introduced to Central Tibet from Ladakh and Baltistan, shortly before the text was written (1688). A similar musical tradition is still sustained in these Tibetan-speaking regions of Kashmir, and there are good reasons for believing that they are directly related. The evidence presented here is of two kinds: musical and historical. The former is based on information concerning the court music traditions of Ladakh which I gathered there, mainly in 1990, and covers the instruments used, the musical repertoire, their social and cultural functions, and the identity and social organization of its performers. The historical evidence, which principally relies on secondary written sources, aims to locate these connections in space and time, and to clarify their historical and cultural setting within the wider distribution of drum and reed ensembles.

LADAKH: MUSICAL CROSSROADS OF ASIA
Ladakh is of particular interest to Western students of Tibetan music not merely because it is the only substantial region of the Tibetan plateau which lies outside the current boundary of the People’s Republic of China. This situation, it is true, offers opportunities to study an unbroken tradition of Tibetan monastic musical culture, but

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4 Cf. Norbu (1986), upon which much of the information regarding gar in this article is based. I am also grateful to Mr Norbu for discussing this & other Tibetan musical traditions with me in London in Feb. 1992. Additional data regarding practical aspects of gar were obtained during a performance by Tibetan gar-pa in London, 16 July, 1987. Any errors or misinterpretations, however, are entirely my own.


6 This formed part of my fieldwork, supported by a British Academy studentship, for my forthcoming doctoral thesis, “Rhythms of the Gods: the musical symbolic of power and authority in the Tibetan Buddhist Kingdom of Ladakh”. 
Ladakh does not bear out its tourist image as a ‘living museum’ of pre-1950 Tibet, and the ‘Tibetan’ identity of its non-monastic performing arts is problematic.\(^7\)

On the one hand, Ladakh’s ethno-linguistic and religious affinity with Tibet suggests inclusion in the Tibetan cultural area: the Ladakhis, most particularly those of the eastern district (Leh), are predominantly of Tibetan stock, speak a Tibetan language (Ladakhi) and follow Tibetan Buddhism. In several ways, Ladakhi music may also be said to demonstrate an affinity with Tibetan musical culture, despite some differences between specific forms; the variety of music found throughout the Tibetan cultural area is considerable, and Ladakh would be no exception. As with any other region of this greater area, its music is interesting in its own right, as well as for comparative study: it is not difficult to identify musical characteristics which would support the view that Ladakhi music reflects its geographically peripheral position on the western fringes of the wider Tibetan sphere. This is especially true of identifiable Tibetan genres such as round dances (zhabs-bro, ‘zhabro’) and music theatre (a-che lha-mo, ‘aché lhamo’).

On the other hand, Ladakh also demonstrates strong ties with the areas to the north and west: almost half the Ladakhis are Shi’ite Muslim, most of whom live in the western district (Kargil); like the inhabitants of Baltistan to the north, they tend to exhibit a stronger Irano-Afghan ethnic component than the eastern Ladakhis and, though Tibetan-speaking, prefer to use the Persio-Arabic rather than the Tibetan script. In Leh city itself, there is also a significant Muslim (mainly Sunni) minority, locally called Argon. They are descendants of trading families of Central Asian origin (principally Kashmiri, Tajik and Uighur) who, prior to the closure of Ladakh’s eastern border in

\(^7\) See Helffer (1992) for a survey of modern Western research on Tibetan monastic ritual music. For an example of how the problem of cultural identity has affected Tibetan and Ladakhi folksong studies, see Trewin (1992).
1950, operated the caravan routes into Chinese Turkestan (Xinjiang) and Tibet. Historically, there has always been a close cultural interaction between the Muslim and Buddhist Ladakhis; through kinship ties, for example, many Ladakhis participated in both communities’ cultural activities. The Ladakhi musical heritage accordingly includes a substantial repertoire of Islamic genres adapted to local taste, such as ghazal (ga-zal), qawwālī (ka-wa-li), qasida (ka-si-da).

Geopolitically, Ladakh does not easily fall into the Tibetan orbit either, since it has never been subject to direct central Tibetan rule – a fact which accounts for its present situation in the remote trans-Himalayan part of Kashmir, wedged between India’s disputed borders with China and Pakistan. The Ladakhi rulers of the Lhachen Dynasty (c.930–c.1470) trace their ancestry to the ancient Tibetan kings, but the political affiliation with Central Tibet ends there. During the Namgyal Dynasty (c. 1470–1842) Ladakh ascended as a major Himalayan power, and relations with Tibet became increasingly strained by political and sectarian differences with the Dalai Lama’s government, culminating in the war of 1679–83. Meanwhile, Kashmir, which had become a Sultanate in 1326, was subject to Mughal rule (1586–1752), and periodically exploited territorial and religious conflicts between Buddhist Ladakh and Islamized Baltistan. The Mughals intervened in the Ladakh–Tibet war, forcing a settlement through two historic treaties which established Ladakh as a ‘buffer’ state between the Islamic west (1683) and the Buddhist east (1684).

Ladakh was therefore well-placed to operate as a channel of influence between the major culture areas lying beyond its borders. As far as Tibet is concerned, Ladakh has historically been the major point of contact with Middle Eastern culture: its rulers were identified as the living representatives of the ancient Tibetan monarchy and the inheritors of its associated cultural heritage, yet they were at the same time patrons of arts foreign to Tibet. Ladakh may not, then, be a very good starting point for investigating the true nature of ‘Tibetan’ music, but it does hold some clues to a fuller understanding of the west–to–east transmission of musical phenomena. These clues are particularly forthcoming in relation to the transmission of certain musical ideas and instruments of Middle Eastern origin during the Islamic era, to which we shall now turn.

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8 The importance of influences on Tibetan music from areas to its west during different historical periods has been remarked upon by Tethong (1979:5–6) and Ellingson (1979:236–37).
INSTRUMENTS
Tibetan gar ensembles, like Ladakhi ceremonial bands, consist of two instruments: oboes and paired kettledrums. Modern gar ensembles typically include three or four of each instrument, but Ladakhi bands may sometimes be much larger than this, sixteen of each being not uncommon even today.

(a) Oboe (‘surna’) [sur-na, bsu-rna, bsu-sna]
The shaft of the Ladakhi sur-na is an externally (and probably internally) cylindrical pipe, flaring to a bell, and is made from a single piece of turned wood (usually apricot). It has a standard length of one cubit (khru, ‘thu’), equivalent to approximately 40 cm. With the mouthpiece attached, the overall length (including reed) increases to about 45 cm. There are seven equidistant finger-holes (bi-yang) and one thumb-hole, covered by the first three fingers and thumb of the proximal (usually left) hand, and the four fingers of the distal (usually right) hand. Many specimens have an eighth ‘emergency hole’, plus a number of smaller holes at the bell end for acoustical purposes. The mouthpiece (pu-rig, “tube”) consists of two elements: a cylindrical pipe, or staple, about 7 cm long, held within the shaft of the instrument at the proximal end; and a narrow brass tube which is plugged by a small wooden stopper into the external opening of the pipe. The latter grips the reed (pi-pi, “nipple”) prepared by the player from the stalks of marsh-reed (‘dam-hu’). There is also a lip-disc (lo-lo), roughly halfway between the reed and the body of the instrument. This lends physical support – the reed is not lipped, but held entirely within the player’s mouth – and assists breath control, particularly during circular breathing (phu-skor).

The wooden body of the instrument is seasoned with apricot oil, and the bell (mtsho, “tsho”, “lake”) – sometimes the entire shaft as well – is often covered with white metal or silver. The finest specimens, reminiscent of some Central Asian sumi-yi-types, are richly decorated with auspicious designs and ornamented with semi-precious stones. More simply, metal rings (shan) are fixed around the shaft between the finger-holes.

9 These are the principal instruments of the outdoor bands (Tethong 1979:6–7; Norbu 1986:135–38). In at least one special performance context, the gar ensemble included a set of ten small copper gongs (mkhar-rngos), reminiscent of the Chinese yunluo. In some Ladakhi ensembles near the Balti border, cylindrical drums of the dhol type are also used, and in Baltistan itself, curved metal trumpets of the sing(â) type may be added; the inclusion of these instruments recommends comparison with other Himalayan ensembles which appear to derive from the Mughal naqqârkhana (see, for example, Hellifer 1969, and below, note 41).
In terms of size, morphology and playing technique, the Tibetan sur-na (also spelt bsu-rna or bsu-sna) differs little from the Ladakhi type but for one essential feature: the bell is made entirely of metal, and has a somewhat wider flare. This gives the instrument a mellower, ‘sweet-sounding’, tone more in accordance with the Tibetan aesthetic of aural beauty (snyan-pa, ‘nyenpa’), and in quality more like that of the monastic oboe (rgya-gling, ‘gyaling’), which also usually has an external metal bell. Indeed, to judge from the instrument’s sound, the Tibetan version may have, again like the rgya-gling, a conical bore.

(b) Kettledrums (‘daman’) [Idaman, brda-ma, etc.]
The Ladakhi ida-man (also spelt dha-man or mda’-man) consists of two semi-ovoid bowls made of iron or copper, and covered with hide (yak, cow, sheep or goat). The larger of the pair (pho-skad, ‘phoskat’, “male voice”) is typically 40–50 cm in diameter, whilst the smaller (moskad, ‘moskat’, “female voice”) measures approximately 25–35 cm, the ratio of the two dimensions being roughly 3:2 for any given pair; in the larger ensembles, a number of drum-pairs ranging in size are employed. The skins (ko-ba, ‘kowa’) are lapped by a leather cord interlaced through the ring of holes around the head, and then braced by thongs (rgyud-skud ‘rgyus kut’), arranged in a cross-lattice, passing through the holes around the head and secured at the lower end by a belt. The bracing is cross-laced just below the halfway level. There are no tuning devices, the tension in the heads being simply controlled by wetting,

10 This concept, consistent with Indian Buddhist aesthetics, refers to the inherent quality of musical sound that is considered to be sensually attractive (Ellington 1979:355–6), a quality not readily applicable to instruments primarily intended for outdoor use.
warming or by applying pressure with the palm of the hand. They are tuned to the sur-na, in the fifths. The drums are always played in pairs, usually with the “male” on the left, by one player with a pair of stout sticks (dam-shing). The two component drums are normally tied together since they are often used in procession, in which case they are either (if small) slung around the player’s shoulder by a long woolen strap, or else carried on the back of a yak or horse. Otherwise, they are played resting on the ground, the player seated centrally behind them; fabric “gathering-rings” (sog-kyir) placed under their bases hold them in position, tilted towards one another.

In appearance, the Tibetan ida-man (also spelt brda-ma) differ only slightly from its Ladakhi counterpart. The left kettledrum, also called the “male voice” (pho-skad, ‘phokê’), is made of copper, sometimes painted red, while the right may be made of silver, painted blue. The bulge of the egg-shape is rather more pronounced, affording a more evenly distributed tension in the heads; it is perhaps for this reason that the lacing is simpler than that of the Ladakhi kettledrum, consisting only of vertical straps looped between the row of holes in the head and lower belt, counter-laced by a broad leather strip. The drum-sticks (brda-rgyug, ‘dagyu’) are tapered rather than cylindrical; additionally, they are painted red and decorated with red silk ribbons. All the drum-pairs of the gar ensemble are of roughly equivalent size, about 45 and 30 cm in diameter, and are positioned horizontally, not tilted. Their sound is somewhat more resonant than the Ladakhi ida-man, and probably more pleasing (to Tibetan ears, at least); this may be due to the presence of thick copper wires stuck vertically inside the drum.

(c) Comparative discussion
The nomenclature and morphology of these instruments corresponds to similar forms found in areas to the north and west of Ladakh, connecting them with the well-established drum and reed tradition introduced to the Indian subcontinent by Muslim invaders from the northwest\textsuperscript{11}. The names sur-na and ida-man derive from the Arabo-

Persian surmā(y)(from sūr, “festival” and nāy, “pipe”, cf. Kashmiri surmār) and damāma respectively, the characteristic features of these instruments being also present. These are, for the surmā, the staple, lip-disc, cylindrical pipe of medium length, and integral wooden bell (only the last-named being absent in the Tibetan case). The lda-ma, which in dimension corresponds to the medium-sized naqqāra (cf. Kashmiri naqqāra, Hindi nagārā), resembles its Indo-Persian form in terms of its shape and method of bracing; the presence of wires in the Tibetan brda-ma may also be compared with the metal jingles fixed inside Arab kettledrums.

While the simpler Ladakhi spellings of the names sur-na and lda-ma are direct transliterations of their Persian cognates, the Tibetan spellings bsu-ma and brda-ma appear to represent corruptions through terms relating to the instruments’ function: respectively, the verb bsu-ba, “to meet (solemnly), to welcome a respected person”, and the noun brda meaning signal or symbol. These linguistic transitions suggest Tibetanizations of the Ladakhi forms, and it may be conjectured that the morphological changes made to the instruments themselves are the result of a parallel process of indigenization. An argument in favour of a Ladakhi source of the instruments must, however, account for these changes in preference to other possible sources. It has been suggested, for example, that the Tibetan sur-na may be related to the Chinese suona. There is no conclusive evidence, however, that the sur-na is directly connected with this instrument, for it is no closer, either in name or form, to the Chinese type than it is to the Ladakhi one.

As already hinted, there is a stronger case for believing that the refinements of the Tibetan sur-na – the external metal bell, and the perhaps conical bore – may have been

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12 This is a feature of an Arabic kettledrum, perhaps equivalent to the naqqāra, described in the medieval Sanskrit treatise, the Śṛṅgādeva (Dick 1984:89).

13 Jascke (1881:593,297).

14 Such a connection has been implied by Tethong (1979:6) and Norbu (1986:137). The suona shares several features of both the Ladakhi and Tibetan sur-na (and other instruments of the surmā(y) type), such as the lip-disc and the number of holes; it also has a widely-flaring external metal bell, but the pipe (not just the bore) is conical (Thrasher 1984). An etymological derivation from the Chinese suona is also unlikely because this could not explain the presence of the ‘r’ in the Tibetan spelling bsu-ma, which tends to be preserved in pronunciation; its absence in other spellings (and pronunciations) is a plausible transition in itself, as in Indian languages (Jairazbhoy 1980:148), and does not imply Chinese influence.
MUSIC EXAMPLES

Ex. 1: (a) lha-rnga prelude (‘phab-ha rag)  
(b) Opening section of gar prelude (sagon-‘gro’i rag).

Ex. 2: Rhythmic patterns used in morning lha-rnga (snga-mo’i lha-rnga).

Ex. 3: Opening portion of first main section (tshir-ka) of snga-mo’i lha-rnga.
inspired by the *rgya-gling*, but this still leaves the question of whether these developments belong to the South Asian or Chinese sphere. Only further evidence will show, beyond reasonable doubt, that the Tibetan *sur-ma* and Chinese *suona* are no more than cognately connected, and that a Ladakhi source is more probable.

**REPERTORY**
The court music associated with the drum and reed ensembles, Ladakhi or Tibetan, broadly falls into two classes: purely instrumental music for official processions and ceremonies; and music to accompany court dances and songs. The former is invariably intended for outdoor use, while the latter may be outdoor or indoor, and may be rendered vocally or instrumentally (or both), sometimes on alternative instruments. This division is one which applies, in general terms, to many civilizations and this may reflect the recognition of the importance of music to royal courts, as a means of communicating (to others) their prestige and status, and as a way of commanding (among themselves) loyalty and solidarity. There are, of course, many ways in which these divisions and bonds may be articulated musically, so there is plenty of scope for the comparison of specific musical traditions suspected of being connected in some way.

(a) Ladakhi court music
The most important category of outdoor instrumental music is known as *lha-rnga* (‘lharña’, “god-drumming”), a genre contiguous with various instrumental pieces performed in Ladakhi folk rituals (e.g. *skrad-rnga*, ‘sadsña’, “expulsion drumming”, for the New Year exorcism ritual *gtor-bzlog*, ‘storlok’). It is broadly in line with Tibetan concepts and aesthetics of religious musical offering (*mchod-rol*, ‘chhöro’) but differs from monastic ritual music in that it is worldly in orientation: in the context of court ceremonial it personifies, in popular perceptions, the ruler’s divinity or a lama’s incarnation; in more orthodox interpretations, they may be described as “welcome blessings” (*byin-pa legs*, ‘jima leks’) bestowed by the invoked divinities (*lha*). In any case, musical forms are distinguished by the identity of the individuals in whose honour they are performed. Besides ordinary *lha-rnga*, in concise (*chung-ba*) or extended (*chen-mo*) forms, there are special types for the king or members of his immediate family (*rgyal-po’i lha-rnga*, ‘rgyalpo lharña’), for a senior lama such as the king’s Preceptor (*bla-ma’i lha-rnga*, ‘lamá lharña’), and for a senior government official, notably the Prime Minister (*pho-khams*) and his wife (*mo-khams*). In addition, at ceremonial feasts, a special offering piece (*gzhung-gral-li lha-rnga*, ‘zhuñdali lharña’) is played in honour of the most senior person present, of whatever absolute rank: he or she takes the seat of honour (*gzhung-gral*) in the centre of the gathering-place and has the privilege of leading the first dance.

There is also a three-fold set of periodic *lha-rnga*, for morning (*snga-mo*), noon (*nyin-gung*), and afternoon (*phyi-thog*, ‘phitok’). Nowadays, they are usually performed in monastic courtyards on the occasion of special, extended rituals, but they may formerly have been performed daily at the royal palace.

Processional music (‘*phebs-rnga*, ‘phepsña’, “drumming for the [auspicious] descent”) is provided whenever a dignitary appears in public on official or ceremonial occasions. There are nominally six types, according to the status of the dignitary (*rgyal-po’i*, royal, *bla-ma’i*, clerical, otherwise lay) and whether they are arriving (‘*phebs*, literally ‘falling’) or departing (*skyod*, ‘skyot’), although the latter distinction is not made musically. There is additionally a special piece (*ti-pi-cag*, ‘tipichak’) to accompany the king’s procession when on horseback.

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15 See Trewin (1993).
TREWIN: History and Origin of Gar (Tibet)

Balti ensemble. [Photo: AMT]

Instrumental music is also used to accompany contests and spectacles (polo, archery, horse-racing, swordsmanship), all of which represent re-enactments of ritual conquest and the associated display of charismatic virtue, and for providing assembly signals (bam), alarm calls and royal proclamations (skad).

Among the repertory of social songs (glu, ‘lhu’) and dances (gar-rtses ‘gartses’) regularly accompanied by lda-man and sur-na today – such as the “male dance” (pho-rtses) and “female dance” (mo-rtses) – some were formerly restricted to court use, especially at the banquets held in the Lhechen Pelkhar winter palace in Leh at New Year (lo-gsar, ‘losar’). These included, for example, the gos-shen-rtses, named after the fine Chinese silk garments (gos-chen) paraded by the nobility as a sign of honour. More ‘exotic’ dances, mentioned by a Western writer at the turn of the century but rarely performed today, include the lion dance (seng-ge-rtses) and the peacock dance (rma-byu-rtses, ‘smajartses’), probably introduced to the Leh aristocracy by traders returning from Tibet and Xinjiang; the same author also refers to a performance of two or three types of sword dances (ral-gri-rtses, ‘raldjrtes’) – still performed today – by

Ex.4: Opening section of gar-glu.
Balti, Ladakhi and Pathan dancers. Court dances are normally performed immediately following a suite of songs in a continuous sequence. These songs are typically congregational praise songs (ghung-glub) or heroic songs (gling-glu, 'lhinglu'); the latter liken the qualities of the King to Gesar, the celebrated epic hero of whom the king was popularly believed to be a reincarnation. Less formal songs would have been accompanied, as now, by flutes (gling-bu, 'lhingbu') and only one or two lda-man or a frame drum with jingles (d'aph 'daf', cf. Persian daf), rather than the full sur-na ensemble; lutes (sgra-snyan, 'damnyen') are used only for accompanying zhabs-bro dance-songs.

These repertory classes, divided by social and cultural function, broadly conform to an Indic model characterized by a pattern of musical performance serving the legitimating functions of the ancient Hindu-Buddhist state, overlaid by an ethic of chivalry and militarism associated with later Islamic rule. Thus the use of instruments for signals, watches, processions, sacrificial contests (notably archery), and as a mark of honour is well-documented in Indian literature from at least the Buddhist period. Of particular interest is the three-fold set of daily honours, which may relate to a pattern of eight-hourly service in support of Buddhist ritual kingship, but which also appears to be connected with the Arabic nawbat tradition (in its early sense as a set of either three or five watches, according to status); this suggests that the more specific subdivision of the repertory by (military) rank may be a feature particularly associated with Islamic protocol. More clearly of Islamic origin is the use of music to accompany equestrian displays (notably polo), as demonstrated by the name ti-pi-caq (Turkish tobeaq,

17 See, for example, Fox Strangways (1914:77).
"horse")20, while the performance of sword dances as a means of legitimating Balti-Ladakhi conflict indicates a phase of predatory warfare associated with Islamic rule in the northwestern Himalaya21.

(b) Tibetan court music
The Tibetan repertory demonstrates a number of parallels with its Ladakhi counterpart, although it has clearly been adapted to Tibetan needs and tastes22. The Tibetans appear not to have adopted the term lha-rnga, but the performance of sur-na and lda-man music was still considered to be a form of semi-religious offering. Although the folk ritualistic dimension of the genre is less strong than in Ladakh, such associations are nevertheless evident from the contexts in which instrumental pieces were played: at the Jokhang temple in Lhasa during the New Year period when the butter images were displayed, apparently as a form of musical exorcism (compare the Ladakhi skrad-mnga); and at the death anniversary of every Dalai Lama, and of the founder of the dominant Gelukpa sect, Tsongkhapa (1357–1419).

Processional music, known by the same name as in Ladakh ("phchsa rnga, but pronounced more like'pheha"), was played whenever the Dalai Lama embarked on an official journey, notably between the Potala and Norbulingka, respectively his winter and summer palaces. Special variants were played when riding on horseback. With the exception of those ensembles maintained at principal monasteries – notably the major Gelukpa centre of Tashilhünpo, the seat of the Panchen Lama – this music appears to have been exclusively associated with the person of the Dalai Lama, as incarnation of the patron deity and as supreme political ruler. It seems that the repertory is not subdivided by hierarchical status, clerical or lay, as in Ladakh, a difference which we might expect from a comparison of the political structures of Tibet and Ladakh23.

A more prominent feature of the Tibetan repertory is the music used to accompany court songs and dances – as reflected in the name gar ("dance"). The dance categories nevertheless bear a strong resemblance to Ladakhi-Balti forms (gar-rtses). The division between male dance (pho-gar) and female dance (mo-gar) is retained, although the distinction is generic; but, as in Ladakh, the difference lies in the style of the dance rather than the gender of the dancer. Gar dances also include a sword dance (gri-gar, 'dirgar') and a number of animal and bird dances, including a peacock dance (rma-byag-gar, 'majagar'). These dances were performed only at official ceremonies associated with the Dalai Lama: in the Assembly Hall of the Potala palace on the first two days of the New Year; during the banquet following the archery contest on the third day; at the special Death anniversary of the Fifth Dalai Lama (tshogs-mchod ser-bang, "The Procession of the Offerings of the Assembly"); during the summer zho-ston ('shotön') festival held in the Norbulingka; and at the enthronements of the Dalai Lamas and Regents.

Gar music may be played either by the full lda-man and sur-na ensemble, or in a "soft style" ('jam-rol, 'jamro'), that is, on a flute (gling-bu) and a single pair of lda-man; when accompanying songs, including dance-songs, the music is performed with the

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20 This name appears to refer specifically to the Central Asian breeds introduced to the royal stables in great numbers by the fanatical King Tshewang Namgyal (ruled 1753–82) (Petech 1977:115).
23 In terms of the ideal types proposed by Samuel (1982), Tibet had a decentralized policy in which political power was negotiated between secular and religious authorities, whereas in Ladakh, an effective Buddhist state, the religious hierarchy was subordinate to the state and had a legitimizing function towards secular rule.
latter instrumentation, or using stringed instruments such as the sgra-snyan\textsuperscript{24}. Unlike most Ladakhi lha-rnga and dance music, the main gar tunes, though rendered instrumentally, are of vocal origin; as with nang-ma and stod-gzhas, the repertoire is more closely shared between dance, instrumental, and vocal forms. However, some of the gar song-texts make direct reference to Ladakhi themes, and exhibit features of Western Tibetan dialects\textsuperscript{25}.

FORM AND STYLE

The form of Ladakhi lha-rnga and Tibetan instrumental gar is broadly similar: all performances open with a non-metrical prelude (Ladakhi 'phab-ba rga, Tibetan sgon-’gro’i rga, ‘nödröna’) played by the leading sur-na and lla-man pair. This is followed by the central sequence (Ladakhi tshir-ka, Tibetan gar-glu), played by the whole ensemble: the lla-man perform fixed isometric patterns, while the sur-na play set melodies in close heterophony. The short postlude frames the piece much in the same way as the prelude.

Beyond this overall structure, the similarity begins to end. The characteristic accelerating “fall” (’phab) rhythm with which all lha-rnga commences is not present in gar preludes, although we can compare the repeated dotted rhythmic figures and the falling fifth in the phrase of the solo sur-na (Ex.1). The sur-na drone which accompanies Ladakhi preludes is also absent; some players employ circular breathing for this, a technique not used by Tibetan sur-na players.

The greatest difference lies in the formal organization of the central section. The main part of a lha-rnga consists of a fixed “order” (tshir) of repeating rhythmic patterns, of which there are supposed to be 360, based on a series of ‘contractions’ (Ex.2). These complex, frequently asymmetric, patterns are produced by vigorous drum-strokes in rapid alternation, employing the dimensions of pitch, stress, and, in some cases, resonance. This playing technique is facilitated by the positioning of the two drums, tilted towards one another. According to the size of each lla-man pair, the basic pattern is executed, in each case, in more or less elaborate form. The sur-na melodies, coterminous with the rhythmic patterns, are characterised by extended trills and scalar figurations (Ex.3). This gives an impression of playing diatonically, although the use of the ‘curled-over’ fingering technique shades the notes somewhat.

Being vocally shared, the central section (glu, “song”) of gar pieces, of which there are said to be 74, are in simple strophic form, punctuated by interludes (’gyur-kha, ‘gyökha)\textsuperscript{26}. Not unlike other Tibetan melodic forms, the themes consist of long, sustained phrases played in an even dynamic; a continuous line is maintained by overlapping the phrasings of alternate sur-na (Ex.4). The melody is subtly ornamented with glides, inflections, variations in vibrato width and speed, and rapid trills, also features of rgya-gling melodies. The lla-man are played with much more restraint and poise than their Ladakhi counterparts – single, resonant drum-strokes are co-ordinated with precision. Although they perform repeating beat–groups they are so extended in time that there is no clear sense of metre, serving rather as time-markers. Again, parallels could be noted with the use of percussion instruments in monastic ensemble.

\textsuperscript{24} For an account of this instrument, see Collinge (1993). Other instruments mentioned by Tethong (1979:6) and Norbu (1986:135) include the dulcimer (rgyud-mang), and bowed lute (pl-wang), also both widely used in Tibet. Two other lutes, one plucked (tum-bu-ra, cf. Persian taḵbūr, but similar to the Mongolian khiiłkhuur) and one bowed (gan-chag or ga-ngda, resembling the Central Asian ghichak or Kashmiri saz-i kashmir) appear to be more specifically associated with the ‘soft’ gar ensemble.

\textsuperscript{25} See, for example, some of the songs in the gar-glu collection of Gyaltse (1985:78,239,304,328).

\textsuperscript{26} Norbu 1986:138.
The overall framework of these pieces suggests an affinity with musical systems of the Middle East. In particular, ila-ringa shares many features of the maqâm–iqâ‘ā system as represented in the "cyclic genre" form which, historically and musically, probably represents an extension of the Arabic nawbat (in its sense as an ordered suite of fixed items) into Central Asia (e.g. Uzbek–Tajik shashmaqom, Kashmiri sufîna kalam). More especially, it may be compared with the sorna/surnâî traditions of Afghanistan, Kashmir and Baltistan which, though now mainly rural phenomena, nevertheless demonstrate connections with this classical tradition, insofar as they all utilize a (usually ideally numbered) set of maqâmât (i.e. "melodic types" of some sort, also called ha-rib in Baltistan), several of which are associated with particular times of the day and are, nominally at least, commonly shared.

Although this nomenclature is not used in Ladakh, nor is there any equivalent formal system in use (beyond the belief in a set of 360 patterns), some characteristics of ila-ringa are comparable with the Kashmiri surnâî tradition. Here too, a prelude (shâkî) is played to the accompaniment of a drone, and, as in Ladakh, is in the form of a quasi–recitative composition. The main section consists of a suite of fixed melodies (called maqâmî), rendered instrumentally in octaves or unison. These are set to a fixed sequence of repeating, often asymmetric, drum–patterns (tâl, equivalent to iqâ‘â) whose beats are of differential qualities; the sequence also proceeds from long, slow patterns to short, fast ones. As in Ladakh, these melodic and rhythmic components operate as separate structures in their own right, rather than (as in Turko–Arabic maqâm or Indian râga) as a basis for improvisation of some kind. The question of whether a modal principal of "melodic types" operates in ila-ringa, as in the Kashmiri maqâm system, or in Balti ha-rib, is quite a different matter, and one which will not be dealt with here.

Besides some similarities in formal organization, many of these features are not present in gar music, suggesting that the genre has become thoroughly Tibetanized. This conclusion has been similarly drawn with regard to its sister–genre nang–ma, which is also considered to have come from Kashmir. It is interesting to note, however, a broad comparison between both these genres (taking gar in its song–dance form) and similar forms in Ladakh and Kashmir. A nangma performance typically consists of a standard instrumental prelude (gomi, spelling unknown), followed by a "song" (ghâzâ, 'shê') or "slow song" (gyang-ghâzâ, 'yanûshê'), then a "dance" (zhâbs–bro), or "fast song" (ngyogs–ghâzâ, 'gyöshê'). The songs are, like gar–glu, bithematic melodies separated by brief instrumental interludes, also a feature of sufîna kalam songs. The dance which follows, however, is more like Ladakhi performances where the musically distinct dance accompaniment, subdivided into sections in different metres, follows a suite of songs grouped by rhythmic mode (glu–tsangs). In the latter, the songs are presented antiphonally by line or verse between the chorus and the sur–na, with the 1da–man continuing throughout, a procedure similar to that of the Kashmiri baccâ naghma (boys' dance). Both this and Ladakhi performances of court dance–songs are prefixed by an instrumental prelude which accompanies the dancers' salutation (Kashmiri salâmî).

28 Baily (1980:8), remarking upon the similarities between the Herati and Kashmiri maqâm names connected with the respective sorna/surnâî traditions, suggests the possible existence of a mixed Indo–Persian system associated with the Mughal naqâqakâhâna. More than half of the Kashmiri maqâmât listed by Pacholezyk (1978:8–9) also appear in the list of Balti maqâmât given by Afridi (1988:160–61), suggesting that the Balti sur–na tradition is also part of this pattern of distribution.
29 See Pachulezyk (1979:54–56).
30 See Samuel (1976:408), who agrees that the suggestion that the word nang–ma derives from the Urdu–Persian naghma ("song" or "melody") is plausible, but concludes that any specific musical relationship is difficult to establish.
31 Rasika 1959:43.
While these correlations in themselves cannot be taken as proof of a Kashmiri/Ladakhi origin of gar or nang-ma, they may gain some significance in the light of other comparisons made in this survey. A comparison would be particularly incomplete without considering the style of dancing, especially as this is an aspect of gar which Tibetans themselves have remarked as being most clearly non-Tibetan. This dimension deserves far more attention than space (and my state of knowledge) allows, but it may be noted that in gar dances, as in Ladakhi dance and in contrast to other Tibetan dance, the rhythmic character of the music is interpreted almost entirely through the legs and feet; body movements are restrained, and subordinate to the complex combinations of step movements. The manner of the dancers’ salutation in gar – shuffling "backwards, in single file, ... bending low and salaaming in a very Muslim fashion" – is also characteristic of Ladakhi dance.

PERFORMERS
A further dimension which may be mentioned briefly is the identity and social organization of the performers of Ladakhi and Tibetan ceremonial music – briefly, because little is known about them. This in itself, though, shows that musical specialists were directly attached to the now-defunct institutions they served, and that they were largely organized separately from other groups of musicians. The Ladakhi royal musicians (mktar-mon, ‘kharmon’) were nominally distinguished from the two musician castes (mon-pa and bhe-da) who served, and still serve, the wider rural community. According to local tradition, they were originally all Balti Muslims, but in the early part of this century, half were Buddhist mon-pa. It would

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32 See, for example, Gyaltsen (1985:8–9) and Norbu (1986:135).
33 Norbu, ibid.
34 Shakspo 1985:98.
appear that some mon-pa, especially in Leh but also some of those attached to certain crown villages or villages with a royal palace, were assigned special royal duties and privileges by a government official under royal direction, and thereby enjoyed a higher status. In return, they were granted special land rights in addition to remuneration in kind at New Year. The head mkhar-mon in Leh, who was required to perform a special lhā-mga at New Year, was – unusually for a musician – permitted to maintain his ancestral home (called ti-chong) within the walled city. In these respects, the organization of the mkhar-mon resembled the guild of Muslim traders (mkhar-tsong-pa) maintained by the palace, but cast-like features, notably hereditary specialization, were retained. As with the music they performed, their organization reflected a dynamic interrelationship between rural/ritual and urban/ceremonial patterns of musical service.

The all-female royal dancers (drag-shos-ma) were provided by selected noble families in Leh, although physical beauty, age and performing ability were also relevant criteria. The King could call upon their services at any time, but especially at New Year. In return, they were offered food and drink, although it was considered a great honour to be asked to dance before the monarch.

In Tibet, the gar-pa – as the gar musicians and dancers were collectively known – were, unlike Ladakh, uniquely specialized and were maintained entirely by the state as a highly organized guild. The head of the troupe, the gar-dpon (‘garpōn’), had the status of a government official and was in charge of training and discipline, said to have been intense and severe. The dancers (gar-phrug-pa, ‘gartrugpa’) were all young boys, except for the sword dancers who were adult males, and were selected according to age, appearance and social class. They received remuneration in kind at New Year, in addition to monthly food rations.

The presence of Muslim musicians in Central Tibet is attested by Tibetan sources, and by Western visitors in the first half of the twentieth century. Their name Khachè

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35 Heber 1903:210–11; Shakspo 1985:101. As Heber points out, these female dancers were highly respected, and there was no suggestion of the ill repute associated with a group of “dancing girls and prostitutes” called malakhvan (cf. the Hindu mēlakkāran caste), whose presence in Ladakh was also recorded in the early part of this century (Mann 1986).
37 See, for example, Gyaltsen (1985:6). Hugh Richardson, who was a British Government official serving in Tibet in the 1930s and 1940s, recalls a nang-ma performance in which a Ladakhi Muslim flute-player participated (Samuel 1976:408). Chapman (1938:110–11), referring to the same ensemble, describes one of its members as a “bearded Ladakhi with a red fez”.

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("Kashmiri") suggests that they may be of Ladakhi Muslim or Balti origin. The identity of the gar–phrug–pa also suggests a possible connection with other traditions of dancing boys in Kashmir (the baccā naghma) and Afghanistan (bacheh bāzū)\(^{38}\). Some elements of their costume also bear a strong resemblance to Ladakhi or Balti dress: they display a length of brocade not unlike the Ladakhi gos–chen, and yet the Tibetans call it isa–dar, the Ladakhi name (from Urdu–Persian) for the woman’s pashmina–wool shawl, while the flat circular hats with tubular rims (la–thod) are similar in style to those worn by Balti men.

**HISTORY AND DISTRIBUTION**
Having explored the possibility that gar came from Ladakh and Baltistan through the music itself, and through data relating to its performance, we shall now turn to historical sources for further evidence which supports this hypothesis, and attempt to reconstruct its historical development in relation to the wider distribution of drum and reed ensembles.

(a) Ladakhi, Balti and Indian sources
The instrument types represented by the Ladakhi ida–man and sur–na are, in the Indian context, connected with three waves of Islamic incursions from the northwest of the subcontinent. Given the proximity of Ladakh and Baltistan to the route favoured by the invaders, we should perhaps not be too surprised if it emerged that the region was in contact with all three waves, but it is to the last of these, associated with Mughal rule in India, to which the relevant discussion is confined\(^{39}\). This concerns the military–ceremonial band called the naqqārakhāna (named after the pavilion (khāna) in which the naqqārā were housed) which rose to great prominence at the court of the Emperor Akbar (1556–1605): his chronicler lists no less than sixty instruments, including eighteen pairs of damāma, twenty pairs of naqqārā and nine surmāy “of the Persian and Indian kinds”\(^{40}\).

Records from about the same era indicate that these ensembles began to be adopted in the Himalayan kingdoms\(^{41}\). Conferred on local rulers by an “act of incorporation” (khil‘at) in return for a pledge of loyalty through tribute (nazār), the exchange of musical instruments, and the right to have them played, formed part of the Mughals’ diplomatic strategy for stabilizing their northern frontier, often in tandem with their policy of marital alliance. This was effective in these remote areas because outright military coercion was often less successful than symbolic action. As assets of legitimate rule, the naqqārakhāna symbolized, to the Mughals, the “incorporation” of peripheral feudatories into their political framework, while to local rulers, it represented the “incorporated” authority to rule territories disputed between neighbouring rivals\(^{42}\).

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\(^{38}\) In Kashmir, the baccā naghma was considered a “cheap imitation” of the female hafiţa classical dance (Rasika 1959:43). In Afghanistan, where an entire repertory (naghmeh–ye bāzū) was associated with boys dressed as women, this tradition was also held in disrepute (Daily 1988:92–3,140–2), but none of these connotations seem to have existed with the gar–phrug–pa.

\(^{39}\) The first two waves are musically represented by the military band of the Arabs (tabl khāna) which reached the borders of India in the ninth century, and the naubat or nahlābat ceremonial ensemble introduced to the subcontinent after the founding of the Delhi Sultanate by Central Asian Turks at the end of the twelfth century (Dick 1984). It is beyond the scope of this paper to consider the evidence, which will be presented elsewhere, that suggests that the Ladakhi–Baltistan region may have been in contact with these traditions.

\(^{40}\) Abu’l Fazl, Ā’īn–T Akbaru, A’īn 19, “The Ensigns of Royalty” (Allami 1927:52–3).

\(^{41}\) For example, the Gorkhā Kingdom of Chatra Śīha in 1609 (Tingey 1992:107), the Kumaon Kingdom of Bāz Bāhādur Chandra in 1665 (Agrawal 1990:291).

\(^{42}\) See Agrawal (1990:294), following a theory of ‘incorporative’ Mughal kingship advanced by the Indian historian Maheshwar P. Joshi.
The state of ongoing conflict between Ladakh and Baltistan thus made them prime targets for the imposition of this type of musico-political diplomacy.

According to Balti accounts, direct musical and diplomatic contact was made with Akbar’s court during the reign of the locally celebrated ruler Ali Mir Sher Khan (1595–1623), shortly after the Mughal conquest of Kashmir (1586). One account says that Mughal craftsmen and musicians were brought from Agra by his Mughal bride, Gul Khâtün, given by the imperial court in exchange for a Balti princess presented there in 1591. These artisans are considered to be responsible for the construction of a Mughal–style palace and garden in Skardu, the Balti capital, and a khâna pavilion “in imitation of the Mughal court, where the naubat [i.e. the naqqârakâhâna] performed five times a day”⁴³. Another local tradition says that Ali Mir sent Balti musicians for training in Delhi. In any event, the system of Balti ha-rib (maqâm) was probably established at this time, or shortly afterwards⁴⁴.

Ladakh was soon brought into the sphere of Mughal cultural and diplomatic relations by a territorial dispute with Baltistan, apparently resolved by the exchange of brides and musical instruments upon Akbar’s intervention⁴⁵. According to Ladakhi oral history, the Balti princess Gyal Khatun who was married to King Jamyang Namgyal (ruled c.1595–1616) brought an ensemble of Balti musicians – allegedly the original mkar-mon – to Leh. The sur-na kept in the Stok Palace museum (pictured here) is supposed to have been one of their original instruments, which suggests a date of about 1600. Given the style of its decoration, in the context of Mughal influence in Ladakhi art experienced during this period, this claim is not implausible⁴⁶.

Alliances and pacts of this kind could not only resolve conflict but could also, through their rejection, provide the basis for prolonged conflict. Thus, while the Balti bride and her musical dowry were apparently incorporated into Ladakhi society and culture, the Ladakhi princess sent to Ali Mir is supposed to have been returned to Leh in disgrace. A similar violation of the protocol regarding the use and exchange of musical

⁴³ Afridi 1988:41–46. Some of the structures identified with these construction projects still remain, but they have not been thoroughly examined (Emerson 1984:130–31).
⁴⁴ Sohnen 1984:40–41.
⁴⁶ The Stok collection also contains jewellery and other items said to have belonged to Gyal Khatun. Mughal influence in painting of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries has been identified by Genoud (1982:37); for example, in a painting of the Buddha Amitabha at Alchi, the two Kinnaaras (mi-’ma-ch) herding the deity with (karma-type) trumpets are reminiscent of Persian miniatures (op. cit., 55).
instruments could also symbolize or provoke a renewed conflict, as represented by the well-known theme in Indian literature of legitimate ownership by capture, rather than by award through submission. Such an instance is recorded in the Ladakh Chronicles with regard to the Ladakh–Mughal war of 1639, when the Ladakhi army is said to have “captured ensigns and kettledrums (‘phyar–dar dang ha-rib rmams), winning a complete victory over the enemy.” In fact, the Ladakhis were defeated by the troops sent by Emperor Shah Jahan (ruled 1628–58), and it was the Balti ruler who was rewarded for his military assistance in securing a Mughal victory, through the award of khil‘at. The same was not conferred upon the Ladakhi monarch until 1666/7, following a meeting in Kashmir in 1663 between envoys of King Deldan Namgyal (ruled 1642–94) and Emperor Aurangzeb (ruled 1658–1707). The French traveler Francois Bernier witnessed the King’s nominal submission at the meeting, and also provides a brief description of the Emperor’s naqqārakhāna accompanying his journey there.

That this act in fact prolonged Ladakhi–Balti conflicts is shown by accounts of the military campaigns of a Ladakhi Commander during the early eighteenth century, descriptions of which clearly demonstrate the symbolic and musical importance that the Ladakhis attached to the instruments of the naqqārakhāna:

> The big drums [mda’-man chen-po] of Bsd [castile], because of their sound, were brought here [to Leh]...

and later, at Shigar:

> The relics of Buddha’s bones, ...the famous iron drums [kcags-kyi mda’-man ming grags-can], etc., were handed over to us... and clarionets [sic. ha-rib, i.e. sur-na] which could be repaired later, were afterwards recovered. In short, he [the Commander] was a discouraging adversary to all the Sbal-ti [Balti] nobles.

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47 One of the earliest occurrences of this theme is the dundubhi war drum described in Vedic texts, whose capture meant defeat (Shakuntala 1968:6).

48 la-dwags rgyal-rabs [Ladakh Chronicles], VII,41,27 (Francke 1926:114). Francke’s translation is not strictly accurate: the word ha-rib, besides being the Balti term for maqam, is also a synonym of sur-na in Baltistan and Lower Ladakh.

49 See Petech (1977:49–51, 63–65), who judges the alleged Ladakhi victory as “mere boasting” (op.cit., 51).

50 Bernier 1988:47.

51 Minor Chronicles XVI (The Services of General Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje according to the account of King Bde-kyon-rnam-rgyal [ruled 1729–39], 229, 13–14 and 230, 7–10 (Francke 1926:232,233).

"Famous" (named) drums formerly kept in royal palaces are still known and used in Ladakh: one from
(b) Tibetan and Chinese sources
According to Tibetan sources, gar has its origin in the early period of the Tibetan kings, attributing it (as with much else) to the great King Songtsen Gampo (620–649), and claiming that the Ida–man and sur–na were in use at this time\textsuperscript{52}. Meanwhile the Ladakhi Chronicles, probably following Tibetan sources, state that these two instruments, together with the rgya–gling, were brought to Tibet from “Gya” (rgya, either India, rgya–gar, or China, rgya–nâg) during the reign of Dütsong (676–704)\textsuperscript{53}. However, given the nature of Tibetan historiography relating to its royal era, these pronouncements are clearly attempts to present more recent phenomena as ‘rediscoveries’ of pre–extant traditions. Thus, while it is generally acknowledged that Indian, Persian and Chinese influences were experienced during this period, the historicity of this particular claim is incompatible with our scientific knowledge of the history and distribution of reed instruments.

The more difficult question of whether Tibetan oboes are of Chinese or Indian provenance is one which has yet to be resolved, and which remains problematic (especially because it can so easily be obfuscated by nationalistic interests). Concerning this issue, an independent origin of an oboe-type in China has been suggested by Deva, locating a source in eastern Xinjiang\textsuperscript{54}. But, as Jairazbhoy argues, his hypothesis is unconvincing; if the instrument is supposed to represent the rgya–gling, then the only argument upon which Deva’s reasoning appears to rest, namely that the prefix rgya refers to China rather than India, is unsupported\textsuperscript{55}.

Alternatively, the length (greater than the sur-na), wide conical bore and external bell of the rgya–gling suggests an association with a category of Indian oboes. In an incisive contribution to the debate on South Asian reed instruments, Dick argues that these features, possibly inherited from pre-Islamic Indian oboes, were refinements added to the medieval band surnâ(y) in the Hindustani context, rendering a more cultivated, “sweet–sounding” tone more suited to Indian musical ideals – and, one might add, Tibetan ones as well\textsuperscript{56}. He surmises that these features of the “Indian surnây”, as distinct from the Persian kind which persisted in the Mughal court (and represented by the Kashmiri surnâr and Balti/Ladakhi sur–na), have persisted in the southern nāgasvaram and northern shahnâl. Since the latter name is the term (from the Urdu–Persian shâh, “king”, and nây, “pipe”) through which surnâ(y) became interpreted, this adds credence to the possible etymological derivation of rgya–gling from the similarly pronounced rgyal–gling, the Tibetan translation of shahnâl\textsuperscript{57}. Furthermore, the central–eastern pattern of survival identified by Dick supports an origin of the rgya–gling in India because this region was at that time (i.e. 8th–12th centuries) one of the last outposts of Indian Buddhism to make a significant contribution to Tibetan culture. It might well be, then, that the rgya–gling, along with some of the other instruments of the Tibetan monastic ensemble, was introduced via this route\textsuperscript{58}.

the Lhachen Pekhar palace, noted for its sound, is call kal–ya–na; another from the present Stok palace is known as pho–dkar.
\textsuperscript{53} Ja–dwags rgyal–rabs, IV,32,7 (Francke 1926:85).
\textsuperscript{54} According to his diffussion map (Deva 1975:84).
\textsuperscript{55} See Jairazbhoy (1980:153–54), who notes that Deva does not verbalize his views, and that they may therefore be open to misunderstanding.
\textsuperscript{56} Dick 1984:91–3.
\textsuperscript{57} Helfferi 1984.
\textsuperscript{58} The Bihar–Bengal region of northeastern India had a major influence on Tibetan art and religion during the Pâla dynasty (760–1142); see, for example, Stein (1972:57,72) and Genoud (1982:35). The use of musical instruments in Buddhist monasteries had also become highly developed with the rise of Tantrayâna during the Pâla period; the Tibetan monastic ensemble, composed mainly of instruments of
The possibility of the Tibetan sur-na having a source in China, however, still remains. Indeed, Deva's proposition of an instrumental source in Xinjiang, spreading south and west through Tibet to the Himalayan regions (from Ladakh to Bhutan), could be taken to represent a suggested diffusion pattern of the Chinese suona, although this can hardly constitute an independent origin since the suona is thought to represent a distinct, Central Asian, extension of the Middle Eastern surna(y) tradition, dating at the very earliest from the Yuan period (1271-1368). Even so, this suggested pattern of diffusion is contradicted by the seemingly unique association of the Tibetan sur-na with the gar tradition, whose transmission from Ladakh and Baltistan is historically traceable by the data, presented below, from The Joyous Feast. If it is also the case that the refinements of the Tibetan sur-na have come from the rgya-gling, then it would appear that this instrument belongs to the South Asian cultural sphere, and there is little reason at this stage to suspect that it is directly connected with Chinese ensemble traditions.

The seventeenth century time frame for the introduction of gar suggested by the treatise is congruent with the special place of the Fifth Dalai Lama's Death Anniversary in the gar repertory, and with the claim that much of the Lhasa ensemble's repertory, and one of its lla-ma dates from his reign. The apparently anomalous inclusion of the Death Anniversary celebrations of Tsongkapa and the earlier Dalai Lamas actually strengthens this dating, for it may be interpreted as an attempt by Gelukpa apologists to confer historical legitimacy upon their sect, which initially had no temporal power; thus the title of their figurehead (Dalai Lama) was assumed only by the Third Incarnation and carried little political authority until the Fifth, Ngawang Lobsang Gyatso (1617-1682); likewise the associated institution of the Panchen Lama was only assumed by the 'Fourth' abbot of Tashilhunpo monastery, Lobsang Chhoky Gyentsen (1570-1662). The reign of the Fifth Dalai Lama (1642-82) and that of his Regent Sanggyé Gyatso (1682-97) - to whom the authorship of The Joyous Feast is attributed - represent a new phase in the political and cultural history of Tibet, conditions which...
# TREWIN: History and Origin of Gar (Tibet)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>India</th>
<th>Ladakh</th>
<th>Tibet</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MUGHAL EMPIRE</strong>&lt;br&gt; Akbar (1556–1605)</td>
<td><strong>NAMGYAL DYNASTY</strong></td>
<td><strong>SECOND KINGDOM</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1586 Mughal conquest of Kashmir</td>
<td>King Jamyang Namgyal (c.1595–1616)</td>
<td>1565 Rise of Tsangpa power in Central Tibet</td>
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<tr>
<td>→ ?c.1595 Musicians brought from Agra to Baltistan following Mughal-Balti alliance</td>
<td>→ ?c.1600 Balti musicians brought to Ladakh following Ladakh-Balti war</td>
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<td><strong>Jahāṅgrīr (1605–28)</strong></td>
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<td>King Senggê Namgyal (1616–42)</td>
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<td><strong>Shāh Jahān (1628–58)</strong></td>
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<td>1630 Ladakhi conquest of Western Tibet (Gugê); musicians sent to Tsangpa court at Shigatse</td>
<td>1630 Ladakhi–Mughal war; Ladakhis capture instruments; Balti ruler granted Imperial favour (khil ‘at)</td>
<td>1642 Tsangpas defeated; Fifth Dalai appointed ruler of Tibet</td>
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<td>→ 1639 Ladakhi–Mughal treaty; musicians sent to Fifth Dalai’s court at Lhasa</td>
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<td><strong>King Deldan Namgyal (1642–94)</strong></td>
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<td>1653 Musicians accompany Dalai Lama’s diplomatic mission to China</td>
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<td><strong>Aurangzeb (1658–1707)</strong></td>
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<td>→ 1666/7 King granted Imperial favour (khil ‘at)</td>
<td>1682 Death of Fifth Dalai Lama; Regent assumes power</td>
<td>1688 The Joyous Feast attributed to Regent</td>
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<td>1679–83 Ladakhi–Mughal–Tibet war</td>
<td>1684 Ladakh–Tibet treaty; Queen Puji Gyalmo sends instruments and musicians to Lhasa</td>
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<td>1683 Ladakhi–Mughal treaty</td>
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<td><strong>TABLE</strong></td>
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Chronology of musical-diplomatic relations between India, Ladakh, and Tibet (1586–1688) (suspected exchange of instruments/musicians shown by arrows).

would have favoured the adoption of a new, sophisticated form of ceremonial music at the courts of the Dalai and Panchen Lamas. Direct musical contact between Central Tibet and Ladakh was in fact established a few years earlier, probably after the Ladakhi King Senggê Namgyal (ruled 1616–42) had completed his conquest of Gugê, one of the three historic lands of Ngor in western Tibet, in 1630. This was the period when the rulers of Tsang were threatening to assert Tsangpa rule over the whole of Tibet, bringing them into conflict with the Mongol–backed Gelukpas in Central Tibet, and with the newly–expanded kingdom of Ladakh. According to The Joyous Feast, the final two Tsangpa rulers of the Deba Tsangpa dynasty, Karma Phintosh Namgyal (fl.1603) and Karma Tenkyong Wangpo (ruled 1621–42) – no doubt acting under political motivation – sent an emissary to Ngor in order to re-establish the ancient gar tradition said to be flourishing there under the descendents of Tibet’s early kings, and encouraged the settlement of musicians and traders from this region. Two gar performers brought from Ngor to the Tsang court at Shigatse are mentioned by name: Khyi’I Tondrup and Gayuni.

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62 See, for example, Stein (1972:83–5).
Garmust have been officially adopted at the court of the Fifth Dalai Lama in Lhasa shortly after he was granted authority over a united Tibet by the Qosot Mongols in 1642, the same year in which a treaty was signed with Ladakh and the last of the Tsangpa rulers defeated and killed. We are informed that the gar ensemble accompanied the Dalai Lama’s controversial diplomatic mission to China in 1653 to meet the Emperor of the new Qing (Manchu) Dynasty Shunzhi (ruled 1644-61), performing daily at the Yellow Palace (huangsi). The ensemble was led by the renowned gar-dpon Guti, also from Ngari, who systematized and expanded the gar repertory.

Further musical developments occurred after the 1684 treaty between Ladakh and Tibet. It is recorded that the Ladakhi Queen Orgyen Putri sent musical instruments (though only sgra-sayan and gling-bu are mentioned) and the gar-dpon Mane Dewa to Lhasa as tribute. Guti’s two sons, Trashi and Tseten, were also subsequently brought there, together with two more artisans, Lopsang Wangchuk and Khangok Ngötrup.

Queen Orgyen Putri is presumably Puji Gyalmo, mentioned in Ladakhi records as the youngest wife of Deldan Namgyal, the Ladakhi King who took flight from the invading Tibetans during the 1679-83 war. She is supposed to have had an affair with the Mongol lama, Galden Tshewang Pelsang, whom the Fifth Dalai Lama had appointed as army general in 1679, returning to Lhasa with him after negotiating the 1684 treaty, and bearing offerings – one assumes those mentioned in The Joyous Feast – for the Regent and the Qosot Khan.

Under the terms of the 1684 treaty, a triennial trading-diplomatic mission (Jo-phyag, ‘lhopcha’k’) was sent from Lhasa to Leh, presenting tribute to the Dalai Lama at the New Year Mönlam (smon-lam) prayer festival. This was administered by Ladakhi Muslims, a community of whom (many of them musicians) became firmly established in Lhasa and other principal Tibetan towns (notably Shigatsé) from this time.

The use of the gar ensemble at the New Year festivities in Lhasa is confirmed in Chinese accounts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries:

On this day (New Year), the Dalai Lama gives a banquet at the top of the Potala. He invites the Tibetan and Chinese officials to a gathering... where a warrior dance [presumably the gri-gar] is staged. Some ten boys are chosen (for this): clothed in garments of many-coloured silk, they wear white linen turbans on their heads, with small bells attached to their feet and halberds in their hands. Before them, dressed in the same manner, stand some ten drummers. The boys dance facing them, to the rhythm of the drumbeats.

COURT MUSIC IN THE MODERN ERA
During Kashmiri rule of Ladakh, under British protection (1846-1947), the King was still permitted to hold court in Leh on ceremonial occasions, and the mghar-mon continued to serve as royal musicians. But the musical symbols of the King’s authority were incorporated within the framework of newer, wider political entities: in 1886, King Sonam Namgyal and a delegation of Ladakhi nobles and artisans took part in the coronation ceremonies of Mahārāja Pratāp Singh in Jammu, in the presence of the British Viceroy, colonial administrators and Western travellers also mention reception music played in their honour.

64 Petech 1977:66-79.
65 The Fifth Dalai Lama had died in 1682 although the Regent kept his death a secret for several years, completing a number of projects – including The Joyous Feast (1688) and the Potala Palace (1694) – whilst acting as absolute ruler (Stein 1972:84-85).
67 A-dwags rgyal-rabs, X,56,8ff (Francke 1926:143).
68 Heber (1903:101-2), for example, describes music played for the British Joint Commissioner and the Wazir of Ladakh, respectively the local representatives of the British and Kashmiri governments.
As in other parts of India, the royal traditions of Ladakh came under public ownership upon Independence. The mkhar-mon were officially disbanded, but some of their descendents have served as Staff Artists at All India Radio–Leh since 1972, while certain royal ceremonies have been maintained by the municipal administration. As a result, a good deal of the court repertory has survived, although the transfer in patronage has inevitably caused changes that are difficult to assess.

In Tibet, gar began to decline even before the Communist era. In the first half of this century, the institution of the Dalai Lama had become politically weakened, and there were other forms of music, notably Western military music, which could fulfil some of the same functions. In the 1950s, gar was appropriated by Chinese leaders, but the growing sense of alienation between the Tibetans and the Han authorities meant that such experiments were bound to fail, and performances ceased after the 1959 uprising.

With the easing of central government control, gar performances were revived in 1982 under the aegis of two state-run cultural organizations, representing Lhasa and the entire Tibet Autonomous Region. In 1987, members of the former made their first overseas tour, appearing in London as part of the BBC–South Bank Board "Music of the Royal Courts" series. The gar-dpon of the Lhasa group, Pasang Tondrup (b.1918), who was the last to serve the present (Fourteenth) Dalai Lama before his flight to India in 1959, also came to Dharamsala to assist in the gar revival there, together with a former Lhasa gar-pa, Rígdzin Dorje (1915–1983), one of the very last of the older generation with a knowledge of this tradition.

Visits were also made to Ladakh in the hope that, once again, something of the old Tibetan tradition could be "recovered" from this region. This quest also, in part, motivated the present exploration. In the course of three centuries, however, it is quite clear that in terms of performance practice, repertoire, musical form and style, gar has become thoroughly Tibetanized whereas the Ladakhi tradition has remained closer to the Indo–Persian mode. These comparisons can, to this extent, be located in time and space since the particular passage from Ladakh to Tibet is one—though not necessarily the only one—which can be recovered historically; and there is certainly scope for further comparative research. This is possible (but by no means easy) not only because of the political value attached to music-makers (instruments and musicians), but also because the music they produced was concerned with forming identities and creating alliances across cultural and political boundaries.

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GLOSSARY

Alchi འལ་チ་
Argon ཉར་ལོ
Dohna Tsangpa དོན་པ་ལྟ་སང་པ།
Deldan Namgyal དེ་ལྟད་ནམ་གྱལ
Dülsong དུས་སོང་
Galden Tshewang Pelsang གལ་སྦེན་བོ་འཕེལ་སོང་
Gayuni རགས་གྲིུ་
Gelukpa དཔལ་ལྟ་སོང་
Gesar རྒྱ་མཚན
gug གུ་
Guti ཁར་
Gyal Khatun རྒྱལ་ཁག་མ
t Jamyang Namgyal རྗིས་པའི་ཉམ་གྱལ
Jamyang Norbu རྗིས་པའི་ཐོ་བུ
Jokhang ཐོ་ཁང
Kargil གར་གིས
Karwa Tenkyong Wangpo སྨི་ལུ་མ།
Karma Phuntsok Namgyal མོ་མ་པུ་ཏུས་གཤེི་ནམ་གྱལ
Khaché གཉིས་
Khangok Ngortrup ཚོགས་པ་དོར་སྤྲུབ་
Khyi Gu Donggrub སླེས་།
Ladakh ལ་དག
Lahchen ཁ་ཆེན
Lhechen Pelkhar གཞག་སྐྲིམ་པོ་ལྡེ་རྒྲ་
Lopsang Chhoekyi Gyentsen གཞག་བཞི་ཆོས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་དབང་
Lobsang Wangchuk ཁ་རྒྱལ་དབང་ཕྱུག
Mane Deva སྒྲིག་མ་འདི་
Namgyal རྒྱལ
Ngari གནས་རྒྱུས་
Ngawang Lobsang Gyatso གནས་རྒྱལ་བཞི་ཆོས་ཀྱི་
Orgyen Putri སྦེན་པ་བྱུང་ངོ་བོ་
Pasang Tondrup བསམ་ནང་ནང་
Pu Loma སྤུ་ལོ་མ་
Rigdzin Dorje རིག་འཛིན་དོར་རྨ
Sanggye Gyatso རྣང་གྱེའི་གྱི་མཚན
Senge Namgyal སེང་གེ་ནམ་གྱལ
Shigatsé ཕྲིག་སྦྱེ་
Shigatse རྗེ་སྦྱེ་
Skardu སྦྱར་རྒྱུས
Sonam Namgyal སོན་པོ་ནམ་གྱལ
Songtsen Gampo སོང་འགྲོས་མགོ་པོ
Stok སྟོོོང་
Tashi སྟི་
Tashilhanpo སྟི་ི་ལྟ་ཧོ་པོ
Tshang(pa) པ་ཚང་(པ་)
Tsate ཁྲ་སྟེ་
Tsongkhapa ཀྲུ་རྒྱུད་པ་

'a-lci
'a-rgan
sde-pa gtsang-pa
bde-ladan rnam-rgyal
'dus-srong
dga'-ldan tshe-dbang dpal-bzang
dga'-g.yu-ni
dge-lugs-pa
ge-sar
gu-ge
gu-ti
rgyal kha-tun (Urdud khätün)
'jam-dbyangs rnam-rgyal
'jam-dbyangs nor-bu
jo-khang
dkar-kyil
karma bstan-skyong dbang-po
karma phun-tshogs rnam-rgyal
kha-che
khang-'og dngos-grub
khyi-gu don-grub
la-dwags
siel
lha-ch'en
sial-ch'en dpal-skar
blo-bzang choes-kyi rgyal-mtshan
blo-bzang dbang-phyug
ma-ne de-ba
rnam-rgyal
mga'-ris
ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho
'og-rgyan bu-khrig
pa-sangs don-grub
bu-k'tid rgyal-mo
rig-'dzin rdo-rje
sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho
seng-ge rnam-rgyal
zhis-ka-rtsa, kizasé
shi-dkar
skar-rdo
bsod-nams rnam-rgyal
strong-bsa-mo sgi-po
sog
bkra-shis
bkra-shis-lhun-po, zhaxi-lunbo
gtseg(-pa)
tshe-brtan
tsong-kha-pa
FIELD REPORT FROM THE YANGZI DELTA

Chinese Folk Singers in Jiangsu Province (1)

ANTOINET SCHIMMELPENNINCK
(Research School CNWS, Leiden University)

Urban scholars and folk song specialists in China pay very little attention to folk singers. Musicologists are primarily interested in musical analysis of folk tunes and in the categorization of genres. As a rule they praise the healthy spirit of country people and the great expressive power of their songs, but they tend to look at folk song culture mainly in egalitarian terms: it is 'the people' or 'the peasants' who sing. But who are 'the people'? Does everyone sing? Why do people sing? What is the nature of singers' relationships with existing folk song repertoires? How popular are folk songs in China at present? In a series of three articles the author tries to offer a more differentiated picture of singers and singing traditions in the Chinese countryside, with particular reference to Jiangsu Province, where she carried out extensive fieldwork between 1986 and 1993. In her first article she introduces five individual singers and presents an overall view of folk singing in Jiangsu.

For most inhabitants of Chinese cities folk songs are synonymous with the amusement repertoire heard on radio broadcasts: folk songs are 'national' tunes sung by popular professional singers to the accompaniment of synthesizers or other modern instruments. At best city people think of folk songs as a thing of the past – a tradition of their rural ancestors.

Most people who live in a city like Shanghai have no idea of the folk songs that can be heard in villages right outside their city, let alone of the wealth of literary invention that distinguishes these songs. A small minority of academics or amateurs with an interest in folk literature – those who read the excellent journal Minjian wenyi jikan – will be aware of the rich subject matter and mythology of the folk songs, but not many of them are familiar with the sound of these songs in actual performance. A still smaller number are sufficiently interested to actually travel to rural areas and collect lyrics and folk stories. They know the tradition by direct personal experience, but their work is beset with problems. One obstacle is formed by the presence of different dialects. Those who have no affinity with the rural dialects – which are different from Shanghai Chinese – have limited access to lyrics sung only ten or fifteen miles outside the city.

Urban scholars and folk song specialists in China – no matter whether they are literary theorists, musicologists, professional musicians or linguists – pay very little attention
to the singers. Literary theorists emphasize history and search for significant links with myths and subject matter found in other regions. Musicologists analyse folk tunes and categorize genres. Most of these scholars praise the healthy spirit of country people and the great expressive power of their songs, but tend to look at folk song culture mainly in egalitarian terms: it is 'the people' or 'the peasants' who sing, in a spontaneous and communal act of creation. The peasants learn their songs by rote and sing them either to lighten their work in the fields or for pleasure, or - sometimes - in courtship. There is no system of music notation and no indigenous music theory to support the tradition. The singing of folk songs is a nonliterate tradition in an essentially nonliterate society, practised by everyone, necessary to all. The stereotyped backdrop for this tradition is a countryside accentuated mainly by mountain tops, where farmers or cowherds sing their dialogue songs over vast distances. This could be Jiangsu, but it could also be Qinghai or Hunan, or Inner Mongolia – the 'Han' tradition is widespread. This is the world of Chinese folk song in a nutshell, as it is evoked in Chinese musicological studies, and as it may appear, perhaps, to a sympathetic observer on a brief fieldwork trip. Substantive field research leads to a different or at least more differentiated picture.

In this series of articles I will focus on folk song traditions in Jiangsu Province, in the eastern coastal part of China, near Shanghai. I carried out most of my fieldwork in part of the so-called Wu dialect area. The actually sphere of influence of the Wu dialect(s) extends from the northern bank of the Yangzi to southern Zhejiang, but this study is

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1 Local 'amateur' song collectors who are familiar with the villages because they live there, and who know the singers at first hand, do better in this respect: their mimeographs and local song anthologies often include brief bibliographies of singers, sometimes with portrait photos.
primarily based on fieldwork in the region east and southeast of Lake Tai, with a rural population of close to 5 million (for a map of the Wu dialect area, see p. 37). From all accounts folk singing was common in many parts of this area in the first half of this century, before industrialization and political changes led to a rapid decline of the tradition. I conducted interviews with over a hundred singers, mostly from 60 to 80 years old. They sang in front of my microphone because I invited them to sing. In the past, folk singing was bound up with work in the fields, and a popular pastime during summer evenings, but the songs are no longer performed in this way.²

SINGERS AND ‘THE’ SINGER
The singers discussed in this essay all work – or had worked – in the fields, at least part of their lives. But beyond this they had other occupations. In the five brief portraits of singers which will be introduced below, we encounter a maid servant, a baker / shopkeeper, a cowherd / hired labourer, a carpenter, some boatmen and a schoolteacher / opera librettist / cultural official. Other informants I interviewed exhibited a similar variety of professions, and a still more diverse picture emerges from a survey of 646 singers in rural Jiangsu published in Suzhou in 1989.³
While the majority in that survey are farmers (51 percent), the list also features factory workers, technicians, teachers, fishermen, administrators, doctors, pedlars, barbers,

² All fieldwork was conducted in close co-operation with Frank Kwekenhoven, and was carried out in the framework of a PhD study at the Research School CNWS of Leiden University. The author wishes to thank the CNWS, the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), and the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation in Taipei for their generous financial support. For a report on fieldwork methods used and for a general picture of the ‘Wu area’, see A. Schimmelpenninck – ‘Report on Fieldwork – Jiangsu Folk Song’, in CHIME 1, Spring 1990, pp. 16-29.
³ In Zhongguo geyao jicheng, Jiangsu juan, Suzhou, 1989. The list is based on local collectors' sound recordings and on data obtained from village officials.
tails, local government officials, musicians, craftsmen and merchants. Among the more singular métiers mentioned in the 1989 list are film operator, papercutting artist, Daoist priest, fortune-teller, wine-grower, and - somewhat surprisingly - landowner. In my own fieldwork, I was unable to trace relevant data for a number of anonymous singers. Among 78 people whose occupations I did record, there are 31 farmers, 11 brickyard or construction workers, 6 cultural cadres, 4 fishermen, 4 factory workers, 3 nurses, 2 middle school pupils, 2 shopkeepers, 2 beggars and 13 others. Occupations represented by just one person include: factory director, agricultural engineer, teacher, silkworm breeder, arboretivist, postman and cleaning woman.

Cultural interests, leisure activities and educational backgrounds of the singers also differ widely. Roughly one-third of those who were interviewed are literate or half-literate. There is ample evidence that literacy has had a considerable impact on the Wu folk song tradition, as will be shown later. Singers frequently express specific interests in culture. Although people in the Wu area traditionally spent most of their time on farming and trying to stay alive, a minority apparently found time and means to engage in other activities, like reading classical novels (a pastime not limited to the rich), participating in traditional opera, telling folk tales or practising calligraphy.

I have not examined singers’ economic conditions in much detail. There are clear disparities in living standards, but these do not necessarily mirror the conditions of the past. The country’s conversion to liberal market policies in the 1980s has drastically altered the situation for many people.

In ‘feudal’ China, the various classes may have had their own distinctive song repertoires. Beggar songs or songs about the hardships of country life were obviously sung by the rich, but there are indications that a certain body of songs was shared by gentry and poor people alike. It is difficult to speculate about the extent of this sharing now that so many social relationships have changed and folk singing in the area has (nearly) become a thing of the past. Anyone who participated in work in the rice paddies was potentially exposed to the shan’ge (山歌) tradition – the rough, bold and loud songs which formed the backbone of the local folk song culture. Reports from some of my informants suggest that a number of locally resident landlords joined in the singing. There is evidence of traditionally distinct folk song repertoires (or performance traditions) for peasants, fishermen, cowherds, women doing indoor work, itinerant beggars, peddlars, house-builders and a number of other groups.

I hope to take a closer look at some of these groups and examine various little-explored aspects of their tradition, with emphasis on the shan’ge repertoire. Many questions need clarification. For example, ‘everyone sings’, but in the countryside not everyone who sings is considered a ‘singer’. Who are the singers, then, and what makes them different from others who may sing but are not identified as singers? What do the songs actually mean for the performers and for their environment, apart from their function in the contexts of ‘work’ and ‘pleasure’?

How widespread is folk singing in southern Jiangsu in reality? Is there folk singing in every village? Is everyone familiar with what the songs sound like? How do the singers perceive their own role, and what do they think about the gradual decline of the tradition? How do singers talk about folk song?

And there are other questions. In what way are – or were – the songs transmitted? How much awareness was there on the part of the singers of aspects like musical and textual change? Some of these questions will be discussed in later articles.

In musicological research, folk singers are frequently viewed as a ‘medium’ of songs, but perhaps it would be fairer to acknowledge that – in their capacity as performers –

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4 Anonymous singers feature in my study via local collectors’ tapes which I was allowed to copy.
they are the folk song culture. Performers' own views and comments on folk song are my main point of departure in this study. For obvious reasons, I cannot introduce at length all the singers (66 men and 39 women) I have interviewed or recorded over the past eight years. My choice of the five people portrayed here individually was to some extent arbitrary. Others might have been equally 'representative' of the Wu song tradition. Hopefully these portraits are sufficiently varied to convey a sense of the rich diversity of the entire performers' community in the Wu area. Part of the message is that 'the' singer of Wu songs does not exist.

The study continues with an evaluation of the five singers' statements in the light of information provided by other singers. It examines such aspects as performance context, the roles of various social groups, ritual and religious aspects of folk songs, processes of transmission, the impact of literacy, and the idea of songs as impromptu compositions.

**LU FUBAO, A COUNTRY WOMAN FROM ZHEJIANG**

Lu Fubao (陸福寶) is a female singer from Luxu, Wujiang County, now in her early seventies. I first went to see her in 1989. Although she was ill, she performed several songs for me. She has a fine voice with a rapid natural vibrato. Like most older singers, Lu Fubao tends to be apologetic about her vocal qualities. During various interviews she told me about her life and her experience with singing.

Lu was born in a peasant home in Daihe village in Zhejiang in 1922. She went to a village school for two or three years but later forgot almost everything she had learned, including the few Chinese characters she had been taught.
She began to sing in her native village at the age of ten: ‘Xiaodiao [小調, ‘little ditties’], or whatever, just for the fun of it.’ Her parents did not sing, but in the summertime she would hear people sing at work in the fields, or in front of their homes in the evenings, while enjoying the cool air (cheng liang, 乘涼). Eventually she began to participate in the singing. She recalls singing shan’ge in dialogue form at the age of sixteen, together with another girl. They might sing until late at night, once provoking an obscene comment from a man.

At the age of 22 Lu Fubao left her native village to marry a farmer in Yuntian’an village in Luxu, southern Jiangsu. For two years she worked in the fields. In that period she picked up bits and pieces of songs from other local singers in Luxu, like Zhang Amu, Li Asan and Yu Baoxiang. ‘I would listen to a few lines and then ask them for a few more lines.’ She never learnt the entire text of long songs. She would only pick up excerpts, ‘but that didn’t matter’. Sometimes she had difficulty understanding local people’s dialect, especially if they were old.

‘I did not learn songs from Lu Amei. I could not understand what she sang. Occasionally she would say: ‘Well now, dear, let me teach you a song!’ But I could make nothing of all her jule jule jule.’

In 1946, she moved to Shanghai, where she worked as a maid servant for thirteen years. She did not sing shan’ge in Shanghai because she hardly felt at home in the big city – she was all on her own – and local people would not have been able to understand her dialect anyway. If there was enough time in the evenings, she loved to go to traditional Chinese opera performances. In 1958 she returned to her husband’s village. During the Great Leap Forward, she worked in a communal soup kitchen. In the early 1980s she took up singing again. She was contacted by folk song researchers from Suzhou and Shanghai and travelled to Wujiang for a recording session. It was the researchers who persuaded her to take up singing again. But it was not like in the old days:

‘Now I am old, and my voice is not good any more. The melody doesn’t come off any more. Nowadays, nobody sings. I am the only one who is left. Zhang Amu is still alive, but he only does ‘ju ju ju’, you can no longer get a tune out of him. Li Asan has died. Yu Baoxiang has died as well. There is no one left with whom I could sing songs together.’

Lu Fubao has not seen much of Jiangsu beyond the towns and villages mentioned above. She did not travel around. She and her husband still live in the Luxu area, in Yuntian’an village, nowadays (since 1949) called Yundong. She has two grown-up daughters. Her children have never expressed any interest in her songs.

**QIAN AFU, THE KING OF SHAN’GE**

Qian Afu (钱阿福), now in his eighties and a widower, is spending the autumn of his life in Dongting village, ten miles northeast of Wuxi. He impresses visitors with his

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5 Quotations from Lu Fubao are from an interview conducted 24 February 1989.
congenial broad smile, shiny bald head and very loud songs. Local villagers have nicknamed him Shan'ge dawang (‘Great King of Shan’ge’).

Qian Afu loves singing to the point of obsession. He can easily keep going for several hours. During interviews he sometimes shifted from speaking to singing in the middle of a sentence, digging up from his memory a text suitable for the situation. He often said: ‘Let me sing another one. I haven’t sung the finest one yet!’ He frequently poured out one text after another without interruption. Qian is fond of erotic songs, which he performs ‘to make people laugh’. He refers to them as cu (rough) or buhuating (‘not good for listening to’), but doesn’t mind singing them. Young people in the audience sometimes encourage him to sing a ‘rough one’. Here is one example of Qian’s rough songs – a text which I recorded in 1990:

Here’s a lad has an eight hundred pound prick.
His lassie – a cunt like a city gate.
Twenty four generals hold a basket under her cunt, oh!
Out comes her son, a great commander he’ll be!

Villagers told me that Qian Afu occasionally got up in a happy mood at three or four o’clock at night to take a walk along the road, singing Shan’ge in a very loud voice. At first people thought he was a ghost, but after having heard his voice on the local Wuxi radio, everyone knew it was him.

Qian Afu was born in Dongting in November 1909. His father was a very poor farmer. Because there were many children in the family and economic conditions were appalling, Qian was sent to Wuxi to find work. In 1923, at the age of fourteen, he became a baker’s apprentice in what was then a relatively quiet and poor market town. He earned one kuai per month, and later ten kuai. ‘I got used to poverty and learned how to economize and save a bit.’ He lived in the shop and baked or sold little buns and snacks for more than fourteen years. In 1937 he married a country girl from Changzhou.

When the Japanese invaded the town in 1938, burning and looting it, Qian fled Wuxi with his wife and two of his younger sisters. Half a year later he returned and tried his luck in a small private trade, a roadside booth. Later he became the proud owner of a flour shop at San li bridge.

Around 1946 he had problems with his health and returned to Dongting. For some years he worked on the land. Then, for the last time he started a shop of his own. He became a successful entrepreneur in the centre of Dongting. After 1949 his bakery was
annexed by the communist government, but he continued to work there until 1979, assisted by his wife. After his retirement, Qian returned to the part of Dongting where he was born. Of the twelve children he and his wife raised, only four are alive today. He has supported them generously and now they take care of him.

How did Qian Afu become a folk singer? As a small boy, still living with his parents, he picked up a few folk songs in the fields. ‘In those days, everyone who worked in the fields could sing shan’ge.’ He learned his first ‘rough’ song at the age of twelve. None of his brothers or sisters could sing. ‘Even if you taught them a song, they wouldn’t remember it. Papa could sing, but he died at 48, when he was still young. My mother gave birth to eight children and died when she was 39.’ But it was only in the bakery in Wuxi that he got acquainted with folk songs in earnest. An elder colleague, called Zhang Rongbao, taught him numerous songs in exchange for wine and food.

‘He usually milled rice meal, while I made glutinous rice cookies. If I offered him dried doufu worth two copper coins, and a bowl of Shaoxing wine for eight coins, he would teach me a few songs.’

Judging from the hundreds of songs which he knows today, Qian Afu must have spent a fortune on his teacher. But where did his teacher get his songs?

‘He was able to read a few characters, and he owned shan’ge booklets, of the kind that you could buy in booths in the street. He would look into such a booklet and then teach me a song, one verse after another. His materials were all burned when the Japanese came to Wuxi.’

After the Cultural Revolution, Qian Afu took up singing again. He was discovered by Chinese folklorists and invited to come and sing at folk literature meetings in Suzhou, Nanjing or even Wuchang, a city in Hubei Province. He was made an honorary member of several folklore societies. He received a certificate ‘excellent folk singer’ (youxiu min’geshou) and local Wuxi TV produced a 45-minute documentary about his life. It was claimed that Qian Afu knew more than 2,500 songs by heart. The number may be an exaggeration, but he did sing close to 2,000 lines of text during the five song sessions I had with him. Many of his songs were included in local anthologies.

The public attention which Qian Afu received boosted his pride: ‘My shan’ge are famous and they rank very high; both Chinese and foreigners have come to collect my songs.’

He is aware of being an exponent of an ancient tradition which has become rare and precious: ‘Nowadays very few people are able to perform these songs. Those who could do it have all died.’ He is not interested in radio and television or in Chinese opera, but he may go to an occasional story-telling performance. He had no formal education and did not learn to read or write. At present, he is in poor health. His voice has grown weaker and he sometimes mixes up texts, which he is quite aware of: ‘The matters of my heart are no good any more, neither are the matters of my brain.’

ZHAN YONGMING, THE SHAN’GE CICADA
Zhao Yongming (赵永明) was born in June 1919 in Tanli village, east of Luxu, not far from the Zhejiang border. He was the youngest in a family of five children. His parents worked the land and were poor. They had no money to send him to school. He can write his name and read a few characters. He is better in remembering songs:

‘When I was young I learned to sing all kinds of melodies and songs. (...) I remember how Subei people [i.e. people from northern Jiangsu] came to beg during the New Year celebrations. They sang songs for money. Life was bitter for them. When I was ten years old I heard these songs, but later I heard them no more.’

6 Quotations from Qian Afu are from interviews conducted January 1989 and January & April 1990.

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Nobody in his parents’ home could sing. Zhao began to sing shan’ge at the age of 13, when he was hired as a cowherd in Jiashan (northern Zhejiang). He had no special teacher. He would pick up songs in the fields—a few lines from one singer, then some more lines from another one. He was fond of singing dui’ge (对歌 dialogue songs) while herding cattle. He and the other boys would sing to each other over large distances in high and piercing voices. He also sang during other outdoor activities, such as weeding: ‘It would make you forget that you were hot and exhausted’.

‘While we were planting rice seedlings [chayang插秧], or pulling out weeds [yundao起稻, tangdao耥稻], we sang. If the weather grew hot we also sang during the evenings, when the air was cooler. People would explicitly ask for us. Then we had tea and refreshments, and many people came to listen. (...) There were quite a few women who were very fond of my songs. During the weeding they always asked me to sing.’

The local landlords were also interested in Zhao’s singing. Some of them participated in his dialogues.

In general his employers were kind to him. Later he was given the nickname Shan’ge zhilitao (Shan’ge cicada), which was a compliment. ‘Do not cicadas sing beautifully?’

Zhao Yongming continued to work for others as a cowherd until 1949. After the land redistribution he returned to Luxu and began to work in a commune, cultivating rice and oil seeds. He now lived with his parents. ‘I refused to sing for them in the evenings because I did not feel happy. I was always very tired.’

The singing of traditional songs was virtually prohibited by the local government after 1949. What came instead were political songs, which Zhao Yongming refers to as new shan’ge [xin shan’ge]. Some of the lyrics were composed by local cultural workers to local folk tunes. Zhao was asked to sing them on formal occasions, notably in the early 1960s.

In 1960, after a government appeal, Zhao went to the far northwest of China, ‘to assist in the development of Xinjiang province’. ‘Many of us went there, but we all returned home after some time. The work in Xinjiang was not hard, but the winter was extremely cold, and there was no food.’ He heard the local folk songs of Xinjiang but did not understand them. He did not sing his own songs there because—as he explained—he felt unhappy.

He returned to Wujiang in 1961. At the age of 46 he married a widow from Luxu. She was about his age and bore him no children, but she brought along a son from her previous marriage. In the 1960s, Zhao Yongming was invited to sing political songs at a meeting in Wujiang. He still recalls that one song was about the friendship between China and Vietnam. It was written by a local cadre.
'Of the old texts they said that these spoiled the youth. They were called yellow [huangseede, i.e. pornographic], so we weren't allowed to sing them. You see, shan'ge are always about the relationship between a man and a woman. So they were forbidden."

In 1973 he worked and lived on a plot of reclaimed land east of Lake Tai. The worst period of the Cultural Revolution had passed. But even now, when a member of the local brigade overheard him singing songs to himself he warned him not to perform such 'unhealthy' things. Zhao Yongming:

'Only after Mao died was it permitted again to sing shan'ge.'

At present, he lives with his family and grandchildren in his native village. Zhao Yongming is past seventy. He has not much energy left. For a brief time he cultivated fish in a pond near his home. He also worked as a caretaker in an oil refinery, but was sent home again. In recent years he has earned a little bit of money by singing folk songs - local collectors pay him a few kuni. He was elected a member of folk song study associations in Nanjing and Suzhou. They declared him a 'famous shan'ge singer' [zhuming shan'geshou]. Apart from his journey to Xinjiang and a single visit to Shanghai in the 1950s, he has never left his native region. Zhao is still not a very happy man, because 'life is not easy with six mouths to feed', and 'it is hard not to have a son of your own'. But he is fond of singing folk songs if people come to record them. During seven sessions, I collected more than 1,200 lines from Zhao Yongming, including parts of the long narrative songs Zhao Shengguan, and Wu Gunliang. This is the beginning verse of Wu Gunliang, recorded 13 December 1988:

Not singing shan'ge, one forgets them easily;
So I go and look for them. My belly still hides 108,900 baskets full!
Hey ho! To Wujiang's Suspended Rainbow Bridge at Eastern Gate I carry them — and sing them all;
The bridge collapses under their weight. Eastern Lake Tai is flooded with my songs!

Wu Gunliang, 1st verse. Note the long drawn-out falsetto passage in the first line.

I rewarded Zhao with pictures, clothes, wine, cigarettes and shoes. He has a light, pleasant and sensitive voice. He can very easily switch to falsetto:
‘My voice? Oh, you should have heard me twenty years ago. Then it all sounded much better. (...) At present, I am probably the only one left who can sing Wu songs. (...) I had a friend, Zhang Amu, who sang more beautifully than I did. He was the king. But he is dead. It’s all over now.’

**JIN WENYIN, MAN OF LETTERS**

Jin Wenyin (金文閔), folk singer and folk song collector, lives in Qiandai village, Shengpu, east of Suzhou. He is in his early sixties. He has many books and is interested in local folklore and all things traditional. His knowledge ranges from local dress and ornamental hairpins to old coins, and from traditional opera to ancient Jiangnan painters. Jin is an amateur opera performer, and a passionate fiddle player. He picked up his folk songs from friends and neighbours, but also from books. He spent most of his life in culture, as he calls it, as a village schoolteacher, later as a cultural worker for the local government.

Jin was born in 1927 in Mudu, east of Lake Tai. His parents started a teahouse and a local shop in Shengpu (then Jiapuxiang). They sold meat and fish and attracted visitors from the entire neighbourhood. Jin had one younger brother who could sing folk songs – ‘but not very well’ – and two sisters.

‘Actually, in those days everyone was able to sing a handful of songs in a simple but effective way. But of course there were only a few people who were really good singers and who rose to fame.’

When Jin Wenyin was eight years old he went to a private school [sishu 私书]. After six years he stopped school: as an older boy he was expected to assist his parents at home. In his spare time he learned to read gongchepu [traditional music notation] and began to play the erhu, the Chinese two-stringed fiddle. Sometimes he worked in the fields and joined in with the rhythmic cries of the answering chorus in group shang'ge. He remembers hearing the naughty dui ge (dialogue songs) of other children of his age who herded cattle in the meadows, but he did not join in.

He became a village schoolteacher at the age of 18. Some of his pupils were only one or two years younger than he was, but he was treated with respect. ‘Some of my pupils could play the erhu. After lessons we would play together and study gongchepu. They brought me some money to support me as a teacher.’ The chairman of a regional Kunqu school taught him to sing opera.

‘He sang Suju, a very beautiful genre, but not widely appreciated because it was rather elitist. Many people in the village did not understand its language, so I eventually switched to Hujia [Shanghai opera]. They could understand Hujia. To be honest, my mother was very much against my preoccupation with opera, because opera actors were looked down upon. Opera was considered vulgar and dirty. So I more or less broke with her. Later she admitted that I was actually quite diligent. So in 1954, when she told me to marry, I obeyed her.’

His wife, from a nearby village, was not a singer. His mother only sang xiaodiao (‘little ditties’) but was widely admired for it. When Jin Wenjing was still a young boy he would occasionally accompany young girls in his village on erhu when they sang love songs. It may have triggered his first genuine interest in folk song. He was 14 and the girls did not mind his presence, but they shunned older boys, who teased them.

‘I got along with them well and they trusted me. Some of their songs were, eh... not so good, so they were hesitant to sing them, but I encouraged them to continue. “I won’t tell anyone else, so just sing whatever you like,” I told them. And I always kept my promise.’

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7 Quotations from Zhao are from interviews conducted 23 February 1989 and 17 May 1990.
Jin did write down some of the girls’ lyrics, and he began to collect songs from other singers as well. In the mid-1950s folk songs were politicized. The old love songs were heard less than before, and new propaganda texts were now provided to be sung to the old tunes. Jin recalls participating in a political tian’ge (田歌 ‘field song’) class, where these new songs were practised. But his main interest at that time was still opera, and he began to write opera libretti and direct stage performances. He was briefly employed as a cultural official and propaganda writer by the local government, but in 1959 the political climate turned harsher and he was sent back home. Jin’s interests in traditional culture made him increasingly vulnerable. At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution he was maltreated and dragged around the village with a placard around his neck. The books and folk song texts which he had collected were burnt, together with other possessions.

‘They now said that love songs were old rubbish [jiu dongxi]. I could no longer maintain contact with others who knew lots of songs.’

He was forced to feed pigs and hens, and continued to do so for nearly ten years, supporting his small son and two daughters as best he could. In 1979 he was restored to his former post as a cultural worker in Shengpu, until his retirement in 1988. He made efforts to bring back to memory the songs which he had collected decades ago. ‘I wrote them down once more. I even went to see people who had sung them to me, if they were still around.’ At present, Jin collects all possible texts:

‘No matter whether they are dirty songs [hun’ge 混歌] or folk songs [min’ge 民歌] or love songs [qing’ge 情歌]. It’s useful material, and I want all of it, even children’s songs. I have time on my hands now that I am retired. I visit the oldest people first, because if they die, they take things forever into their grave.’

Between May 1987 and April 1992 I saw Jin Wenyin seven times. I recorded approximately sixty songs, mostly short ones of two or three verses. Here is one example of a love song which I collected in May 1987:

The girl on the shore is washing clothes.
She takes a quick glance at her lover on the other shore.
Says: ‘I am like the carp which has emerged just now, in the third month of spring.
I wonder... are you the greedy yellow cat which will devour me whole? ’
For some of the longer texts Jin consulted written versions, because he did not know them completely by heart.\footnote{Quotations from Jin Wenyin come from interviews conducted 9-11 May 1990 and 21 April 1992.}

**LIAN DAGEN, CHASER OF SPIRITS**

The last in this series of portraits is Lian Dagen (廉大根), a singer and story-teller from Huangdai (north of Suzhou). His voice and his health have grown weak. I was only able to record fragments of a few of his songs. But local informants attested to his former ability as a singer. His son Lian Xiaodi (廉小弟) collected long narrative lyrics from his father, a total corpus of more than 10,000 lines.\footnote{These include Zhao Shengguan (4,800 lines), Shen Qige and Ru E (each more than 2,000 lines), and various shorter ones such as Hong lang qu xiao yi (1,200 lines).} Most of these songs are tragic love stories about sons and daughters of rich landowners in feudal times. The stories are set against a backdrop of floods, famines, magic and frequent interference by the gods. The lovers may end up in heaven or in hell. Some of the male characters are of high birth and aspire to become kings or emperors. Basically, these same elements can be found in the repertoire of other singers, but Lian Dagen shows a passionate interest in the characters of his songs, some of whom he regards as saints. He is a deeply religious person, a Daoist worshipper. His wife is a practising lay Buddhist.

Lian Dagen was born in September 1919 in Huangdai. He grew up in a family of singers. He was the oldest of many children in his parents’ home.

‘My grandfather sang folk songs, and so did my father. They were oarsmen on a ferryboat between Suzhou and Huangdai. It took them four hours to cover the ten miles from our village to Suzhou city, and they usually sang *shan’ge* during their work. The passengers appreciated the songs and would occasionally join in. My mother and grandmother did not sing, except lullabies.’

Lian Dagen learned to sing *shan’ge* from people who worked outdoors. He had no particular ‘teacher’. ‘You heard the others, and you sang.’ Lian and his younger brother took to singing on all kinds of outdoor occasions, such as collecting grass or watching over an ox while it pulled a millstone. From 1925 to 1932 he attended a private primary school (*sishu*) in Huangdai. He learned to read and write and showed talent for calligraphy. He took a fancy to collecting riddle songs (*mi ge* 迷歌) which he heard from other children around him. Occasionally he sang these riddle songs to the local *shan’ge* tune of Huangdai. After six years at school he went to work in the fields and began to pick up *shan’ge* texts of the kind that grown-up people sang.

When he was 19 he married Lu Dagen (陆大根), a local farmer’s daughter. She was two years younger than he was and shared his passion for *shan’ge*. Dialogue singing created a bond between them. Like Lian Dagen, his wife had many relatives who were prolific singers. Her grandfather sang *shan’ge* so beautifully that ferrymen who passed by on the lake would row their boats to the shore to listen to him.

Until the early 1940s, Lian worked as a farmer in Huangdai. The strains of war and poverty and the growing number of mouths to feed drove him to Shanghai when he was 26. He also hoped to avoid conscription by the Guomindang by hiding in the big city. For three years he and his wife worked in Shanghai, he as a carpenter and she as a wet-nurse. Eventually they returned to Huangdai to take up farming again. Lian did not sing *shan’ge* in Shanghai because nobody there was interested. In fact he gave up singing when the Japanese invaded Jiangsu. He was not encouraged to take it up again after 1949. Life was difficult. His wife gave birth to twelve children, seven of which died of famine or illness.
When his son Xiaodi started to take an interest in Lian Dagen’s songs in the late 1970s, Lian had not sung for more than thirty years. He racked his brain to recover the thousands of lines which at one time he had known so well. Before the Cultural Revolution he had owned a booklet (chaoben 抄本) containing a version of the long narrative song *Zhao Shengguan*. He had copied the text from another singer and had learned to sing the song by reading from the booklet and listening to other singers’ performances. Some people in his neighbourhood had had similar songbooks, but the possession of such booklets became dangerous during the Cultural Revolution. Red Guards ransacked the houses of farmers, searching for any traces of a ‘feudal, backward mentality’. Lian Xiaodi, the son of Lian Dagen, recalls:

‘Nearly everything which contained characters was burnt, even packets of cigarettes. My father was severely beaten because he did not immediately come out with everything he kept in his home.’

The manuscript of *Zhao Shengguan* was destroyed, but a little handwritten booklet with riddle songs (*mi ge*) from his childhood miraculously escaped the fire. He had hidden it in the pig’s trough.

‘It was the only thing he dared to hide. They wouldn’t have killed him for it.’

Lian Dagen was severely punished for his ‘unhealthy’ interest in folk songs and magic. From 1972 to 1975 he lived separated from his wife and most of his children in a caretaker’s cottage near a fishpond and a melon field in Huangbai. His son kept him company, and they shared some quiet hours in the midst of all the difficulties. A younger brother of Lian Dagen, also a *shan’ge* singer, was driven to suicide.
Memories of the Cultural Revolution still haunt the Lian family today. The bridge in front of Lian Dagen's house is called Red Guard Bridge – no one has bothered to remove the name carved in concrete in the late 1960s. The late 1970s were a period of great distress, but also the time when Xiaodi began to develop an interest in the songs and stories of his parents. He recalls:

"In 1975 it was still possible to hear people sing in the fields. People only sang very softly, when returning home from work. No one dared to sing aloud at that time."

His parents' songs contained many erotic passages. They would speak the texts for Lian Xiaodi, rather than sing them, afraid to be overheard. They were eager to preserve the lyrics they had learned, but also worried that the written versions might fall into the wrong hands. Fearing danger, they twice burnt a written version of Zhao Shengguan which had taken their son more than a year to commit to paper. They slept very badly whenever Xiaodi asked them for texts. Bringing back to memory the long songs was a slow and at times almost maddening task. They could get painfully excited about it.

Lian Dagen showed an interest in many other aspects of folk culture. He loved opera and pingtan and saw much of it, notably during his years in Shanghai. He learned to sing several melodies from opera and pingtan. He liked to read historical novels such as 'The Book of the Three Kingdoms' (Sanguozhi yanyi ). In addition to all this, he was – and still is – a skilled calligrapher. During the New Year period of 1989 I saw him walking around with black ink and red paper, preparing some couplets to paste on the door of a neighbour's house. He also earned local fame as a story-teller. During the interviews he told me – with his son serving as interpreter – various legends about the origins of the Chinese people, stories he related directly to his religious views. He believes in various forms of magic and exorcism. I saw him protect his house against spirits by spreading fresh chicken blood on his doorstep or by suspending a grass-made 'spider' from the roof. I asked him whether any of his songs were traditionally sung on ritual occasions, to which he said no. One day when I inquired about the difference between Daoism and Buddhism (his wife's religion), he said:

"Originally, the Buddhists were in favour of equality and against any form of suppression, but nowadays they listen too much to their leaders. Whatever the leaders say is always right, "even their farts smell fragrant"!"

Lian and his wife do not experience their religious views as opposites. They have firmly supported each other through the years. Lian Dagen was deeply moved when, in May 1990, his wife began to sing spontaneously in front of my microphone. She had not sung to anyone outside the family for nearly half a century.10

REGIONAL SPREAD OF FOLK SONG CULTURE
From the interviews with the singers it is possible to obtain an overall picture of folk song in southern Jiangsu the way it was sung over the past one hundred years. As I already pointed out, folk song culture has been on the decline for several decades. I had to piece together casual remarks dropped by singers, stray lines in lyrics and accidental observations in local folklore studies, and add a seasoning of plain guesswork, to obtain a plausible idea of what performance habits were like in various stages during the lives of my informants. A number of phenomena could be traced back three or four generations. Folk singing was very common in many parts of the Wu area in the first half of this century. It was a popular activity during the communal work of planting and weeding

10 Quotations from Lian Dagen, his wife and son in this were taken from interviews conducted 13 November 1988, 6-7 February 1989, and 7-10 May 1990.
Traditionally, back-breaking work like rice planting and weeding was often accompanied by songs.

in the fields and in the evening, when enjoying leisure after a day of hard work. The phrase *cheng liang* (乘凉 'enjoying the cool air') is frequently used by singers; it also occurs in various songs. After work there would be informal gatherings in front of people's houses or near a bridge in the centre of the village. In addition to planting, weeding or resting, there were many other occasions for singing: indoor work like embroidering or spinning, outdoor work like herding cattle, rowing a boat, or transporting goods, participating in festivals and games, worshipping at temple sites, or courting.

How widespread was the tradition? Not everyone sang, but clearly a lot of people sang. There are independent eyewitness reports on singing in the Wu area from Chinese and Japanese anthropologists who visited Jiangsu and Anhui in the early 1930s. Here is one such description, dated 1 July 1933:

‘When we left the capital [Nanjing] by train at 10 o'clock in the morning, there was a light breeze and a drizzle. Finally we were off to the people! The train was ventilated but the air was muggy all the same. The landscape on both sides was flat. We saw rice and sorghum planted everywhere, growing profusely and radiating a wonderful vitality. The farmers had formed groups of three to five people; they sang during the work with a truly tremendous energy. We passed clusters of square grass huts and small vegetable gardens, with sometimes a stone fortress in archaic style in between the huts; we pondered on the simplicity and the insecurity of these people's lives.’

[Italics added.]

Not every part of the Wu area was equally fertile in terms of songs and singers. The local Bureaux of Culture (founded by the Government) who supervised and

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documented folk song activities from the 1950s onwards were not always very active in this respect. Some areas may have been left virtually unexplored, and I may have missed them in my own research. But it is clear, all the same, that the situation differs remarkably from one region to the next. I found that Baimao, in the north, and Luxu, in the south, were rich in singers. Other villages had remarkably few people who sang or remembered having heard songs in the past. According to Jin Xu, chairman of the Wu Folk Song Research Study Society, the singing of shan’ge used to be particularly popular in those parts of the area where wet-rice was grown. Rice cultivation would invariably result in rice planting and weeding songs in a variety of forms (solo or with lead singers and chorus).

The lower central parts of the Yangzi delta may have been particularly rich in folk song. Wet-rice is best grown on low-lying land with easy access to water. A vast area from Changshu in the north down to Zhejiang Province, cutting through the western half of Shanghai district and including most of Wuxi, Xujia, and Wujiangxian, never rises more than 3 to 5 metres above sea level and focuses on rice cultivation. According to data from the 1930s, the highest proportions of rice in the area were grown in Kunshan, Songjiang, and Qingpu. These are indeed areas where so-called shan’geban were reported to be very active in the past. Shan’geban 随歌班 were ad hoc groups of singers hired by landowners to support (and if possibly speed up) the work by singing vigorous songs. Some of these groups reached a semi-professional status, which demonstrates their local importance.

The outer parts of the Yangzi delta have high-lying ground where cotton (a dry crop) is grown. I noticed that Jiuq (close to the Yangzi) and most of the villages on Chongming island, which have mixed cotton and rice cultivation, were less rich in shan’ge. I found no traces at all of shan’ge on the tip of the Dongtianshao peninsula and on Dongtianshao island, which are 20 to 50 metres (or more) above sea level and have a very different vegetation, with orange plantations and vegetable plots.

Naturally, shan’ge are not the only type of folk songs found in the Wu area, and their occurrence cannot be solely explained by geographical factors. (The case of Baimao village with its unusually high proportion of young female singers will be discussed later.) However, the connection between shan’ge singing and rice cultivation in the area is quite evident. The relationship is also reflected in the vast quantity of lyrics containing casual or elaborate references to work in the rice paddies, especially weeding. Here is just one example (sung by Jin Wenyin, recorded in 1988):

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Hey! if you're weeding, sing a weeding song.
With knees bent, squelching in the mud.
A plot of six feet, full of weeds.
My ten pointed fingers hold six seedlings. Hey!
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呀！耘稻要唱耘稻歌
弯腰弯弯泥里拔
翻手六尺路口开
十指尖尖稻六根
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Most singers I interviewed had lived in a single place for most of their lives (in the case of the male singers usually their native village) and did not travel around very much,

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12 While every xiang (county) had such a bureau, there were only a limited number of filials in each county (e.g. some twenty in Wujiang), which means that not necessarily every village was covered.

13 The Wu Folk Song Research Society (Wuge xuehui), founded officially in 1985, has some two hundred members, who include both singers and collectors, people who sympathize with the local folk song tradition and have a special interest in the texts of the songs, and to a lesser extent, in the music. The Society publishes song anthologies and contributes to several journals of folk literature published in Shanghai and elsewhere. Its present headquarters are the Suzhou Folklore Museum (Suzhou Minsu Bowuguan). The address of the Wu Folk Song Research Society is: Wuge xuehui, Suzhou minsu bowuguan, Yuanlin lu, Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, 215001 P.R. of China.
In the past, boat travellers in Jiangsu would often sing songs during their journeys.

which may account for fairly rigid patterns of tune distribution in the area. Every region appeared to have its own favoured shan'ge tune or tunes.\textsuperscript{14} Nevertheless, folk tunes and text repertoires did spread around. Certain melodic turns or ornaments were the same in many parts of the Wu area. And texts appear to have travelled particularly easy from one place to the next.

It is not difficult to imagine the most likely ways and means of transport. Marriage was in most cases inter-village and patrilocal, i.e. women changed residence at marriage.\textsuperscript{15} A girl would take whatever songs she knew to her husband's village, as Lu Fubao did. Cowherds and hired labourers would find work in other village regions and pick up songs there, as in the case of Zhao Yongming. They would take them back home if they returned to their native area. Boatmen like Lian Dagen's father and grandfather transported their song repertoire almost daily from the countryside to Suzhou, and boat passengers who overheard the songs might take some of the texts still further. In addition to this, there were the itinerant beggars and pedlars who took their songs wherever they went. Sing-song girls may have taught songs to non-locals who visited their brothels. Itinerant opera troupes sometimes adopted local folk song texts and included them (sung to opera tunes) in their performances. In that case the texts travelled, but usually not the tunes.

The dissemination of songs was not completely arbitrary and free. Dialects and geography were likely to set barriers with respect to the distance that songs could travel or the degree to which they could be incorporated in repertoires of adjacent regions.


Zhao Yongming never took his songs as far as northwest China. Lu Fubao and Lian Dagen found that their songs would not attract any audience in Shanghai, just sixty or seventy kilometres from their native villages. Urban people were not interested in weeding and planting songs, certainly not if they were sung in an unfamiliar dialect. People in the city might have been interested in ballads about tragic loves and all kinds of magical events, but the language and metaphors in the songs were too far removed from their urban culture. When Qian Afu had his booth in the streets of Wuxi, he, too, noticed that people were not interested in his songs:

'No one paid attention. Sometimes people stopped to listen, but when they had heard two or three lines they walked away.'

Within the limits of the Wu dialect area, the elaborate and intricate net of waterways – the predominant means of communication – helped to establish a close-knit rural song tradition.

As the recorded repertoire in this study shows, many of the lyrics spread to villages far apart in the Wuxi, Wuxian and Wujiang regions. Naturally, there was a certain amount of change and adaptation along the way – different local dialect words and turns-of-phrase would be pieced in, different names and titles would be used, different tunes would carry the texts.16

**SOME REMARKS ABOUT THE REPERTOIRE**

Virtually everywhere in the Wu area love songs are the favourite genre.17 They vary from brief descriptive verse and courtship texts to long narrative songs. Love songs could be heard in the fields during work or on almost any other occasion for singing, sometimes even in paraliturgical situations. One informant in Shenta village quoted a popular local saying: ‘Out of every ten shan’ge, nine are about love’ (‘Shizhi shan’ge jiuzhi qing’). I expect that this actually reflects the situation in many parts of China, not just the Wu area.18

Other subject matter ranges from descriptions of scenery to stories about legendary figures. Riddle songs and seasonal cycle songs are widely popular. Many lyrics contain references to gambling and prostitution, and songs about political and historical events can be found in many places. Songs for ritual occasions include bridal songs, funeral laments and various chants for worshipping.

Political songs, propagated by the government – and often written by local officials – have lost much of their appeal for folk singers after more than four decades of political harassment and violence. But incidentally, new political songs may still emerge in the countryside. In 1990, one year after the military crackdown on the ‘Tiananmen’ Democracy movement of 1989, I recorded the following local folk song in Taozhuang village in praise of Communist government leaders who were in power or who rose to power at that time:

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17 Of 860 song performances in my study I was able to screen 698 songs for subject matter. More than half of these (52 percent) are about one or other aspect of love or relationships between men and women. Other topics or subject areas include: riddles (13.7 %), descriptions of work (8.3 %), historical and legendary figures (6.7 %), social problems like famines, poverty, feudal suppression, gambling (5.8 %), ceremonial and ritual customs (4.5 %) and political propaganda (4.2 %).

18 Chinese folk song anthologies can be misleading in this respect. They often include love songs, but these are not necessarily presented as the most prominent category. Editors like to stress variety. They often include a broad range of topics, which gives an idea of the many-sidedness of a local song repertoire, but possibly a wrong idea about which topics the performers like best.
Poetry dominates over music in the Wu folk song culture. Singers know only a handful of tunes to which they sing hundreds of texts. They rarely express a fondness for tunes. Their favourite songs are appreciated for textual reasons. The size of singers’ text repertoires ranges from a few lines to ten thousand lines or more. Most of the songs are one-verse lyrics, usually referred to as *sijitou shan’ge* (四句头山歌 ‘four-line shan’ge ’). Anyone listed as a singer in my study performed at least one such song. Some of the more flexible singers performed whole series of short verses in a row, extemporizing on given patterns and formulas. If nothing else, people could sing *Shizhi taizi* (‘Ten Tables’), a popular enumeration song which piles up famous names of historical or legendary figures.

‘Sometimes we sang songs in the fields until we knew no more texts. What to do about it? Well, we could sing *Shizhi taizi*. That gave us ten more songs. But actually we did not think *Shizhi taizi* was very interesting.’ [Jin Wenyin, 11 May 1990.]

Jin Wenyin’s repertoire amounted to some six hundred lines. He was neither a mere beginner nor a really advanced singer. The number of lines memorized by Lian Dagen (more than 10,000) is remarkable but by no means exceptional. Hua Zurong, a singer near Wuxi told me that he knew at least five long narrative songs, all acquired orally, and each having well over two thousand lines. The longest had 4,500 lines and would take him three days to perform. *Average* singers, like Lu Fubao or Jin Wenyin, would not know such lengthy songs. It was only the ‘kings’ and ‘queens’ of shan’ge like Qian Afu who sang them – and rose to fame.

Local writings frequently refer to the extraordinary memory feats of individual singers. In recent years, over thirty long narrative songs from southern Jiangsu were published by interested folklorists. Some performers apparently managed to learn such songs from beginning to end, and their total repertoire could amount to well over 12,000 lines. Less gifted singers might know large segments of one or two long songs and would share and supplement each other’s performances. All these numbers should not be interpreted very rigidly. They may be indicative of the singers’ memory capacities, but, more likely, of their talents for improvisation and creation. Beyond the basic unit of the four-line stanza, there is essentially no fixed length for any given shan’ge. Some versions of the long narrative song *Shen Qige* have 500 lines, while other versions have five times as many. The length of a song actually depends very much on the performer, on the occasion of his performance and on the response of the audience.

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19 *Jiu shi ni nan dai di yi chun*, sung by Wu Qisheng, Taozhuang, 29 May 1990. A roc is an imaginary bird of ancient times, believed to be very large and fierce. The character for roc (peng) is identical with that in Li Peng’s name. To make a roc’s flight of ten thousand miles is a general metaphor for ‘to have a bright future’.

20 This song is called *Qing she zhouan* or *Xiao Qingqing*. It is recorded in *Jiangnan shi da minjian xushishi*, changpian Wuge ji, Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 1989, pp. 600–731. The other songs were *Xi Liulang*, *Shen Qige*, *Jin bu huan*, and *Hua Baoshan*.


SINGERS AT WORK IN THE FIELDS: SINGLE, BUT NOT ALONE

Traditionally, *shan'ge* singing took place primarily in summer, during work in the rice paddies. One of my informants said that ‘winter was not a good time for singing *shan'ge*. The only vocal sounds heard outdoors all year round were *haozi* 響子, brief rhythmic shouts to support physical motion. When I toured parts of the Wu area on bicycle in 1988, I heard many *haozi* — notably from people who carried bricks or sand on bamboo poles — but no full-blown songs.²³

Things were different before 1949, as virtually all informants confirmed. The summer air was filled with the sounds of *shan'ge* — as familiar to villagers’ ears as the twittering of birds or the grunting of pigs. Here is one report out of many:

‘During weeding and ploughing we sang together. One of us sang a question, and people in the next field sang the reply. You always sang loud to attract other people’s attention and to tempt them to respond. Singing made you forget the heavy work. We did not sing every day, but as soon as anyone started there was a lot of singing. It went on in the seventh and eighth month, when the harvest had been collected and the rice seedlings planted and we had nothing else to do. Then we sang during the evenings.’²⁴

Singing was functional particularly during weeding activities like *yundao* and *tangdao*. *Yundao* (also called *yunmiào* 言妙) was weeding in squatted position, sometimes with the help of special bamboo-made finger cuffs to pull out the weeds. People wore trousers of grass or fibre to protect their legs while they crawled around in the mud. The work was exhausting. It was carried out in the hottest months of the year. *Shan'ge* performances during *yundao* were intended to bring relief but sounded as strenuous and energetic as the weeding movements.

The *yundao* songs (*yundao ge*) were sung by groups, with long drawn-out ‘hey-hey’ cries which could be adjusted to the rhythm of the pulling. One singer acted as a lead singer who sang the text parts, while others joined in with ‘hey-hey’ cries at the end of a line. Singing was so common during this work that singers in some parts of Kunshan referred to *all* their songs as *yundao shan'ge*. The more relaxed work of weeding with a harrow (*tangdao*) was also accompanied by song.

‘During *tangdao* we mostly sang *siju tou* [short songs of four lines]. You sang a line, and you grabbed a bit, you sang a line, and you grabbed a bit, and so on.’²⁵

Other field activities accompanied by song included ploughing, planting young seedlings (*chayang* 播秧 or *luoyang* 耘秧), collecting manure, milling rice (*qianlong* 秩禾), herding cattle (*fang niu* 放牛) and pumping water to irrigate land (*cheshui* 车水).²⁶ There was no notable habit of singing during harvest time, which was a period of hectic mobility.

The lyrics often reflected the seasons and the rhythm of outdoor work, especially in formulaic beginning lines. These lines could be sung at the appropriate moments:

‘During *yundao*, you watched the sun [i.e. you kept an eye on the time]. So in the morning, the singers of *han shan'ge* sang “The sun rises in the east”. And around noon, when it was time for lunch, they sang “When the sun is right above, the girl comes and brings tea”. And late in the afternoon they sang ‘The sun sets behind the western mountains’.”²⁷

²³ Unlike *shan'ge*, *haozi* are very much a supraregional genre, easily learned and shared by people from different parts of the country. I recorded workers in a brickyard who transported bricks on wheelbarrows. Some of them had recently come from northern Jiangsu, others from Jiangxi and Anhui.

²⁴ From an interview with Fei Dexing (b. 1932), a singer in Baimao; 14 April 1992.

²⁵ NB. 12, p. 43; interview Fei Dexing, Baimao, 14 April 1992.

²⁶ Picking tea may have been yet another occasion for singing, but I found no traces of tea picking songs in the area.

²⁷ From an interview with Jin Wenyin, Shengpu, 11 May 1990. The Chinese titles of the songs are *Dongtian richu*, *Ritou zhile jie dan cha* and *Ri huo xishan*. 

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Singing at the top of one's voice was called *han* (喊 ‘calling’ or ‘shouting’) *shan'ge*. The term referred either to the activity or to a genre. Outdoor singing was always loud and vigorous. It was the best way to reach one’s neighbours and to attract general attention. The songs were sung without much variation in dynamics, but shouting was the preferred way. Whoever began set the standard.

'If you sang *shan'ge* in the field, your throat was always very loud and very strong, and it had a rough power.‘

Spontaneous replies could be simple choral refrains of the kind described above, but there could also be competitive dialogues between soloists. The object was to tease and outwit the others with funny, improvised texts. Singers frequently asserted in interviews that they only sang when they felt happy.

'These songs were a good cure for depressions. They chased away one's depressions. They resolved boredom. You started singing, and the dreary work became fun again.‘

Dialogue songs (*dai ge*) frequently took the form of a competition between teams at work in adjoining fields. Individual singers from each team alternated, singing verses in turn. The text could follow an existing model, for example a riddle song. Other singers in the team might join in at appropriate moments as a chorus or make suggestions for suitable replies. Anyone in the team could act as a soloist in the dialogue if his or her status as singer was sufficiently acknowledged. Usually one person in every team was regarded as lead singer on the basis of vocal skills and improvisatory talent. Here is an example of a riddle song in dialogue form, following a simple repetitive structure. Lyrics of this kind could be elaborated ad infinitum.

| What is round and goes up in the sky? | 是啥个圆圆天上天     |
| What is round and floats on the water? | 是啥个圆圆水浮面     |
| What is round and used by all? | 是啥个圆圆人人用     |
| What is round and used by a girl? | 是啥个圆圆常伴姐身边 |

The moon is round and goes up in the sky
Lotus leaves are round and float on the water
Silver coins are round and used by us all
A mirror is round and used by a girl

| What is sharp and goes up in the sky? | 是啥个尖尖天天上天     |
| What is sharp and floats on the water? | 是啥个尖尖水浮面     |
| What is sharp and used by a scholar? | 是啥个尖尖人人用     |
| What is sharp and used by a girl? | 是啥个尖尖常伴姐身边 |

The northwest wind is sharp and goes up in the sky
Water caltrops are sharp and float on the water
An inkbrush is sharp and used by a scholar
An embroidery needle is sharp and used by a girl

This particular song had no choral refrain. I recorded it as a solo song. In the past an unspecified number of people could participate, each contributing one or more stanzas at appropriate moments. Participation was spontaneous. Note that, in general, text parts were nearly always carried by a single voice at the time, no matter how many people joined in the singing. Choral effects, if there were any, were limited to short

29 From an interview with Tang Qian-gen (b. 1919), a singer in Dongting, 29 Jan. 1989.
cries or repetitions of line endings. The essentially communal nature of shan’ge singing – whether solo or with a group – is reflected in the statements of various singers.

‘Singing shan’ge on your own was no fun. You needed a few people to stimulate each other.’\(^{31}\)

‘As soon as there were four or five of us, we started singing long narrative songs.’\(^{32}\)

‘Good singers who were capable of very loud singing [han ge] were not plentiful. Perhaps there were four, five or six of them in every village. You were fortunate if you happened to have a whole group of them together. We did not have songs every day. For example, if there was only one good singer around, he would not sing.’\(^{33}\)

Group singing was traditionally common in all the villages where I carried out fieldwork. It was not clear to me whether the same applied to the more complicated musical structures of the shan’geban. I noticed that that particular tradition (with brilliant falsetto parts for some of the voices) was well-remembered by people in areas north and northeast of Suzhou (Baimao, Kunshan, Huangdai), in Wujian, northern Zhejiang and parts of the Shanghai district (Qingpu, Songjiang), but in some other areas I found few or no traces of it.

Gifted singers were frequently invited to sing solo songs, but solo singing was not a solitary act, even if there was only one performer available. The audience helped to determine the course of a singer’s words by showing enthusiasm or disapproval. In my own sessions there was, on the whole, a good rapport between performers and listeners. One man sang an erotic song and lowered his voice to a whisper – his audience immediately responded with respectful silence. On many occasions singers responded freely to what they saw and made people laugh. Qian Aifu sang funny four-line shan’ge to children and to young mothers with babies. Other singers asked their audience whether they had sung ‘correctly’, or consulted colleagues on textual details. Or they cast a brief glance at the listeners after a number of lines to inquire rhetorically: ‘Isn’t it right?’

In the past, singers would always attract many listeners. The throngs of people who turned up in my own fieldwork cannot be held up as evidence, they were caused in part by the presence of a foreigner. But numerous statements testify to people’s general enthusiasm about shan’ge singing, even in unlikely places.

‘Lu Qiaoying sometimes went out to buy some titbits. The people in the village shop said: “If you sing a couple of songs for us, we will give you our cookies for free.” As soon as she started singing, a huge crowd gathered around her to listen.’\(^{34}\)

‘When the tape of my songs was played in the village shop of Taozhuang, many passers-by stopped to listen and blocked the road. They were so fascinated that they forgot everything else around them.’\(^{35}\)

Singing in the evening hours could be as vigorous and loud as during the daytime. A single performer could keep an audience spellbound for hours with a long narrative song. Naturally there could be interruptions by people coming or going, or by other performers who supplemented a stanza or jumped in with a folk tale of their own.

\(^{32}\) Hua Zunrong (b. 1927), Dongting, 30 January 1989.
\(^{33}\) Jin Wenyin, Shengpu, 11 May 1990.
\(^{34}\) Interview with Qian Xingzheng, folk song collector, 19 April 1990, Suzhou Opera Museum.
\(^{35}\) Wu Jusheng (b. 1930), a singer in Taozhuang, northern Zhejiang, 29 May 1990.
There was no need to finish it all in one evening. People in Huangdai recalled that the long narrative song Shen Qige 'took quite a few days to perform'. A singer in the Wuxi region frequently travelled to Suzhou by boat but never heard the end of his own songs:

'The journey always lasted a day. You sang on the boat, but usually no more than a few sections [tao 踏]. For example, if a song had ten tao, you would be able to finish two or three tao before arriving in Suzhou.'

Exactly how much time did it take to perform a song of the long narrative type in its entirety? A single four-line stanza could last anywhere from 10 to 60 seconds. That means a non-stop performance of 2,000 lines would take a singer between three and eight hours, depending on the speed of his performance. There were long narrative songs in the Wu area with twice as many lines, which would take a whole day to sing to the end.

In reality it was unlikely that any singer would go on non-stop for even a few hours without taking some food or rest. The normal practice was to sing a few sections of a long song, and to continue it the next day if the same audience or the same performers were still around. In this way, long songs could last several days. The beginnings of long songs were sung more often than the endings. As a consequence, the beginning parts of most narrative songs were less open to variation than the endings.

COURTSHIP SONGS: SINGING AS A PRIVILEGE OF THE YOUNG

To a certain extent, the singing of folk songs reflected labour relations in the field. Lead singers in shan'ge groups frequently (though not always) acted as team leaders. Moreover, shan'ge helped to establish personal relationships.

Some couples I met learned to know each other and confessed their mutual love by singing dialogues in the fields. It happened with Daoist-minded Lian Dagen and his Buddhist wife Lu Dagen. It also happened with Xu Awen and Xu Qiaolin, a farming couple in Baimao, now in their seventies, who spent as much time in their youths singing to each other as having normal conversations. Some young singers in Baimao told me that their parents had met in similar ways.

While shan'ge were a road towards love relationships, they were not a self-evident road to marriage. Marriage in traditional society was determined by parents, and often pre-arranged while the children were still very young, e.g. six or seven years old. Many shan'ge are concerned with 'private loves' (siping 私情), unofficial love relationships, not authorized by marriage – as if to escape the world of formal ties and filial obligations. Fei Xiaotong observed that children in Kaixiangong village (southeast of Lake Tai) gave their parents a free hand in arranging their marriage affairs and always obeyed accordingly. It was considered improper and shameful to talk about one's own marriage and 'there was no such thing as courtship'.

The texts of the folk songs and the stories of some of the singers in my study suggest that courtship did occur in the Wu area, and that a certain degree of personal initiative and a good rapport between self-elected candidates and their parents was sometimes possible. But the role of courtship songs in making matches was obviously limited. When asked whether their partners in marriage could sing shan'ge, most of the singers in my fieldwork answered in the negative. Couples who managed to turn their passions for each other and for shan'ge singing into marriage formed a small minority. The love dialogues sung in the fields were primarily a celebration of youthful dreams and (sometimes) opportunities for short-lived affairs.

Xu Awen and Xu Qiaolin learned to know each other by singing dialogue songs in the fields.

In some other parts of China, dialogue songs do serve as a possible road to marriage. One American researcher told me that Miao communities in southern China use folk songs to match candidates for marriage by checking whether the tunes of the candidates fit together.\(^{39}\) Yang Mu, in his study of ediang, relates how boys and girls in villages on Hainan island move from their parental homes into separate male or female community houses when they have become young adults. On moonlit nights they go out in groups to search for potential partners — and perhaps for sexual contact. Ediang (local pronunciation for diaosheng 调声) are courtship dialogues sung between male and female groups. Singers are expected to demonstrate wit and resourcefulness in their partly improvised texts. After several hours of singing, the groups may divide into couples. Some of the friendships established in ediang performances eventually result in marriage.\(^{40}\) Similar matching traditions are found in Guangxi, Yunnan, Guizhou and Sichuan.\(^{41}\)

Under communism, the singing of ediang became more of a government-organized, partly trivialized pastime, in which aspects like courtship, free sex and indeed polygamy were suppressed. Probably something similar happened with hua’ers singing in northern China. Like shan’ge in the Wu area, hua’er 花儿 — folk songs of the north — were traditionally performed during temple fairs, as part of popular festivals, and

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\(^{39}\) Communicated to me by Professor Amy Catlin (University of California) during a SEM conference in Oakland, California, USA, November 1989.


during weeding and other work in the fields. *Hua’er* often served as a vehicle for sexual flirtation. There was a rule that they should be performed at a good distance from the singers’ villages in order not to disturb domestic life. One foreigner who visited Xining during the early 1900s described weeding time as a period when everyday social restrictions were relaxed, so that *hua’er* could at least be sung in the open fields.\(^{42}\)

In recent times, *hua’er* festivals have been turned into government-organized folklore events with overtones of nationalism and regional pride. Interestingly, the old lyrics with blatant sexual references have not disappeared, and flirtation can still play a role in the festivals. I have not come across any research on the relationship between courtship singing and mate selection for marriage in China. Yang Mu suggests that ‘erotic musical activity’ (as he calls it) in China is mainly found among minorities or in areas where Han Chinese mix with ethnic minorities.\(^{43}\) This would not apply, then, to Jiangnan. The subject remains open to further investigation.

If the singing of dialogues in the Wu area was not a road to marriage, it was certainly an opportunity for young people to flirt. It may come as a surprise that youngsters who were perhaps too shy to confess their love in quiet indoor conversation would openly declare it in the field in a loud-voiced performance. But singing gave people the courage to convey emotional messages of a kind they could not express as easily in words. Singing could serve (in Claude Lévi-Strauss’s words) as an acoustic equivalent of wearing a mask: people could convey a message without bearing full responsibility.\(^{44}\) The songs and the act of singing were always ambiguous. In the fields, the transition from ‘weeding song’ to ‘love song’, from ‘love song’ to ‘courtship song’, can hardly have required much effort, since so vast a proportion of the *shan’ge* were concerned with love. Descriptions of boys taking notice of girls (or vice versa) were freely blended with descriptions of beautiful scenery or the actions of the work. Love, landscape and work formed a continuum in the lyrics:

| This mountain gives the better view.          | 这山望见那山高               |
| I see the young girl pulling weeds.          | 看见妹妹女采药               |
| Black her jacket with the stiff collar,     | 黑布褂子骨牌领               |
| Black the trousers round her lovely waist.   | 黑布裤子缝腰带               |

Courtship singing has waned in the Wu area. Understandably, old people do not normally sing dialogues about love—although one old couple in Baimao was willing to demonstrate the (harmless) riddle song which first brought the two of them together.

This brings up another question concerning the past. To what extent was singing *shan’ge* a privilege of the young? It is difficult to obtain a clear picture from interviews with singers. All of them started singing at a very young age, and all of them learned from ‘older people’. The aged certainly continued to participate in the tradition, but it is difficult to imagine them singing loud-voiced dialogues about ‘forbidden love’ in the fields. Aged singers in this study sang bold love songs in front of my microphone without showing embarrassment, but they did so in the context of a special recording session.


\(^{45}\) Rice planting song, sung by Zhou Pingqing (b. 1948), Guazhou (northern Jiangsu), 6 Nov. 1986.
No such sessions were held in the past. When I asked why there were so few old people left who could sing, although ‘everyone’ in their generation sang, the singers replied that the others were either dead or were ‘embarrassed’ (buahoyisi). Some of the cultural workers in the villages also referred to this element of shame:

‘Some of the singers have children and grandchildren. They are now faced by three or more new generations. The folk songs are usually about “I love you, you love me”, so they consider themselves too old to sing such texts. They think: “I am too old, what will my children think of me?”’ 46

Zoltán Kodály observed that in Hungarian villages ‘old men and women were considered to be indisputably drunk if they sang outdoors’. 47 The situation in the Wu area was possibly similar in this respect. During my fieldwork, many singers told me that people would think them ‘mad’ if they sang in the fields, at their age. Apparently, it was traditionally the young (and the middle-aged) who dominated the custom of outdoor singing in the Wu area. One cultural official said as much when he explained the decline of folk singing:

‘In former times, it was mostly young people who performed shan’ge. During the Cultural Revolution, nothing could be transmitted to the younger generation, who, as a consequence, no longer took an interest in folk song.’ 48

Old people were not necessarily barred from singing. In their homes, they could always attract an audience, especially with long narrative songs. Brief shan’ge texts of any kind – including courtship songs – were inserted at will in the longer songs. It was one way for singers to continue and to keep up a repertoire they had learned when young. The characters in the narrative communicated with each other in sung dialogues or performed any number of four-line shan’ge in the course of their adventures. This was also a manner to legitimate the singing of erotic songs: lascivious texts were ascribed to characters in the narrative. They served as illustrations of their thoughts and behaviour.

But old people would no longer perform such songs outdoors, as they might have done in their youth. No doubt the torch of the shan’ge tradition was carried chiefly by the young, and the most natural environment for singing shan’ge was not people’s houses but the open air.

In the second article on Jiangsu Folk Singers (to be published in Chime 9) I will take a closer look at various specific groups of singers and their repertoires, e.g. cowherds and their cursing songs, fishermen, labourers, pedlars, itinerant singers and (lay) priests. I will also examine the role of organized festivals in the shan’ge tradition and take a look at images of shan’ge singers in local mythology. The final article (Chime 10) will discuss problems of orality and literacy, matters of local song terminology and how folk singers look upon themselves: what do they regard as the real qualities of folk singers? And what, in their view, are good songs?

ZHANG XINGRONG ON HIS FIELDWORK AMONG MINORITIES IN SOUTHERN CHINA

‘One of Yunnan’s most unique features is its music’

JACK BODY
(Victoria University, Wellington, New Zealand)

In November 1994 ethnomusicologist Professor Zhang Xingrong 张兴荣 from the Yunnan Art Institute, Kunming, was invited to New Zealand by Jack Body, a lecturer at Victoria University of Wellington. Over a period of ten weeks they worked together, preparing for publication a selection from Prof. Zhang’s extensive collection of field recordings of the music of the Yunnan Minorities. At the end of his stay in Wellington Zhang Xingrong was interviewed by Jack Body about the joys and frustrations of his fieldwork. Zhang is very enthusiastic about traditional culture in Yunnan. ‘You hear music everywhere. It is an integral part of people’s lives – there is music for walking, for eating, for drinking, for greetings, farewells, courtship, weddings, funerals...’ But the future of traditional music in Yunnan is very uncertain. Young people show little interest in the music and rituals of the older generation. ‘The media has the potential to stimulate traditional music, but they consider it coarse and vulgar.’

Fifteen hours of Zhang’s recordings of mainly instrumental music representing all the the Yunnan National Minorities will be released on cassette through the Asia-Pacific Archive the Victoria University School of Music in late 1995. From this collection five programmes – four of instrumental and one of vocal music – have been selected for production on compact disc through commercial record companies. Pan Records of The Netherlands, who will release the vocal recording, has also contracted Prof. Zhang for first option on recordings from his future research projects. The following is an edited form of the author’s interview with Zhang Xingrong, conducted earlier this year and translated by Liu Changying.

MOTIVATED
‘After I had completed my studies at the Shanghai Conservatory in 1982, I started teaching the analysis and composition of traditional instrumental music at the Music Department of the Yunnan Arts Institute. I was interested in melody structure and felt that the music of the Yunnan Minorities should be included as well as music of the Han. Until then very little attention had been paid to the music of the Minorities - only one book had been published in the 70s by Renmin yinyue chubanshe (People’s Music Publishing House) and it was very limited, with only one example from Yunnan. And
I thought to myself, ‘No way, I’ll only get beaten up!’

so I was motivated to do this research project, to collect this music and to analyze, among other things, its melodic characteristics. Because I had been teaching performance on traditional instruments I had some useful background experience. It also happened that in 1982 the Chinese Ministry of Culture was engaged in a series of ten large projects on traditional music, including the music of the minorities. And because I was a native of Yunnan, I felt I wanted to do something for the region by writing a book about its music.

SIGHT-SEEING OR FIELD RESEARCH?
When I approached the School authorities the Dean’s response was very positive, since no one else had had this idea. The School had only reopened five years earlier. The Chairman had a good relationship with his superiors, and I was granted Y3,000, the first time any such grant had been made. Everything was in my favour – the time, the place and the resources. I was free to choose my own team, which I kept small. It included my wife, Li Wei, an experienced sound technician. I was able to get an excellent driver, Hong Baoshun, who accompanied us on seven of our trips.

Each trip lasted about a month, generally during the winter and summer vacations. Apart from this there were special festivals such as the Bai March Street Festival, the Dai Water Festival and the Panwang Festival of the Yao. In the beginning we had no comprehensive plan as to how to cover the whole province. For the first trip we went to the Western areas since we already knew this was rich in music. After this trip there were many criticisms and complaints at the school – ‘Why is he supplied with a car to go sight-seeing like this’, ‘He is only a lecturer, and yet he has all these privileges; if we had been allowed to do this we would have done a better job!’ This made the Chair-

Zhang Xingrong with lusheng players of the Miao minority in Wudingxian in 1989.
man have second thoughts, and I had to reassure him about the value of the project. I published a small monograph, *Dianxi Minzu Minjian Qiyuequ Xuan* (A Selection of Instrumental Music of the National Minorities: 1986 Yunnan Minzu Chubanshe), and produced two video tapes that were shown on local television.

**SENSITIVE**

Those in charge were impressed, though there was still criticism. The Musicians' Association in Beijing heard about it and sent me a telegram asking to see the videos. (This was in 1984 when video was still rarely used for this kind of documentation in China.) Because of this some people became more obstructive and tried to prevent the tapes being sent: 'If you send this material then you should send ours as well!' The Vice- Chancellor realised it was a sensitive issue. And so even though the people from Beijing arrived at our Institute expecting to see the videos, the Vice-Chancellor finally declined their request. Eventually I had to ask permission to take the material to Beijing myself. There a special meeting was organised for me with high ranking musical officials. Everyone was enthusiastic and praised my initiative. I explained that I needed their support to enable me to continue the project and they prepared a news bulletin about me which was circulated among musicians. I took this back to Yunnan to impress them with the fact that my work has received recognition and validation in Beijing. It is common for local officials to be uncertain of the value of things. And this project in New Zealand will also strengthen my position. I am glad to have the chance to publish the recordings which have been lying dormant for so many years, even though I have published a book of transcriptions.

After our first trip to the western regions of Yunnan we planned to survey the other geographical areas systematically. We located prominent performers through several channels: from our reading, from our own school graduates who were able to function as informants and interpreters, and through the cooperation of the Minority Affairs offices. Since we worked in vacations we had to plan our itinerary very carefully, taking into account the season, the road access, and so on. We were sometimes held up by landslides and road works, and had to learn patience. One time, on our way from Ruili where we had purchased some *mangluo* (37 note gongs) for our school, through to Dali to see the March Street Festival, we were stranded on the road overnight because the road was blocked by an accident. We were without food and tempers frayed. I got into an argument. The other fellow suggested we go to his office to resolve the matter, but I thought to myself, 'No way, I'll only get beaten up!'. The road was cleared by 4.30am and we decided to go on immediately so as not to miss the festival. We got near Dali by 6.00, but it was obvious the driver was too tired to
proceed. And so we stopped at a small hotel, knocked at the door and asked for a room. They were very suspicious: 'How come you want to go to sleep at this time of the day!' And so we had to explain our predicament. We rested a couple of hours and got on the road again, but the driver still kept dozing off because he hadn't slept properly for two or three days. I kept lighting cigarettes for him, even though he wasn't really a smoker, just to keep him awake!

On another trip, we encountered an accident where a learner driver had driven a truck over the bank. One person was dead and several badly injured. We took them to a local hospital which refused to accept them. I was furious, since hospitals always have a sign, a quote from Chairman Mao: 'Care for the wounded, save the dying'. I said, 'So much for your caring for the wounded and dying!'. We went off to find another hospital. In many places there was no vehicular access, such as in Ninglang, which is very mountainous, and we had to abandon our car, and hire horses bearers to carry our equipment over tracks which were muddy and slippery. We arrived in Ninglang in time to witness the torch festival, which was beautiful. Unfortunately, when we got our equipment out we found that the batteries were flat and of course there was no electricity there. And so we just simply had to watch and enjoy!

HOW COME YOU HAVEN'T FINISHED?
The equipment we used was very basic. We borrowed from various places including our school. At the stage I started the project in 1984, I couldn't afford to buy my own equipment; even now we don't have access to fully professional equipment. Ours was a small team. My wife did the videoing and I always looked after the recording and photography. Of course there are always problems, with unpredictable situations, such as the wind blowing, dogs barking, equipment malfunctioning, or people milling around and wanting to touch the equipment.

I didn't have enough hands. Sometimes I got my ten year old son to hold the microphone. Occasionally after a recording session I would find that something had gone wrong and that there was nothing on the tape!

After we had been paid Y3,000 for the publication of our monograph, my wife and I decided to invest in a video camera of our own. From the twelfth trip onwards we had a Sony recorder of our own, thanks to the help of my friend Helen Rees who generously contributed a third of the cost. We had a few bad experiences with borrowed equipment; people play tricks on you by lending the worst equipment they have. For instance we borrowed a really heavy video camera which we had to carry around, but when we came to use it, it didn't work!

Some people were uncooperative because they thought that since by now I was already a professor I should give up doing this kind of work, and let someone else have the opportunity to make a name for themselves. The position of Dean of my section changed after our eighth trip. Whereas previously I had received support from above, my new boss kept saying, 'How come you haven't finished yet?'. He thought that this project was the brainchild of his predecessor, and so was disinclined to support it. And so I had to do the ninth trip, in 1986, without financial support. Our film was broadcast on Central Television educational programme for which the school was paid Y10,000. I asked if I could have some of these funds to support future trips, but my request was declined. The only thing I could do was to appeal over his head to the Vice Chancellor, in order to complete the project. And that worked.
The beginning and end of this project were the hardest. I regret that I never really had the resources and support to do a truly comprehensive survey. The administration couldn’t understand why the project never seemed to come to an end. On one occasion we had Zhou Feng of the Musicians Association from Beijing attending a meeting discussing my project. He was emphatic that I should receive the support I needed and told the school that if they were unwilling to help then he would fund it personally. The Party Secretary at the school immediately promised the school’s support, but in the event, no funds were forthcoming from any source. And so I had to pay for three trips out of my own pocket. In fact there is still one region in the north east of Yunnan which we never did get to visit. The school demanded the video tapes back, saying that they were school property, and they needed them. And so I had to buy replacement video tapes, otherwise our videos would have been wiped.

UNIQUE MUSICAL EXPERIENCES
The thing which impressed me most from my work among the Yunnan Minorities was the authenticity of the cultures. They truly value music. You hear music everywhere; it is an integral part of people’s lives - music for walking, for eating, for drinking, music for greetings, farewells, for courtship, weddings, funerals, and so on. Music has so many functions; it can’t be separated from everyday life. Festivals are sustained by music – people sing and dance for three days and three nights without rest. A festival, as such, without music is inconceivable. I once attended an engagement ceremony in Fugong where I was greeted at the entrance with singing and offered wine – it was milky-coloured, made from potatoes with some drops of oil floating on top and poured from a bamboo pipe. I can’t say I liked the taste but everyone there was singing and dancing ecstatically, intoxicated with the music and the drink. On another occasion I was at a Naxi funeral. We arrived at the house the night before the cremation. The wake was accompanied by suona and the chanting of monks. Every so often a new group would come in, wailing laments which combined into a rich natural polyphony. Next morning was heralded in with long trumpets and suona. The funeral procession was made up of different groups singing their individual laments, all at the same time.

Music serves as a medium of communication. Without music, love is impossible among the Minorities. One form of courtship among the Maan is the playing of one instrument (leengnong), a flute, by two people. There are many unique forms of instruments and unusual playing techniques. Some of the melodies are non-thematic, almost random in structure. Sometimes the modes are highly unusual, and the vertical combination of pitches can be very complex and surprising. I had already learnt about the experimental musical techniques of modern music in my studies at the Shanghai Conservatory, but I didn’t know that many of these techniques and principles already existed in the music of the Minorities. In the case of Naxi Remeicuo celebratory songs, the two chorus groups can either sing using the same tonic or at various different intervals from each other, creating a kind of polytonality.

NO ‘OUT-OF-TUNENESS’
Sometimes the real significance of what you are listening to is not immediately apparent. On one occasion I was recording a Lisu ensemble of qiben, jizi (lutes) and juelie (pipe). The music sounded very discordant. It seemed that the lutes were not playing at the same pitch as the pipe, and that the instruments had not been tuned properly. I took the instruments from the players, and tuned them to match the pipe.
The ensemble began to play again, but by the end of the first phrase the players were all busy retuning their instruments. When I listened to the recording later I realised my mistake: the ‘out-of-tuneness’ which I had attributed to bad musicianship was actually an intentional layering of different intonations and was an essential part of this music.

Another thing that struck me when listening to Sani/Axí (sub branch of the Yi) performances that continued all night was that, what at first seemed simple, was actually a grouping of five beats divided according to the golden section 3 plus 2. This is what gave the phrase its aesthetic power and allowed it to be repeated endlessly without people becoming bored. Another branch of the Yi has a cycle of eight beats but divided in the proportion 5 plus 3. So many types of folk music which at first appear quite simple, actually have concealed within them profound aesthetic principles which have a scientific basis. ABA is the most prevalent musical form, but it is not necessarily the best one when one looks at the rich variety of forms in the music of the Minorities.

TALKING INSTRUMENTS
The dabiya lute of the Nu minority is interesting since it can be tuned in a variety of ways so that a player can articulate sounds in imitation of the Nu language. A message such as ‘How old is your father?’ or ‘How many people are there in your family?’ can be conveyed on the dabiya and immediately understood, without using human speech. The sanxian lute of the Lahu minority can be used in a similar way. I recorded a famous Lahu musician, Zhang Laowu, playing a piece consisting of two melodies with variations. One of the melodies was for dancing, with a clear rhythmic structure, the other was played in a free, non-metrical style which ‘spoke’ to the audience, communicating the spoken word through the instrumental sound. Sometimes musical instruments such as the kouxian jaw’s harp are used for intimate communication. This instrument which uses the mouth to resonate vowels is normally played by a girl who may be wanting to give messages to her boyfriend, things which she might otherwise be too shy to speak. Thus speech conveyed through musical instruments can have one of two functions: one is aesthetic as in the first example, and the other is practical communication such as the case of the kouxian. When the Yi or Zhuang play a leaf as a kind of whistle, a lover will be able to identify his or her partner. And so it can become a kind of secret code.

Among the Nu there is a two-holed flute reserved solely for giving notice of a death. The size of the ensemble indicates the status of the deceased; five or six flutes playing together would indicate the death of a person of importance. The Jinuo, who have a very communal lifestyle, beat a bamboo tube drum as they return from hunting, to signal the number and size of the animals they have caught. In Hani funerals the flute controls proceedings in the ceremony.

GREAT MUSICIANS
Because of my musical education in Han and Western music, when I first started working in the area of Minority music, I found some of the music very hard to appreciate. The first reaction was often one of shock and surprise. ‘Oh, what’s this? So very strange!’ My preconceptions were challenged, and my curiosity was aroused. When I first heard the De of the Wa I was astonished. Even though the music was so peculiar, it was a fresh experience, something new. As I listened, what at first had
seemed so odd became more and more fascinating, although I still sometimes find it hard to appreciate music whose melody is structured in an unfamiliar way.

In my time I have met some truly great folk musicians, famous within their own communities but unrecognized by officialdom and totally unknown in the wider world, such as Zhang Laowu, a blind musician of the Lahu nationality. His playing of the xiao sanxian was deeply musical, and he had a profound knowledge of repertoire and styles, not only of Lahu music but also of other traditions in the same vicinity including Yi, Wa and Dai. He was also able to sing repertoire of these other groups, in their original languages. He worked as a professional musician within his society, without any kind of official recognition or financial support.

Bai Jinliang of the Yi Nationality was another great musician, a total artist. He could play both string and wind instruments, and he was a drummer, a dancer and a singer. When he was young he was a household name in his area, with a large following of admirers, and yet he was totally disregarded by the State.

Musicians like these are very poor. I have made several official reports to both the provincial and state governments about this situation. Even if they can’t be given status as some kind of State cultural treasures, they should be Provincial cultural treasures, or at the very least given some financial support in acknowledgement of their unique talents and the importance they have in their communities.

MUSIC SCHOOL
As for passing on the traditions, a music school called Yinyue Chuanxi Suo has been established to encourage young people to learn traditional music. The aim was to have musicians of a particular nationality pass on their traditions to their own people. The
person in charge is Tian Feng, a composer with the Central Philharmonic Orchestra (Zhongyang Yuetuan) who is devoted to studying folk traditions, particularly those of Yunnan. He was in charge of all aspects of this project including the administration, selecting the musicians, vetting the students and so on. He is very resourceful and even managed to raise Y150,000 from the army to help the school get started. He has had to deal with all the bureaucratic red tape to get approval from institutions like the Yunnan Provincial Department of Cultural Affairs. The staff of our Institute (Yunnan Arts Institute) were invited to a banquet and our support and cooperation sought.

Although Professor Chou Wen-chung, as president of the Sino-American Friendship Society and representative of the Ford Foundation instigated the project, he was not able to provide any secure funding. His attitude was, 'This is your project; you are responsible for making it work.' Perhaps this is the American way of doing things, to encourage people to be self-reliant.

The project faces many difficulties. It started with music of the Yi in the Honghe area, which represents a very incomplete view of Yi music. The participants met there for a while and then went home again. The project desperately needs more funding in order to continue. It seems that Tian Feng is interested primarily in the music as material for his own composition, and doesn't really have a professional ethnomusicologist's grasp of what is required. Many of these people don't really identify with Yunnan - they visit for a short time and then go back to their expensive hotels; they don't live where the music is.

THREAT
Traditional music is threatened by a natural process as the old musicians pass away. Many have already lost their dexterity and stamina. Few young people are interested in this music. It has become urgent to try to preserve this music through sound and video recordings. Another threat is the social one. During the Cultural Revolution Jiang Qing designated folk music 'pornographic'. Nowadays, the media, radio and television, has the potential to stimulate interest in and support traditional music, but they consider it too coarse and vulgar. Instead we hear pop music all day! Tourism also has the potential to help - after all, if we think of Yunnan, one of its most unique features is its music. But the future does not look very promising, I'm afraid.
A BARLEY PIPE BECOMES A JASPER FLUTE:

The Naxi folk instrument wowo

YANG ZENGLIE
(Lijiang County Cultural Bureau, Yunnan Province)

Translated by Helen Rees, New College, University of South Florida

The wowo, a multiple-reed whistle made out of a barley stalk of about eight to ten cm in length, is an ancient folk instrument of the Lijiang Naxi minority in Yunnan (southern China). It has just one opening to emit sound and lacks finger holes altogether. In appearance it resembles a half-open lantern shade. The average person can only get a crying sound out of it, rather like an infant’s wailing, but skilful players can play notes over a range of a sixth or an octave, and produce agreeable tunes. The author discusses the construction of the wowo and traces its development in poems, folk songs, scriptures of Naxi priests and other sources. From the way the wowo is made and played he infers that the instrument probably originated after the Naxi ancestors had taken to farming, but before they invented their pictographic script (i.e. before the Han or Tang dynasties). Traditionally the wowo was played for amusement and for courtship. As one Qing dynasty poet observed, ‘whoever plays it, an unreasoning passion develops...’

In the Qing dynasty, the Naxi of Lijiang produced an extremely talented poet, Niu Tao (c.1790-1858, style Hanwan). His [Chinese-language] poems, widely disseminated and admired by his contemporaries, combined an almost visual depiction of scenery with great profundity of content. At the same time, Niu Tao was a well-known

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1 Translator’s note: this paper, entitled in Chinese “‘Maiguan chui cheng biyu xiao’--Naxizu minjian yueqi ‘wowo’ jianshi” 紅旗歌成碧玉箫——納西族民間樂器歌謠《瓦窩》及其發展 (‘A barley pipe becomes a jasper flute’: the Naxi folk instrument wowo) was originally presented at the third annual conference of the Association for the Study of the Music of China’s National Minorities (Zhongguo Shaoshu Minzu Yinyue Xuehui), held in 1988 in Yuxi City, Yunnan Province. An abridged version entitled “Naxizu yiguan duohuang yueqi ‘wowo’ jianshi” 納西族一管多簧樂器《瓦窩》及其發展 (The wowo, a Naxi instrument with a single pipe and multiple reeds) was published in the resulting conference volume (Yang Fang 1991, 256-264). Yang Zengjie works at the Lijiang Naxi Autonomous County Cultural Bureau and has carried out substantial research on folk music in Lijiang County. He is particularly well known for his publications on Lijiang’s Dongjing music (Yang Zengjie 1990-1991, etc.). I have based my translation mainly on the manuscript version of the paper, but have had to change some section headings, make one slight alteration in the order of presentation and add footnotes to clarify some of Yang’s points for the non-Chinese reader. I wish to thank Wu Ben of the University of Pittsburgh for his help with this translation.
musician. He was not only familiar with musical theory, but was also a composer, and an accomplished master of the qin. His name was linked with that of two other Lijiang poet-musicians, Ma Ziyun and Xi Xingqiao, as Qin Niu, Flute Ma, Zheng Xi. Later these three men were accorded the epithet ‘the three marvels’ of Lijiang’s musical world. Because of Niu Tao’s particular enthusiasm for music, a fair number of his poems touch upon the ethnic folk music of Lijiang. In such a minority border area, where there is generally little historical evidence on the subject of folk music, Niu Tao’s poems stand out by offering historical material for scholars researching the folk music of the Lijiang Naxi. The most popular of Niu Tao’s poems are probably those entitled ‘Poems on the Land of Flowers and Horses.’ One of these poems reads,

The corn fields are green, the children charming,  
The wind softly blows the willow branches.  
Willow twigs are twisted into a girl’s hat,  
A barley pipe becomes a jasper flute.

In this poem, ‘barley pipe’ (maiguan) refers to the wowo. This is a folk instrument of the Lijiang Naxi. In the Naxi language it is called mu-ze-wo-wo. Mu-ze means barley, while wowo is the onomatopoetic name for the instrument. The term mu-ze-wo-wo means a wowo made out of a barley stalk. Locally in the Chinese language the instrument is called ‘barley flute’ (maidi), ‘barley stalk flute’ (maiguan di), and ‘barley pipe’ (maiguan di). In her compilation Anthology of Poems by Naxi [Zhao 1985], Ms. Zhao Yintang uses the term ‘barley knot vertical flute’ (mai jie xiao). This is because in the construction process it is necessary to retain a knot or node in the stalk at one end, and because the instrument is played vertically. Her nomenclature follows the traditional Chinese dictum about the two kinds of flute, that the di is played horizontally, the xiao vertically. But the present writer feels that, since the wowo has just one opening to emit sound, lacking finger holes altogether, to call it di or xiao is a misnomer: instead, ‘barley knot whistle’ (mai jie shao) would be more appropriate. Usually the wowo is made from a barley stalk of about eight to ten cm in length. In

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2 “Land of Flowers and Horses” (Hua ma guo) was an old name for Lijiang. This set of poems may be found in Zhao 1985, 127-129.
3 Translator’s note: Yang writes the Naxi term muze wowo in two ways: mu-ze-wo-wo, in the International Phonetic Alphabet, and 穀積 in Chinese characters. For the sake of consistency, I use the regular pinyin readings of the Chinese characters throughout.
appearance it resembles a half-open lantern shade (see Figure 2). There is always an even number of reeds, either six or eight. Three types of reed pipes may be distinguished among China’s folk musical instruments: single reeds, double reeds and multiple reeds. But on the whole the term ‘multiple reeds’ refers to instruments with both multiple pipes and multiple reeds, for example the sheng and hulusheng. These instruments have one reed to each pipe. For instance, in Lijiang Prefecture the hulusheng of the Naxi, Lisu and Yi all have five pipes, each with its own single reed. By contrast, the Naxi wowo has one pipe, but multiple reeds. This is a novel kind of multiple-reed instrument which requires its own niche in organology.

ANTiquity and continuity in the wowo
It is of course impossible for us to discover who invented the wowo, or when it came into being. However, by looking at the pointers offered by folk practice, investigating the choice of raw materials, the method of construction and the performance characteristics, we may nevertheless infer that the instrument, tied so closely to agricultural production, originated after the ancestors of the Naxi had taken to farming. In this regard, certain important points should be borne in mind. First, let us note the antiquity and continuity of the material preserved among the people. The wowo is an unsophisticated folk instrument which was not found in elegant society, and never achieved an entry in the histories compiled over time by officials. Nevertheless we may find evidence of its origin and development in scattered folk sources.

For example, the Naxi espouse the dongba religion. The priests are called dongba, and the scriptures they chant are written in an ancient pictographic script. Although it is unclear when the dongba script was invented, it is generally considered to date from before the Han or Tang dynasties. Many pictographs in dongba script depict Naxi folk instruments such as the transverse flute, the Jew’s harp and the hulusheng (see Figure 2). These pictographs are produced by using simple brush strokes to portray the actual appearance of the instruments. The graph for wowo is based on a different generative principle, which rather than giving the actual shape of the instrument combines an ear of barley and a bone in one graph (see Figure 3). The vertical stroke stands for the long ear of barley, called in Naxi mu-ze, the material of which the instrument is made. The horizontal stroke stands for ‘bone’, pronounced wo in Naxi, the sound produced by the barley whistle. Reading the two elements one after the other results in the word mu-ze-wo-wo, which means literally a whistle made of barley stalk. This method of forming written linguistic representations is known as ‘determinative phonetics’.4

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4 See Fang and He 1981 on the Naxi writing system.
The *dongba* scripture *Du Ding Du Ta Mi* used for the ceremony *Da Ti Shen* contains the following passage concerning the *wowo*:

In spring in the third month in the abundant fields, the barley grows robust and even. Cutting a segment of barley stalk, one makes a barley knot whistle. The mother plays the barley whistle; the daughter sits in the village, but she also comes to play. Mother and daughter harmonize; the sound is co-ordinated and very beautiful. Grandfather and grandson, father and son, come to listen to the barley whistle.\(^5\)

This is possibly the first recorded reference to the *wowo*, showing that even before the Naxi ancestors invented the pictographic script, the *wowo* was already widespread among the people. In Naxi folk songs, there are often lines of the nature 'men play the *lusheng*, women play the barley whistle'.

During the Ming and Qing periods, the Naxi imported and studied Han Chinese culture on a large scale, and produced many famous scholars who composed poetry in the Han language. Their poems contain numerous descriptions of the *wowo*. Apart from the poem by Niu Tao quoted above, there is also the 'Poems on the third month Dragon King Festival' by the renowned Qing dynasty *jinshi* He Songqiao (original name He Cengji). It includes the lines

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A wonderful sound issues from the barley flute;  
Whoever plays it, an unreasoning passion develops.  
Wondering, looking with shyness, 
Making eyes with stealthy, sideways glances.
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From the foregoing evidence, we may conclude that the *wowo* has enjoyed wide currency among the Naxi over a long, unbroken period of time. Furthermore, it is clearly a musical instrument of recreational amusement, and also an ingenious means for young men and women to communicate their affection. This is one of the social functions of the *wowo*.

**DEPENDENCE OF THE WOWO ON NATURAL CONDITIONS**

The raw materials used in the making of the *wowo*, as well as its performance, are very much dependent on natural conditions. The main raw material used in *wowo* construction is the barley stalk. A second possibility is to use the stems of certain herbs. The latter kind of *wowo* is called in Naxi *ru wowo*, meaning a *wowo* made of grass stalks. However, it is difficult to make such a *wowo*, and the tone-colour is inferior, so that one seldom encounters it. The barley stalk is by nature soft, as a result of which it is easy when blowing into it to cause the reeds to vibrate and emit a sound. Its toughness prevents the reeds breaking when subjected to forceful blowing, while its elasticity obviates the potential problem of the pipe closing up because of the use of lips and tongue to control the sound. In Lijiang, the main raw material used will admit of no substitute, not even of a modern man-made synthetic material; thus the *wowo* is completely dependent on the bounty of nature.

Furthermore, because it is only in the third and fourth lunar months that one can pluck barley stalks of an age and tenderness to make *wowo* with a pleasant tone, there are also natural constraints on the timing of *wowo* construction and performance. In China and abroad, historically as well as at the present time, most reed-pipe instruments have managed to distance their construction and performance from total reliance on the vagaries of nature, and have thus achieved a measure of independence. By contrast, the degree of the *wowo*’s dependence is an indication of the antiquity of the instrument.

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\(^5\) This scripture is translated into Chinese in Niu n.d.
CONSTRUCTION OF THE WOWO
Simplicity of construction is also a pointer to the antiquity of the wowo. Among Naxi musical instruments capable of producing a tune, only the wowo requires no tools for its construction. The making of a flute, jew’s harp or hulushe, for example, necessitates the use of tools or fire. It is, however, extremely simple to make a wowo.

First one uses one’s fingers to nip off a six to seven cm length of barley stalk. This should be a suitably tender stem from the new crop, and should have a knot at one end. The section just below the knot should be pinched between the outer edges of the two hands and rolled back and forth so that the barley stalk splits into multiple reeds about three cm long. Then, using the thumb and index finger of each hand to pinch either end of the stalk, the maker exerts pressure towards the centre, causing the reeds to bulge outwards. Finally, he or she blows out the inner membrane that has been fragmented by the rubbing process, and the wowo is ready for a trial blow. If it does not speak easily, or the tone colour is unattractive, it is simply thrown away and a new whistle is made, until such time as the maker is satisfied.

HOW THE WOWO IS PLAYED
No great knowledge or skill is required to make a wowo: The process is easily understood and learnt, and just by blowing into the instrument one can get some sort of sound. In the past, Naxi men and women alike, regardless of age, could all make and play the wowo. Although people regard it as something for personal amusement, there is nevertheless a distinction between levels of playing skill. The average person can only get a crying sound out of it, rather like an infant’s wailing. The skilful player, however, can play notes over a range of a sixth or an octave, and produce agreeable tunes with great feeling. There is no fixed repertory of wowo tunes. Musicians from different areas play somewhat differing melodies, although the style and playing technique are basically similar.

The sound is produced by the air stream hitting the multiple reeds in the pipe and causing them to vibrate. The pitch is related to the thickness of the barley stalk and the length of the reeds. If the stalk is thick and the reeds long, the pitch of the wowo is low; the opposite conditions produce a higher pitch. In performance, the pitch of a note is controlled by the force of the air stream, the distance of the hands from the lips, and the distance of the tip of the tongue from the reeds. If the air stream is fast, the hands are close to the lips and the tongue is close to the reeds, then the note is high-pitched, and vice versa.

In playing, the end of the wowo with the knot, including the section with the reeds, is held in the mouth, while the other end remains outside the compressed lips. While the [right] hand makes a half-fist, the thumb and index finger form a small circle around the outside of the opening of the pipe. The left hand is placed around the right hand, and together they form a resonating chamber for the barley pipe, rather like an amplifier. The dynamics and tone colour are controlled by the relaxation and tightening of the right hand, and by the movement of the fingers. When the two hands close up, the result is a dull sound of little carrying power; when the right hand loosens its grip, the sound is loud, bright and reverberant. Although the wowo has only one sound-hole, an excellent player with strong musical sensibilities and fine-honed technique can vary the shape of the mouth, the positioning of the tongue and grasp of the hands to control the pitch, tone colour and dynamics. By this means he or she can produce an exquisitely beautiful wowo tune redolent of the particular character of Naxi music.

On 20 May 1987, I visited He Xiyuan, a 61-year-old Naxi folk artist from Jie Village.

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6 Although the tree leaf, also played by the Naxi, might appear to come into this category, strictly speaking it does not go through a process of construction.
Longquan Township, Lijiang County. By all accounts he had previously been a master exponent in that area of the wowo. Although he hadn’t played for many years, after a little practice, he got his skill back; and then and there in the field he played the following extemporaneous tune (Figure 4):

\[ \text{Figure 4. The 'wowo' tune played by He Xiyuan.} \]

Most long notes have a slow downward vibrato over an interval of about a minor second.

\( \checkmark \) ‘open’ note: the two hands are spread outwards from the pipe.

\( \cup \) ‘half-open’ note: the two hands are slightly spread outwards from the pipe.

\( (\quad) \) ‘closed’ note: the two hands are held close around the pipe.

\* flutter-tongue: a distinctive feature of wowo performance, often used at the start and finish of a piece.

Because of the freedom and informality of wowo performance, different musicians may play different tunes, and even where the same musician plays the same tune, there may be differences in each rendition. The improvisatory and informal nature of wowo performance may reflect the antiquity of the instrument.

**THE ‘WOWO TUNE’ IN FOLK SONG**

In Naxi areas, as soon as people hear the sound of the wowo, they unconsciously hum a few lines of what has become fixed through local usage as the ‘wowo tune’ (see Figure 5).

\[ \text{Figure 5. The 'wowo' tune sung by He Xueyi.} \]

The words, sung here by He Xueyi, mean, ‘Ah, the wowo, the golden wowo!’ When I visited the singer Mu Runhai of Longquan township, she sang the ‘wowo tune’...
reproduced in Figure 6. The words mean:

Ah, the golden wowo!
When played on the peak of the Jade Dragon Snow Mountain
It can also be heard down at the Jinsha River. 8
Men panning for gold
Forgetting to pan
Come to hear the wowo tune.

\[ 1 = C \quad \downarrow = 70 \]

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Fig. 6. The 'wowo tune' sung by Mu Runhai.

This melody reflects the special affection of the Naxi for the wowo.
According to some elderly people, the wowo is also capable of conveying speech.
Players can use the wowo to express definite meaning, while people familiar with the wowo tune can understand the player's meaning.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BARLEY TO THE NAXI
Why should the Naxi invent the wowo, and why is it so widespread in Naxi areas? Is this phenomenon purely fortuitous? The answers to these questions may be found by examining the place of barley in the life of the Naxi.
In the vicinity of the Jade Dragon Snow Mountain, among Naxi living on both banks of the Jinsha River, barley is a ubiquitous crop sown in late autumn. Through long-standing experience, the Naxi have come to be extremely familiar with this grain, so that it has become an integral part of their lives. First, barley is an early ripening crop sown in late autumn. In the third and fourth lunar months, when the grains sown in spring are already used up and other late autumn-sown crops are not yet ripe, barley is the major foodstuff which tides the Naxi over this period of shortage. Second, barley is an important ingredient in the white spirit distilled by peasant families, and is also one of the principal ingredients in Lijiang’s famous yinjiu. 9 Third, barley straw is a good source of fodder for cattle and horses, promoting, in particular, rapid fattening and oestrus. The renown of Lijiang’s horses is in some measure due to their consumption of barley straw. Fourth, the maltose extracted from barley is easily absorbed by the human body, and malt is a good cure for stomach ailments. Fifth, barley is not easily

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7 Translator's note: in Figures 5 and 6, the Chinese characters given under the notes are used by the author to represent phonetically the Naxi words sung.
8 Translator's note: the Jinsha River forms the northern boundary of Lijiang County, and the magnificent Jade Dragon Snow Mountain, located not far from the county town, features prominently in Lijiang lore.
9 Translator's note: white spirits with high alcohol content (bajiu) are drunk frequently in Lijiang, and are a staple of banquets and informal gatherings. Yinjiu is a sweet wine which is one of Lijiang's best-known products. For details on yinjiu, see Yang Erding 1991; for a vivid description of its place in the life of 1940s Lijiang, see Goullart 1957, 39-41.
flattened; the particular toughness of the stems is the pre-requisite for the construction of wowo.

The historical preconditions for the Naxis' ability to make wowo lie in the various important roles barley plays in their lives, and in their comprehensive knowledge of its properties. The making of wowo takes the Naxi familiarity with barley a stage further, expanding its functions and strengthening still more the connection between this grain and the local lifestyle.

PRESENT CURRENCY OF THE WOWO AND ITS PROSPECTS

Some years ago, the wowo was already dying out at the folk level. Middle-aged and older people preserved happy memories of it from their youth, while young people knew nothing about it. However, in recent years its singular, beautiful sound has once again issued forth; and in springtime it may be heard reverberating at the foot of the Jade Dragon Mountain in the broad fields bordering the Jinsha River. Certainly the wowo will not die out at folk level, but as people's standard of living rises and their cultural life grows richer and more diverse, it will become increasingly restricted in currency.

Because of the choice of raw material for the making of the wowo, it is natural conditions that determine when it may be played. Moreover, success in construction is not guaranteed, and even if one does produce a good one, it can be played only for a short while. Thus the wowo cannot be included in a folk ensemble, nor can it make the shift to the professional stage as an accompanying or solo instrument. For this reason, I suggest the following scenario for its future development. With the cooperative efforts of folk music workers and experts, it may be possible through research and experimentation to develop a man-made synthetic material with properties similar to those of the barley stalk, and which can take the place of the barley stalk. The next stage would be to make a new musical instrument with single pipe and multiple reeds, effecting reforms in tone-colour, compass, dynamic range, tuning, powers of expression and performance technique. By gradually perfecting it, we could realize the words of the poet, 'a barley pipe becomes a jasper flute.' Such an outcome would render a valuable service to the development of folk music, and also be the greatest possible consolation to the present writer.

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YANG Zenglie 杨曾烈  

ZHAO Yintang 赵银唐, ed.  

## GLOSSARY

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‘A BIT OF THIS AND A BIT OF THAT’:

Notes on Pop/rock genres in the eighties in China

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Unlike the rock movement in the West which has experienced an orderly progression of pop/rock genres from the fifties onwards, singers, musicians, songwriters and their audiences in the People’s Republic have been ambushed by a veritable flood of random pop/rock influences virtually simultaneously. Some Chinese critics argue that the sudden exposure to eclectic foreign influences has done little more than generate a copy-cat mentality among Chinese musicians. Others believe that pop and rock bands in China have endeavoured to find their own unique style without deliberately drawing on Western models. The author traces the development of various genres of pop and rock music in China in the 1980s.  

In an important and stimulating article entitled ‘Mozart and the Ethnomusicologist and the Study of Western Culture’, Bruno Nettl addressed the issue of viewing Western culture from an outside perspective through the eyes of a fictitious musicologist from the planet Mars. The Martian, among other things, established an image of the Music Conservatory as a place where great masters are revealed and respected, and observed a hierarchy among musical systems and composers. If Nettl’s same inquisitive friend arrived in the People’s Republic of China in the early eighties, how might this ‘ethnomusicologist from Mars’ describe the indigenous pop/rock genres which emerged in the mid to late eighties? Arriving in China, the ethnomusicologist has a vague notion that these pop/rock genres evolved through a process of social contact, acculturation and musical syncretism. The ethnomusicologist also observes that the eighties has witnessed a freedom of choice in music unprecedented in the history of the People’s Republic, a phenomenon which has had much to do with China opening up to the West and the economic reforms of the eighties. While there is a large degree of modelling and borrowing of Western pop/rock styles, the ethnomusicologist does not simply dismiss the process as blatant imitation. Indeed, as our terrestrial friend asks, ‘what is creative and imitative in a culture?’

1 The author is indebted to one anonymous reviewer for detailed comments and criticisms on various drafts of this essay. I am also indebted to Reis Flora and Craig De Wilde for their remarks on the first draft of this paper. I would like to thank Gérémie Barmé, David Kelly, Trevor Corson, Andreas Vath, Robert Cousland who graciously helped locate relevant material and Tanya McIntyre for permission to print her graphics and woodcut.

This paper sketches a number of indigenous pop/rock genres which became a permanent and ineradicable feature of popular urban culture in the eighties. I will cite specific examples for purposes of illustration, but generally limit the paper to setting out these pop/rock genres chronologically and explaining them.

**HONG KONG CANTOPOP & TAIWANESE POP SONGS**

The emergence of Hong Kong and Taiwanese pop songs in the early eighties coincided with the Party’s efforts to initiate economic reform and establish increasing contacts with the outside world. The economic policies initiated by Deng Xiaoping were not just simply a matter of choice but necessity. If the long-term survival of the Communist party was to be secured, not to mention its dwindling economy, drastic measures were needed to spearhead China into the 80s even if this meant embracing reform gingerly and loosening its stranglehold on culture. The first pop music to be endorsed by the Party in the wake of the Open Door Policy in 1979 was from Hong Kong and Taiwan. To be sure, the straight-jacketed cultural policies of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) had severely restricted cultural diversity, including music, and party leaders were anxious yet equally cautious to give its youth a taste of ‘foreign’ music. In the eyes of the Party, Hong Kong Cantopop and Taiwanese pop songs could safely be labelled as ‘foreign’ as they were not indigenous to mainland China, yet by virtue of their shared background, these songs were nonetheless Chinese.

Another thread linking the mainland with Hong Kong and Taiwan in the realm of popular music is that many of these songs incorporate familiar and popular folk tunes, particularly, ‘folk’ instruments such as the two-stringed spiked fiddle (erhu), and the membrane-hole transverse bamboo flute (dizi). Many Cantopop songs, for example, are simply pop or rock versions of popular Chinese ‘folk’ tunes. Others are borrowed

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3 Thomas B. Gold’s ‘Go With Your Feelings: Hong Kong and Taiwan Popular Culture in Greater China’ (*China Quarterly*, December 1993, no.136, pp.907-925) provides a very comprehensive survey on the influence of Hong Kong and Taiwan popular culture in China from the late seventies to the present day, including pop music. See also Tim Brace, ‘Popular Music in Contemporary Beijing: Modernization and Cultural Identity’, *Asian Music* vol XXII, no.2 (Spring/Summer, 1991), pp.47-48.
from Western and Japanese pop tunes set to new Cantonese and Mandarin lyrics. Others still, are popular songs of the thirties and forties. The first singer to gain nationwide popularity was the Taiwanese singer Teresa Teng (Deng Lijun). Her name became virtually synonymous with this genre until the mid to late eighties when a litany of Hong Kong and Taiwanese pop stars – Qi Qin, Su Rui, Jiang Yusheng, Tang Yonglin, Wang Jie, Zhao Chuan, Tong An'ge, to name a few – literally flooded the pop/rock music scene.

The party’s initial response to Teresa Teng was to say the least, lukewarm. In October 1983 when the party launched its Anti-Spiritual Pollution Campaign the official response to this Taiwanese singer became obvious to all. Cultural vigilantes such as Deng Lijun and Hu Qiaomu who targeted literature and the arts as examples of spiritual pollutants also included pop music on their hit list. Prior to the campaign, several commentators had already made statements on the pernicious influences of ‘foreign’ pop music on China’s youth. Writing in the People’s Daily Shi Guangnan blamed these ‘bad influences’ not only on ‘foreign’ pop music, but also on the disastrous effects of the Gang of Four and the Cultural Revolution:

Due to the Gang of Four, our cultural and educational facilities were left in shambles, leaving a youth spiritually and musically impoverished. What they really need is to experience something akin to a second cultural enlightenment. To be sure, this is a formidable task. Some have no powers of discrimination; as soon as they see something new they latch on to and imitate it...

There are also others who have no ideals, who have lost all faith in their country’s future, whose minds are void and who merely spend their time pursuing spiritual stimulants.

Zhou Yinchang, writing in the same journal in June 1982, provided a highly colourful and subjective evaluation of Cantopop and Taiwanese pop songs. Zhou observed, among other things, that many of these songs were borrowed pop tunes of the 30s and

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4 For examples of borrowed Western pop/rock tunes set to new Cantonese lyrics see Joanna Lee, ‘Cantopop Songs on Emigration from Hong Kong’, Yearbook for Traditional Music, 24 (1992), pp.14-23. A number of Cantopop songs are also sung in Mandarin.

5 For examples of these popular songs which reappeared in the late seventies and early eighties see Zhang Zhentao, Zhongguo sansishi niandai luxing gequ, quzhong gequ gaishu, in Zhongwai tongsu gequ jianshang cidian (An Appreciation Dictionary of Foreign and Chinese Popular Songs), Yang Xiaolu, Zhang Zhentao (chief editors), Shijie zhishi chubanshe, Beijing, 1990, pp.1-4.

6 I was very sad to hear of Deng Lijun’s sudden death in early May this year at the age of 42. She was born in Yunlin county, Taiwan, in 1953. When she was eleven years old she took part in a huangmeidiao song competition organized by Taiwan television and she scooped up the first prize for the song Visiting Yangtai (Fang Yangtai). In 1965 she enrolled in a rudimentary singing class for young children where she began her formal training as a singer. In 1967, before completing middle school, she went to Taibei and started work with a Taiwanese television company compering a variety programme called Everyday of the Week (Meiri yixing). The following year she was performing at a number of cabarets and nightclubs in the capital. At seventeen she began her fledgling career as an actress in Thank You Assistant Manager (Xie xie zong jingli) and a year later she sang the hit song from the television soap opera Glitter (Jingjij). The title song and a number of others from Glitter sold close to five hundred thousand albums. In 1973, Deng was ‘discovered’ by talent scouts (tarenko sukauto) from Japan’s Polygram Records in Hong Kong. Deng subsequently went to Japan where she was grounded in the finer points of pop singing before launching her first record with Polygram. The following year she recorded her second album entitled Empty Harbour (Kong Gang). In 1977 she returned to Taiwan and signed a contract with Taiwan television and released a compilation of her greatest hits. (See entry for Deng Lijun in Zhongwai tongsu gequ jianshang cidian, op. cit., pp.959-961). Deng kept up a steady stream of social engagements in the eighties and early nineties. Among other things, she staged a solo concert at the Las Vegas Casino in February 1983, and more recently, she took part in fund-raising concerts organized by pro-democracy activists in exile in Paris. (See footnote 4., in G. Barmé ‘Official Bad Boys or True Rebels’, in Human Rights Tribune, no.4, Winter 1992, p.20.)

7 Shi Guangnan, ‘Sentimental Songs Must Pave Their Own Road’, Renmin Yin Yue [People’s Music], hereafter RMYY, March 1990, p.3.
40s set to new lyrics.\(^8\) He also considered Teresa Teng's songs 'pornographic', a label which can encompass anything that is thought to be obscene, unhealthy, degrading, disgusting or simply anything that clashes with 'respectable' Party culture. An example of such scurrilous songs, as averred by Zhou, is *Unbridled Weekend* (*Fengkuangde zhoumo*):

Monday, everyone gets up too early  
Tuesday, business is swell  
Wednesday, I secretly make a phonecall  
Hi darling, give me a cheque.  
Thursday, I spend the whole day loafing around  
Friday, I go to the movies and stuff myself with food  
Saturday afternoon, it's off to the races to win some money  
Then it's off to rage the whole night through.  
I'm pretty drunk and I feel great  
The music is rockin' and rockin'  
Cha Cha Cha rock'n' roll  
The wilder it gets the more excited I feel.\(^9\)

While the lyrics of this song are hardly scabrous, Zhou writes emotively about its content:

It is not difficult to see that the lyrics and the song reflect a predilection for dissipation, swaying this way and that, while they're deranged, confused and void of meaning. Those wild tunes, incessant pulsating rhythms and unconstrained phrases only give people a kind of sensory stimulus. These songs also contain many foreign words...\(^10\)

Although shot through with political rhetoric, the tenor of Zhou's article is clear: to bring to the public's attention the lowbrow quality of Hong Kong and Taiwanese pop songs. Not surprisingly, Zhou's article appeared in the most politicized of musical journals – the *People's Music* – which then, and indeed today, continues to serve as a useful guide to prevailing official policy within the musical establishment. While the Party was conscientiously eliminating spiritual pollution, official coverage of the campaign in late 1984 became something of a ritual in official newspapers. To stem the flow of these 'decadent' Hong Kong and Taiwanese pop songs, not to mention Western pop songs, there was an attempt to 'spread the cool breeze of national music and purify the murky streams of pop music'\(^11\).

A series of concerts given by the Zhejiang Song and Dance Ensemble in Beijing in early November, performing *Jiangnan sizhu* – arguably one of the most well known of Chinese traditional/folk instrumental genres – was reported in the *Guangming Daily* as 'setting an example for developing Chinese-style light music'.\(^12\) If 'national music' was being used as an exemplary example of music that was neither obscene nor decadent, the timely comeback of official role models was clearly intended to provide the populace with role model figures to emulate as part of the Party's ideological campaign to ward off spiritual pollution. Medical students attached to the Fourth Army Medical College, who had heroically rescued tourists who had plunged off a mountain top at Huashan in Shaanxi Province on May 1, were publicly lauded for

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10 *Ibid*.
12 *Ibid*.
their heroic deeds and raised as virtuous persons of the Zhang Hua type. The incident also prompted a song entitled *Ode to Zhang Hua*.\(^{14}\) While many Cantopop songs have increasingly addressed such topics as the future of Hong Kong and the emigration wave,\(^{15}\) love in all its hues remains an integral part of this pop genre. Songs about stardust, roses, bleeding hearts, the vagaries of love, or the loneliness of separation are endlessly churned out. Such themes have inspired song titles such as *Autumn Tears, My Heart Only Loves You and Whose Tears Are Flying*. On one album entitled *Passionate Feelings*, sung by Deng Lijun, the song titles and lyrics are taken from Tang and Song poetry.\(^{16}\) *Thinking of You*, for example, by the northern Song Dynasty poet Li Zhiyi (1038–1117), describes two young lovers who live on opposite sides of the Yangtze River. The river, though an obstacle, is a silent undulating thread which ties the lovers together, a kind of symbolic embodiment of their love for each other, ‘I think of you everyday, but I can’t see you, even though we drink from the same river.’\(^{17}\)

It was not long before many aspiring mainland singers and musicians were imitating the likes of Teresa Teng and Cantopop singers in more or less a copy-cat fashion.\(^{18}\) Many cabaret clubs located in coastal cities and Special Economic Zones, notably Shenzhen, where the political atmosphere was considerably less stringent, became popular breeding grounds for many mainland singers to imitate their pop siblings.\(^{19}\) However, cabaret clubs were also targeted during the Anti-Spiritual Pollution Campaign, as one amateur singer explains:

Last year [in Guangzhou] when they [the authorities] were searching for pornographic videos and that sort of thing in the campaign against ‘spiritual pollution’, they closed all the cabarets down. It wasn’t the first time either. Later the Cultural Bureau agreed to register us when they checked to see that we met the required standard. We passed because our group is so professional and we work in a large respectable establishment like this.\(^{20}\)

**THE RISE OF CHINA’S FIRST POP/ROCK STAR**

Despite the efforts of hard-line ideologues to eliminate spiritual pollution, the campaign was short-lived. This was partly due to the fact that the campaign was seriously threatening Deng Xiaoping’s economic reforms, and among other things, risked turning away foreign investors and repealing joint-venture contracts. Amidst economic reforms and the loosening of control on political and cultural matters, a young mainland musician emerged on the pop/rock scene. After winning the Shanghai Guitar Competition the same year, Zhang Xing began his recording career singing songs

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\(^{13}\) For a full account of the Huashan incident see *GMRB*, November 9, 1983, p.2.

\(^{14}\) *Ibid.* See also ‘The Song of Zhang Hua Resounds through Huashan’, *GMRB*, November 17, 1983, p.1. Zhang Hua was an army medical student who heroically died attempting to rescue a peasant who had fallen into a nightsail pit.

\(^{15}\) See Joanna Lee, *op. cit.*

\(^{16}\) See *Yanyan youqing*, Polygram Records, Hong Kong, 1983.


\(^{18}\) These include Li Guyi (b. 1944, Changsha, Hunan Province), a former Hunan opera singer; Zhu Fengbo (b. 1937, Jinan, Shandong); Zhu Mingying (b. 1947, Shenyang, Liaoning Province) and Cheng Fangyuan (b. 1960, Beijing). Cheng began her musical career as an *erhu* player graduating from the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing before embarking on a pop singing career.

\(^{19}\) There are many cantopop singers who found fame in the early eighties as a result of talent-spotting competitions held at various venues including dance halls and discoteques as well as concerts and competitions held at college campuses and music conservatories. It is interesting to note that similar talent-scouring competitions and ‘campus songs’ (*xiaoyuan gequ*) were already popular among tertiary students in Taiwan since the late seventies.


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which stylistically were little more than carbon copies of American and Japanese love ballads such as *There's More Than One Way to Make It* (Chenggongde lu buzhi yi-tiao), *It's Too Late* (Chidao), and a rendition of John Denver's *Country Road* sung in English.\(^{21}\)

Zhang's rise to stardom was shrouded in controversy, the news of which was not widely publicized in the official press. His somewhat flamboyant and ostentatious lifestyle, at least in mainland terms, earned him the disapproval of the authorities. When it was discovered that two of his girlfriends had shared nine abortions between them, security police arrested him on charges of hooliganism for his purported promiscuity.\(^{22}\) Ironically, *It's Too Late*, a light-hearted and flippant song about a man who has to apologize to a girl because his heart already belongs to another, became one of his most endearing songs:

You came to me with a smile,
bringing with it a dilemma
I have somebody else
who was around a long time before you came along.

She's gentle and cute
Pretty and unpretentious
I knew one day she would be mine.

Do you understand how I feel
it's not possible to love someone else
when my heart belongs to another
I'm deeply sorry.\(^{23}\)

Several aspects of Zhang's rise to fame should be briefly analysed. First, the making of Zhang, as Robert Delfs notes, "was primarily the result of the huge market for tapes created by the cassette-recorder boom in recent years".\(^{24}\) The dissemination of music tapes in major coastal and urban centres had already penetrated the market economy, and pop/rock music became a growing market for private entrepreneurs and record companies. The Pacific Audio and Visual Company since its founding in 1979, had sold more than 600,000 cassette tapes by December 1983 and a subsidiary company of the China Record Company in Shanghai had sold close to 200,000 tapes from the second half of 1980 to February 1982.\(^{25}\) These sales figures were by no means confined to pop/rock music, but included a number of other genres such as regional opera and folk music. A second aspect reflects the change in the political climate. As already noted, by late 1984 the Anti-Spiritual Pollution Campaign had fizzled out, and the party temporary lifting its curfew on culture gave the likes of Zhang Xing the opportunity to emerge on the pop/rock scene that otherwise may not have been given to him. Conversely, Zhang may just have happened to be in the right place at the right time. As Thomas Gold observes, the political pendulum in the People's Republic is not as methodical or systematic as we would be led to believe:

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\(^{23}\) Song and lyrics by Yi Ming. Chidao, originally sung by the Hong Kong singer Liu Wenzheng, was already familiar to mainland audiences before Zhang turned it into a mega hit. (See Liu Hong in *Zhongwai tongsu gequ jianshang cidian*, op. cit., p.524.)

\(^{24}\) Delfs, *Ibid*

Tightening-loosening can take many forms. There might be economic liberalization and political restriction. There might be a clampdown in Beijing and liberalization in the provinces. Some social groups might experience restrictions while others escape untouched.  

While Zhang carved himself a place in public security files in Shanghai and was becoming a well-known celebrity, he was also a source of worry and concern for hard-line ideologues. Suffice it to say, Zhang lacked the pedigree and exemplary distinction of self-sacrificing and altruistic ‘youth models’ proffered by the party. Zhang’s ascendency angered hard-line ideologues who had difficulty coming to grips with the realization that this pop/rock star might be a potential role model for China’s youth in the eighties, who could inspire and encourage imitation. Indeed, by the early eighties official role model types such as Lei Feng and Zhang Hua had lost much of their pristine image as many young people were searching for more realistic, down-to-earth role models to whom they could relate on a more personal basis. For many young people, popular heroes in films and literature and even traditional heroes such as Wu Song and Lin Chong from Shi Nan’ai’s classic novel Outlaws of the Marsh, contained more lively and realistic characters than the lifeless, one dimensional models extolled by the Party. In this respect, Zhang Xing can be defined as ‘unofficial’ insomuch as he represented a public figure not openly encouraged or supported by the party. On the one hand, many urban youth saw official role models not as symbols of ‘revolutionary virtue, but of repression and ideological bankruptcy’.  

On the other hand, many urban youth found in Zhang a far more approachable and real-to-life role model with whom they could identify, a model they could call their own, a model that was not necessarily shared by the adult/communist establishment.

CHINESE DISCO (DISIKE)

In the early to mid-eighties, disike found an eager and waiting audience among many urban Chinese youth in dancehalls and nightclubs around China. While there are easily-identified similarities between disco and disike, they should not be used interchangeably. Disco in the West, which had its heyday in the seventies and can be traced back to the mid-1960s when the jukebox was first introduced to the USA, became virtually synonymous with dance music from the film Saturday Night Fever (1977) and groups such as the Village People, Boney M, the Bee Gees, Abba and Hot Chocolate. Disike was not associated with any particular movie or pop group and only became a widely accepted activity in the mid-eighties when dancing appeared on national television and was personally sanctioned by the erstwhile Party Secretary Hu Yaobang. While disco music can be defined within the realm of such films as Saturday Night Fever, Grease, and more recently Muriel’s Wedding and The Adventures of Priscilla: Queen of the Desert, disike has cast its net much further to include a ragbag of popular music genres from the West as well as from Chinese folk and instrumental music setting them to a pulsating regular bass drum rhythm.

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29 See Randy Chiu, ‘Disco Takes the Floor as Youth Culture Takes the Stage’, FEER. May 9, 1985, p.61.
30 Two 1993 Australian movies which bubble along to megadoses of disco from beginning to end. Abba songs are heard throughout Muriel’s Wedding, in particular ‘Dancing Queen’ and a litany of seventies disco hits such as ‘Go West’ (Village People), ‘I Love the Night Life’ (Alicia Bridges) and Abba’s ‘Mamma Mia’ accompany the vicissitudes of three drag queens in The Adventures of Priscilla: Queen of the Desert.
Graphics and woodcut used for the tickets of a *Beijing Underground* Concert by Tanya Mc Intyre. Mc Intyre writes: 'This is my 'artist's impression' of Beijing as a 'foreign student' in 1986. From my dormitory room on the 8th floor I looked out over a skyline of traditional and modern architecture, red flags and cranes. The *Beijing Underground*, or representatives of the unofficial culture submerged in the highly populated metropolis, of which I was a part, were surprisingly diverse crowd-ethnically and culturally. They danced to their own tune, which was an expression of these unique circumstances'.

In early 1985 a band that called themselves *Beijing Underground* toured Wuhan. The band, which toured under the less subversive name *The International Mainland Band* was formed a year earlier by a group of foreigners residing in Beijing, perhaps as a diversion from the exceedingly dull and mundane cultural life that the capital offered many of its expatriates. From its humble beginnings as a garage band, the group soon found itself performing at dances at joint-venture hotels and other gigs around Beijing, patronized by a growing expatriate audience which included foreign students, journalists, diplomats, business people and teachers. On the eve of their Wuhan tour, rumours had circulated that the band - whose members consisted of 'famous rock stars' - would be giving 'disco performances', a successful ploy by organisers which created enough excitement and anticipation among youth in Wuhan who were willing to pay up to four times the original price for a ticket from greedy scalpers. Not surprisingly, it didn't take long for private entrepreneurs and others in the music industry to discover hype as a basic tool of the entertainment industry.

In September that same year Wen Zhongjia and Mei Baojiu set a number of regional and revolutionary opera arias to a drum beat and other electronic wizardry, culminating in a cassette tape entitled *Mismatched Medley*. Somewhat cautious of how these arrangements would be received by listeners, Qiao Yu, who collaborated with Wen in this cassette tape version, provided a short explanation of their somewhat novel

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32 Randy Chiu, *op.cit.*

experiments which began with the following statement, '[I] don't know whether you will laud [our experiment] or disapprove'. While their efforts no doubt angered and upset many opera purists, it did set the scene for composers such as Guo Feng to set familiar regional opera arias to a steady beat of a drum machine.

While many folk songs were set to synthesised disco music, a great deal of folk music was also arranged in instrumental versions. These instrumental arrangements invariably accompany modern and traditional dances often performed on national television during Chinese New Year and other festive occasions. One such piece this writer has seen on video in Australia is *Laughing in the Northeast* (*Xiao zai Guan-dong*), a traditional/folk dance set to a throbbing non-stop disco beat performed as part of a *China Movie Festival* on Beijing's Central TV Station (CCTV) on September 9, 1992.

The enormous popularity of these disco arrangements of folk songs may be explained by their sheer familiarity. While an electric drum is often used as the base upon which folk songs are 'jazzed up', creating an aural impression of something new, these arrangements remain essentially folk in character, especially in incorporating traditional/folk instruments. As George Lewis and others have noted, traditional/folk instruments confer a sense of identity as a popular music which is immediately recognisable as belonging to a specific cultural group. One of the most used traditional/folk instruments found not only in disco arrangements of 'northern style' folk songs, but as we shall see, in other indigenous 'northern style' pop/genres as well is the *suona* (double-reed shawm). The *suona* in these pop/rock genres provides an aural image of a popular music which is part of a specific cultural group (in this case, mainland Han Chinese), although the instrument historically is not of Chinese provenance.

While *diske* found a ready and enthusiastic audience among many of China's urban youth - long after the demise of disco in the West - it also carved a niche among the elderly who found it an excellent form of exercise. In December 1987, the *Beijing Review* devoted a 'health clip' column to disco dancing among the elderly in Canton:

> Retired people in Guangzhou are taking up disco dancing for entertainment and health. In the early morning everyday, groups of aged men and women can be seen along riversides and sidewalks twisting to music from pocket tape recorders. According to a municipal official, more than 8,000 old people have been participating in regular disco sessions at the city's cultural centres.

**PATRIOTIC SONGS**

As the Party was trying to wrestle with the dilemmas of governing a growing disaffected youth in the eighties and the growing proliferation of 'unofficial' role models such as Zhang Xing, it repeatedly attempted to inculcate a sense of loyalty and recapture the 'golden days' of its past. The reasons for this crisis of faith in the party

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34 Taken from the sleeve notes of *Mismatched Medley*.
35 Guo Feng also set Peking opera arias to a non-stop disco beat. Unfortunately, I have not been able to avail myself of this cassette tape. See Guo Qingye, 'Songwriter Seeks a New Style', *China Daily*, October 9, p. 5. Guo Feng came to prominence in 1986 with the pop anthem 'Let the Whole World Be Filled with Love (*Rang shijie chongman ai*') a song which echoes much of Michael Jackson and Lionel Richie's *We Are the World*.
38 See *Beijing Review*, December 7-13, 1987, p.34.
and socialism are indeed complex, but stem in part from the disastrous years of the Cultural Revolution. Since those 'ten years of devastation', many Chinese youth, not to mention many adults and those within the party itself, have found themselves living in a society that neither commands or deserves respect. For many, their unquestioning faith in the tenets of socialism and Marxist-Leninist and Mao Zedong Thought has been supplanted by a tough philosophy of cynicism.\textsuperscript{30}

Despite the general lack of faith in the Party, several popular patriotic songs penned in the eighties became an equally pervasive part of the pop/rock scene.\textsuperscript{40} The poor relations between Vietnam and Kampuchea and the constant border conflicts of the late seventies and early eighties gave birth to three patriotic songs about the unwavering loyalty of PLA soldiers fighting for the motherland on the Sino-Vietnamese border. While morale-boosting and suitably stirring songs for soldiers, sung with great patriotic fervour by Dong Wenhua, a singer formerly attached to the Shenyang Army Song and Dance Ensemble, they also achieved widespread popularity. On one level, their appeal could be read as a rejection of Hong Kong and Taiwanese pop songs; on another, as an expression of acute nostalgia for the fifties (both within and outside the Party) when the bright, socialist future of the People’s Republic seemed assured.\textsuperscript{41} One such song is The Blood-Stained Banner (Xuerande fengcai). The lyrics describe a soldier who, with stoic resignation, prepares to lay down his life for his country as he goes off to defend the motherland knowing that he may never see his loved one again. The song opens with the following, 'I may leave, never to return, will you understand? I may be shot, never to rise again, will you still await my return?'\textsuperscript{42} The Moon Is Full (Shiwude yueliang) and Gazing into the Starry Sky (Wang xingkong) echo similar sentiments though patriotic fervour is not as explicit. In Gazing into the Starry Sky, for instance, the pangs of separation between a soldier defending the motherland and his loved back home are poignantly expressed (for part of the lyrics, see p. 95).

These patriotic songs, like national anthems, flags and emblems, are potent political symbols which invariably represent the desired self-image of a nation, not to mention some of its deepest political goals and aspirations. As noted above, on one level, these songs are no doubt related to a nostalgia for the Communist Party’s golden days of the

\textsuperscript{30} Distillation and discontent in the Party and socialism among many Chinese youth had been an ongoing and major concern for the Chinese government since the early seventies. This crisis of confidence in the Party was also reflected in a number of youth journals such as Intimate friend (Zhiyin) and Zhengtian (Searching). On the youth problem which prompted the Chinese Academy of Science (CASS) to set up a Research Institute for Youth and Juvenile Affairs in 1980 see Beverley Hooper, 'Re-evaluating Chinese Youth', Asian Studies Review, vol.14, no.1, 1990, pp.25–30. See also Liu Qing, 'From “I Do Not Believe” to “I Have Nothing to My Name”: A Study Note on the Culture of a New Age', Chinese Education, Spring, vol.23, no.1, pp.87–91.

\textsuperscript{40} While the patriotic songs, like revolutionary slogans were undergoing a crisis in the eighties, by the early nineties revolutionary songs from the past had been reclaimed into popular culture. The most obvious example are the ubiquitous Mao pop/rock tunes eulogizing the Great Helmsman, Mao Zedong. These appeared on a number of cassette tape compilations including The East Is Red, Respectfully Cherishing the Memory of Chairman Mao, and The Red Sun, which reportedly broke an all-time record for monthly sales of a pop/rock cassette tape. See Yvonne Preston, 'Mao rock and rolls in a red sun rising', The Age, February 24, 1992, p.7. The interest in these revolutionary 'jazzed-up' Mao tunes is partly a result of record company strategies 'to cash in' on releasing old Party favourites and greatest ‘Party’ hits compilations. But it also stems from a revived interest and curiosity in Mao and Maoist paraphernalia in the late eighties. For a generation of younger listeners who never heard these Mao tunes the first time round, they are, in a sense, 'new' and 'novel' alongside current pop/rock genres. On the Mao craze see Tai Ming Cheung, 'Good Luck Charm', FEER, August 15, 1991, p.19.

\textsuperscript{41} This is not to say that people stopped listening to Taiwanese and Cantopop pop music when these patriotic songs appeared. As noted earlier, the eighties witnessed a freedom of choice in music previously denied to the general populace and perhaps for the first time people were able to listen to a variety of pop/rock genres.

\textsuperscript{42} Music by Su Yue, lyrics by Chen Zhe. Taken from a cassette tape entitled Ode to Righteous Ardour: Songs of Tribute to All the Generals in China, China Records, undated.
early fifties. But as we have seen, they were also used to inculcate a sense of pride and loyalty at a time when the polity was showing increasing signs of no longer commanding absolute authority.

Is it possible to gauge how these songs were received? Were audiences different from audiences for Hong Kong Cantopop? Musical tastes are unmeasurable and, of course, can vary enormously from individual to individual, making generalizations very difficult. But judging from my observations as a foreign student in China, sitting through a number of popular and general music magazines, spending many hours of each day glued to the television set and informal discussions with a wide spectrum of social groups, these patriotic songs were enormously popular. It would be naïve to suggest that only party elders and hard-line party apparatchiks constituted the fans of these songs.

CHINESE ROCK 'N' ROLL (YAOGUNYUE)

In the spring of 1985 the British pop duo Wham! staged the nation's first pop/rock concert. The concert held at the People's Stadium attracted approximately 12,000 people. That such an event could take place in the People's Republic had much to do with the successful Sino-British talks over the future of Hong Kong in late 1984. To be sure, the concert unnerved many middle-aged cadres present, due in no small part to the sight of screaming fans being dragged off the stage by security police and the somewhat salacious performances by George Michael and a couple of dancers on stage. For many wannabe pop/rock singers and musicians, the concert provided the impetus needed to fuel their own pop/rock movement.

At a gala concert staged in Beijing in May 1986, Jin Zhaojun, a music critic and writer, commented:

This concert marks the beginning of a new generation of pop music in China and also marks a departure from the copy-cat Hong Kong and Taiwanese models and a new stage of independent exploration [in pop music].

Among the singers present at the concert was Cui Jian, one of China's leading pop/rock singers who came to public attention in November 1985 when he appeared on Beijing Central Television singing Nothing to My Name (Yi wu su yao yu). What many mainland singers and musicians needed to get rock off the ground, to embark on this new stage of 'independent exploration' (du li tansuo), was a homegrown hero, someone they could call their own, someone who could crystallize their rock movement. Obviously, Hong Kong Cantopop and Taiwanese pop stars did not measure up. But Cui Jian obviously did. Rock was born and Cui Jian and his band ADO, made up of both Chinese and foreign instrumentalists, became the mainland's leading rock group spawning a host of other home-grown bands in the process.

43 Andrew F. Jones in Like a Knife: Ideology and Genre in Contemporary Chinese Popular Music (Ithaca: Cornell University East Asia Program, 1992) divides popular music in China into two categories: The first, tongsu ('popularized') music, is 'linked to shifts in the political climate', and appeals to 'a middle-aged audience'. The second, liuxing ('popular') music 'has absorbed Western popular harmonies and appeals to predominantly youthful audiences' (p.19). While these divisions are very perceptive, they are by no means water-tight and are far more complex and fluid than Jones suggests.


46 See Linda Jaivin, 'It's only rock 'n' roll but China likes it', Asian Wall Street Journal (Hong Kong), October 12-13, 1990. It should be pointed out that while Cui Jian and others were making their own 'northern-style' rock in Beijing, Guangzhou had produced its own nascent rock movement. In 1987, Xie Chengqiang (b.1954, Canton), a graduate in cello from the Guangzhou Military Song and Dance Ensemble, teamed up with Bi Xiaosheng and Zhang Yuanfu to form the band 'Fresh Air' (Xin Kongqi) also dubbed 'The Three Muskeeters' (San Jianke).
While rock began in earnest in the mid-eighties, the seeds of movement could be traced back much earlier. In the West, rock music is often a symbol of youth rebellion, resistance, independence and protest. In the People’s Republic, youthful rebellion against authority was clearly evident during the early years of the Cultural Revolution, particularly at the height of the Red Guard Movement in 1967. Here, amidst the whirlpool of chaos and confusion, were some of the first footprints of rock. As Linda Jaivin writes:

Rock ‘n’ roll in terms of being a symbol of youthful rebellion would be very incompatible with the Confucian culture of China, but when Mao introduced the Cultural Revolution and got the whole youth of the nation to rebel, as it turned out in the service of party politics, he probably broke that mould forever, and what he did was create the mental, emotional and psychological conditions for youthful rebellion. 47

While many urban youth were coming to grips with rock music as a potential form of self-expression and as a symbol of defiance, the concept of rock was by no means unfamiliar to the expatriate community residing in the capital. Their presence was to play a significant role in shaping the pop/rock music scene. Indeed, a band of kindred spirits soon formed between aspiring mainland pop/rock stars and expatriates. For Cui Jian, these contacts proved invaluable and played a decisive role in the makeup of his band ADO, and arguably a crucial part in his development and maturity as a musician, singer and songwriter. 48

Pastiche, or to put it more crudely, borrowing ‘a bit of this, and a bit of that’, is clearly reflected in many of Cui Jian’s songs as well as other singers and songwriters. This fusion of melding indigenous musical elements with pop/rock Western styles is, of course, not unique to China. As James Lull observes:

At first a band may try to imitate the music that comes from abroad. But in a short period of time, the tendency is to incorporate the new material into their own musical experience rather than try to create something culturally unfamiliar. Rock bands in Sweden or Norway, for instance, may now continue to use an electric guitar, electronic bass and synthesizer, but they may also employ an electric accordion or another instrument associated with their own musical culture. 49

ADO’s first album issued in 1989 entitled Rock’n’Roll of the Long New March 50 reveals the influences of Western bands such as The Police, U2 and Bob Marley and

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50 Released by China Tourism & Audio Visual Publishing Company. In the same year a cassette tape was released in Hong Kong by Cohen Records entitled *Nothing to My Name*, identical except that the title track – Rock’n’Roll of the New Long March – was omitted.
the Wailers.\textsuperscript{51} Take for example the highly rhythmic playing and funk-like vocal style used by Cui Jian in \textit{It's Not That I Can't See} (\textit{Bushi wo bu mingbai}) or the characteristic reggae rhythmic textures in \textit{Start All Over Again}. Similarly, the heavy metal rock group Tang Dynasty (formed 1988) employ a heaviness of texture and screaming vocal styles typical of heavy metal bands in the West such as AC/DC and Metallica.\textsuperscript{52} Other influences may be described as simple pop ‘n’ rock. For example, Cui Jian’s \textit{Run Away} (\textit{Chuzou}) and \textit{Nothing to My Name}. Nowhere is the process as palpable, however, as in the use of traditional/folk instruments. The first singer/songwriter to introduce traditional/folk instruments such as the \textit{suona} into pop/rock songs was Hou Dejian. A Taiwanese singer/songwriter turned political activist, Hou is perhaps more well-known for his belated participation in the 1989 Protest Movement than as an influential and wealthy patron of the pop/rock movement.\textsuperscript{53} Both the \textit{suona} and the \textit{bawu} can be heard in his pseudo-pop/rock anthem \textit{Descendants of a Dragon}.\textsuperscript{54} Traditional/folk instruments can also be heard in several of Cui Jian’s songs. For example, the plaintive strains of the \textit{suona} in \textit{Nothing to My Name} and the \textit{guzheng} which figures predominantly in \textit{The Phoney Mendicant Monk} (\textit{Jiasengxing}). Zang Tianshuo -lead singer and keyboard player of 1989 – as another example, employs the \textit{suona} in his pop/rock rap song \textit{Say Something} (\textit{Shuoshuo}).

The close-knit circle of pop/rock musicians were for the most part professionally trained, attached to orchestras or song and dance ensembles, and took their music very seriously. The seriousness and standard of music making among musicians and singers alike is reflected in efforts to include foreign instrumentalists in their bands who displayed a high degree of musical prowess. For example, Balaze, a foreign student from Hungary and Eddie from Madagascar, an employee at the Madagascar Embassy in Beijing, initially attracted Cui Jian’s attention with their amazing pyrotechnics on the bass guitar and electric guitar respectively.\textsuperscript{55} No doubt, the presence of foreign members in bands such as ADO and 1989 provided real life rock models for fledgling mainland musicians and singers to emulate. Moreover, as rock

\textsuperscript{51} Like many Cantopop songs, a number of \textit{yaoqin} songs are borrowed Western pop/rock tunes set to new Mandarin lyrics. For example, the song \textit{Footloose} from the movie of the same name appears in Chinese version \textit{One}, \textit{Three}, \textit{Four} Five, as does Dan Hall’s love song \textit{Sometimes When We Touch} (renamed \textit{Without Words}). In the mid-eighties, Zhou Feng, a singer from Sichuan province, was doing renditions of Lionel Richie songs which included \textit{Hello} (renamed \textit{Enchanting Eyes}). In all of these Mandarin versions of Western pop/rock tunes that I have heard the recordings follow the arrangements practically note-for-note. A more recent example is an arrangement of a techno song entitled \textit{Twilight Zone} (renamed \textit{A Madman’s Diary}). It would be interesting to know what the original artists of these borrowed Western pop/rock tunes think about this level of ‘imitation’.

\textsuperscript{52} For a brief discussion of the rock styles which have influenced the group see A’se Di’an, ‘Dreaming Back to the Tang Dynasty’ (\textit{Menghui Tängzhao}), \textit{Audio and Visual World} (\textit{Yinxiang shijie}), November 1992, pp.10–11.

\textsuperscript{53} For an informative discussion on this Taiwanese pop/rock star turned dissident see Linda Jaivin, ‘Dragon’s Disowned Heir’, \textit{FEER}, September 13, 1990, pp.36–37. It is well-known that Hou Dejian became somewhat of a patron saint for many aspiring mainland pop/rock groups by providing musical instruments as well as other accoutrements necessary to start up a band. This point is also made by Linda Jaivin ‘Rock Music in China and Its Audience’, \textit{op.cit.}

\textsuperscript{54} For part of the lyrics to the song in English see Jaivin, ‘Dragon’s Disowned Heir’, \textit{ibid.}

\textsuperscript{55} It is important to mention briefly the venues where pop/rock musicians and expatriates gather in Beijing. These include embassy compounds, joint-venture hotels, nightclubs, bars and cafes. Such venues, in particular nightclubs and cafes, play an important role in mapping social networks, determining where expatriates and pop/rock musicians meet, party, discuss possible venues for a rock concert such as Zhongshan Park where Cui Jian and ADO held their first rock concert in the spring of 1988 or negotiate a suitable instrumentalist for a rock band. As well as attracting artists, writers, poets and musicians, such venues also attracted those who had clearly reaped the benefits of Deng Xiaoping’s reforms – fashion designers, executives of companies, private entrepreneurs and so on.
Ticket to a Christmas Eve Concert held at Susannah's which the author attended in Beijing in December 1993.

was a foreign import, the presence of foreigners also lent a degree of credibility to these nascent rock bands and their music.

While many mainland pop/rock singers and musicians are graduates from conservatories and song and dance ensembles, not all are professionally-trained.\textsuperscript{56} Wei Hua, for example, the lead singer of the Beijing rock group \textit{Breath} (\textit{Huxi}) formerly worked at the China International Broadcasting Station as an English newsreader for CCTV. Liu Huan, who most recently penned and sang the hit song from the twenty-one part TV serial \textit{A Native of Beijing in New York (Beijingren zai Niuyue)}, was originally a student of French at the College of International Relations in Beijing. Wan Di, as another example, who found fame by singing gritty renditions of songs from the movie \textit{Red Sorghum}, was in the fine arts before he became a successful pop/rock singer and songwriter.

\textbf{THE NORTHWEST WIND (XIBEIFENG)}

Two films by the so-called 'fifth generation of film makers' – \textit{Yellow Earth} and \textit{Red Sorghum} – which appeared in the mid to late eighties sparked off a craze for Shaanxi

\textsuperscript{56} Like many pop/rock musicians in the West, many of their Chinese counterparts do not have a basic training in music (i.e. do not read music) and expend many hours practising together 'in endless collective experiments'. Ruth Finnegan describes this process as 'collective prior composition through practice'. See Simon Frith, 'The Cultural Study of Popular Music' in \textit{Culture Studies}, ed. Lawrence Grossberg \textit{et al}, Routledge, 1992, p.175.
folk music and gave rise to a pop/rock genre known as the 'northwest wind'. Writing in the People's Music in September 1985, Zhao Jiping noted that songs from Yellow Earth were not direct copies of Shaanxi folk songs, but rather based on north Shaanxi 'folk song source material'. Collecting folk songs for the film began in early January 1984 when Zhao and others, braving biting cold sub-zero temperatures, travelled to north Shaanxi. The Yellow River—the cradle of Chinese civilization—and to a lesser extent, Yan'an, the hallowed revolutionary base of the Chinese revolution, is a powerful and potent symbol for many Han Chinese. For Zhao, the trip to China's northwest hinterland proved not only a source of inspiration, but the centre of self-discovery and rebirth as well. Similarly, when Zheng Yi, novelist and author of The Old Well, trekked off on bicycle from Shanxi to Henan cycling through scores of towns and villages, he realized why the Yellow River had become a totem of the Han Chinese. The experience was equally inspiring: 'I had come to the Yellow River, home of the legendary sage Kings Yao, Shun and Yu, and later the stage of countless live dramas throughout Chinese history. The experience engendered a fundamental change in my writing'. In this respect, the 'northwest wind' can be interpreted, not so much as simply a hybrid pop/rock genre which incorporates aspects of north Shaanxi folk music with rock, but rather as the music of the 'authentic' China, emanating from the Yellow River and its environs, the wellspring of Chinese culture. Such sentiments are no better illustrated than in the following song, composed by Su Yue and penned by Chen Zhe in 1988:

My home is on the loess plateau
the strong wind blows across the slopes
it doesn't matter if it's a northwest wind or a southeast wind
they're all my songs.

No matter how many years have gone by
like my ancestors before me
I sing songs that stretch the length and breath of this land
the Yellow River by my side.

My home is on the loess plateau
the sun moves across the mountain slopes
casting rays of light on my cave dwelling
bathing my arms in sunlight
my ox follows me.

The wind blows across the slopes all year round
it doesn't matter if it's 800 years or 10,000 years
they're all my songs.

This song captures 'something' which many Chinese have for the Yellow River and China's central plains, a strange mixture of romanticism and realism. The romanticizing of peasant life in the countryside is coupled with a realistic image of its harshness and strangely primeval landscape, a place which is at once desolate and impoverished, inhabited by country folk who face its often insurmountable hardships.

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59 Quoted in Su Xiaokang, 'Searching for Dreams (Xunmeng)', in Heshiang (River Elegy), Wenhuayishu chubanshe, 1988, p.8.
60 Taken from a cassette tape entitled Shanbei 1988 issued by the China Film Publ. House. Geremie Barmé and others have suggested that the 'northwest wind' phenomenon was a self-conscious attempt to locate Chinese pop/rock in rural Han China. Cui Jian and other 'northern-style' pop/rock practitioners see their music as the true 'authentic' pop/rock, self-consciously competing with and superior to Cantopop Hong Kong and Taiwanese pop songs. This attempt to locate 'northern-style' Chinese pop/rock in rural Han China is aptly illustrated on the cover of a rock cassette which bears the title Our Rock (Andi yanggan) issued by the Beijing Film Production and Audio Visual Company, undated.
and bitter ironies, yet at the same time it is a constant source of inspiration for many, including poets, writers, artists and film makers. These images which may find expression through a painter’s brush, a writer’s pen or through the lens of a cinematographer’s camera are ultimately produced by and for those who would never want to live there. Such imagery becomes less and less an actual physical place on the map and more a state of mind.\(^\text{61}\)

Zhao Jiping aside, composers who write within the pop/rock medium, not to mention modern composers of ‘serious’ Western art music, frequently make fieldtrips in China to collect folk songs (caifeng) which contain innumerable source material for their own compositions, be they tonal, melodic, rhythmic or structural influences. A case in point is one story concerning the origins of Xintianyou (lit: ‘one who trusts Heaven’s flow’), a ‘northwest wind’ song which many believe had its roots in the North Shaanxi region.\(^\text{62}\) When Xie Chengjiang, a graduate in cello from the Canton Military Song and Dance Ensemble, went on a fieldwork trip to Chaoshan in Guangdong, he discovered that numerous folk songs shared a striking resemblance to folk songs from North Shaanxi. According to Xie, historically, these similarities had much to do with the fact that after neighbouring tribes invaded the capital Kaifeng during the Northern Song dynasty (960–1126), the Han Chinese moved south and settled along the southeast littoral.\(^\text{63}\) Whatever similarities there might be between folk songs of Chaoshan and north Shaanxi, the trip inspired Xie to write Xintianyou which became wildly popular throughout China.\(^\text{64}\)

During the ‘northwest wind’ craze in 1988 it was difficult to walk or cycle for a few minutes through a shopping precinct or residential neighbourhood without being subjected to these ubiquitous tunes. Indeed, in the eighties the most common medium of dissemination of pop/rock music is not via state-controlled radio stations, but via cassette recorders and tapes.\(^\text{65}\) In urban and coastal centres one can often pick up the

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\(^{61}\) It is noteworthy that the attraction of China’s northwest hinterland as a mystical place of self-discovery for many poets, writers, artists as well as film makers in the mid eighties was very much part of the so-called xungen or ‘cultural roots’ movement. Why and in what ways China’s Central Plains, and in particular the Yellow River has such an impact upon ‘Chinese’ understanding of themselves and their identity is a fascinating subject which falls outside the scope of this brief study.

\(^{62}\) Entry for Xintianyou in Zhongguo yinyue cidian (Renmin yinyue chubanshe, 1984, pp.437–438) defines the term ‘as a type of shange, popular mainly in parts of north Shaanxi, Gansu Province and parts of northeast Ningxia…’. For some of the debates surrounding the term shange see Antoinet Schimmelpennekamp ‘Jiangsu Folk Song’ in CHIME no.1, Spring 1990, pp.16–29, and Zhang Zuoshi \& Helmut Schaffrath ‘China’s Mountain Songs’ in CHIME no.4, Autumn 1991, pp.23–33.

\(^{63}\) See Jian Gu ‘Canton’s “Three Musketeers”: “The Fresh Air” Music Group’, in Tongsu Gequ (Popular Songs), April 1990, p.9. Both Jian Gu and Xie Chengjiang seem ignorant of the fact that when the Song dynasty was forced to abandon its northern capital of Kaifeng in 1127, it relocated its de facto capital not in Guangdong province but in Hangzhou.

\(^{64}\) Xintianyou (lyrics by Liu Zhiwen and Hou Dejian) was originally sung by Cheng Lin and appeared on a cassette tape entitled The Best of Cheng Lin released in 1988. That same year the song appeared on Shanbei 1988 released by the China Film Publishing House sung by Tian Zhen (b. 1966, Beijing).

\(^{65}\) As Gold writes: ‘The introduction of cassette recorders at the end of the 1970s must be considered a revolution. They were much less expensive than television or record players, were mobile, and were capable of making instant copies of other tapes or records. One could listen to and copy tapes within the privacy of one’s home. The advent of the walkman facilitated this even more – listening through personal earphones put one beyond the reach of snoopy neighbours’. See Gold, ‘Go with Your Feelings’, op. cit., p.916. There are of course a variety of ways pop/rock songs are disseminated and popularized in the People’s Republic apart from cassette recorders and tapes. The lyrics of pop songs deserve special mention here. Lyrics are disseminated in newspapers, magazines, pop song books in cipher notation, and can also be found on the back of small, pocket-sized calendars. Lyrics are also widely distributed and circulated among many young middle school as well as tertiary students. It is not uncommon to find such students in their spare time copying the lyrics of songs into personal notebooks or diaries alongside a cut-out picture of their favourite or idolized pop/rock star. The nineties brought a new dimension to the dissemination of pop/rock music with the added visual component.
latest fad of popular music, walking down a main street or shopping centre, blaring from loudspeakers or ghetto-blasters in department stores, privately-owned restaurants, bars, cafes, nightclubs, hair salons, coffee shops, in taxis, at railway stations; in fact, anywhere cassette players and video machines are found. These locales are something akin to radio stations where resident disc-jockeys provide a major source of pop pabulum for many urban youth who keep abreast with the latest pop/rock styles.

By early 1989 the reception of the ‘northwest wind’ appeared to be on the wane. According to Zhang Yuming, a reporter writing in the People’s Daily in April, the audience at an All China Pop Music Competition in Canton clamoured to hear pop/rock songs other than the ‘northwest wind’. A month later Jin Zhaojun, who had enthusiastically covered the genre since its inception now declared it moribund. While it became apparent that the fad for the ‘northwest wind’ had lost much of its appeal with audience by early 1989, it by no means vanished from the pop/rock scene altogether. Rather it continued to co-exist alongside other pop/rock styles. In the realm of television, where arguably an essential part to the success of a popular mini-series, cartoon or soap opera is often calibrated by its catchy tunes and main theme song, the ‘northwest wind’ played a significant role. Witness, for example, ‘northwest wind’ tunes in TV soap operas such as Bamboo Fence, Woman and Dog (Liba núren yu gou), Windlass, Woman and Well (Lulu, núren, jing) and A Woman is Not the Moon (Nüren bushi yuejiang).

In 1988 Cheng Yun, a musician and writer in his seventies, had already predicted that in time other ‘winds’ (i.e. styles) would supplant this pop/rock genre:

> We have numerous minority groups abundantly rich in ‘musical resources’ and many talented composers who can write even more outstanding works (including popular music). ‘How can we call ourselves beggars when we are holding such riches in our hands?’

of pop/rock videos and more recently, satellite dishes. It could be argued that given the dissemination of cassette tapes in the eighties and no less the impact of video machines and satellite dishes in the nineties, pop/rock songs have the scope to reach a much larger audience than the works of any mainland writer or poet. None of these trends augurs well for the Party.


67 Jin Zhaojun, ‘Where Is the Wind Blowing to? A Critique on the Aftermath of the “Northwest Wind”’, RMB, May 24, 1989, p.8. It is debatable among many pop/rock music critics and singers as to what makes xibei feng distinctive from yao yun yue. Writing in the Music Lover [Yinyue Aihaozhe] in December 1988, Li Hanying and Shen Tingkang observed that both Xie Chengyang’s Xinbianyou and Cui Jian’s Nothing to My Name were considered by many to be the harbingers of the ‘northwest wind’. For Jin Zhaojun, writing in the People’s Daily several months earlier, the ‘northwest wind’ also began with these two songs, but he called the synthesis ‘Chinese rock ‘n’ roll’. See Jin, ‘Where has the Wind Blown Come from?: An Evaluation of the “Northwest Wind in Song Circles”’, RMB, August 23, 1988, p.5. When both styles share similarities in vocal delivery and instrumentation, the difference between the two may depend entirely on the commentator. This, of course, has parallels with the blurring of definitions such as pop and rock in the West.

68 From a litany of examples, these include Journey to the West (Xiyouj) from the TV series of the same name; Maya’s Song from the Japanese animated cartoon The Trials and Tribulations of Maya (Maya lixian ji), sung by the teenager singer Sun Jiaxing, Aspirations (Kewang) and Everything is Plain Sailing for Good Companies, Honest People (Haoren yisheng ping’an) from the fifty-part soap opera of the same name.

69 In the late eighties record companies continued to release ‘northwest wind’ hit compilations. In 1990 the China Film Publishing House issued a tape entitled Shanbei 1990 which included popular ‘northwest wind’ tunes from TV soaps such as Shadow on the Bamboo Fence Wall (Liba qiangi de yingzi). One of the opening pop/rock songs I heard during a MTV music awards program in 1993 was a ‘northwest wind’ song entitled A Boat Punter’s Love (Qianfu de ai), sung by Yu Wenhua and Yin Xiangjie.

PRISON SONGS (QIUGE)

Just as Cui Jian was typecast as a practitioner of rock music, so the name Chi Zhiquiang, a movie star and one-time criminal turned singer, became synonymous with another pop/rock genre which emerged in the late eighties – the so-called ‘prison songs’. The ‘wind’ had changed. Whereas the ‘northwest wind’ incorporated elements of North Shaanxi folk music with rock, ‘prison’ songs, as one writer observed, had a distinct northeast folk song flavour found in such songs as The Happy Bachelor, Mother’s Really Careless and There’s Not a Drop of Oil in This Dish.\(^{71}\)

Chi was not your typical mainland pop/rock singer. He had spent time in prison for reportedly joining a criminal gang and engaging in nefarious activities of one kind or another. But he had ‘washed his heart and changed the skin on his face (xinixi gemiai)’. In other words, he was a reformed citizen obviously on the mend. Pop/rock became the medium through which he voiced his repentance and remorse. Not surprisingly, the song titles of this pop/rock genre reflected not only Chi’s sentiments of remorse, but those of other young criminals who had spent time behind bars. Some of the song titles even read like self-flagellations and confessions. For example, Tears of Remorse (Huihende lei), Eternal Regret (Yihan qiangiu) and Ten Things I Shouldn’t Have Done (Shibugai).\(^{72}\) Despite the glamourized world of crime, a world which is vividly portrayed in much of Wang Shuo’s fiction,\(^{73}\) the messages in some of these songs are simple and direct: crime doesn’t pay.\(^{74}\) In one well-known song entitled Banknotes (Chaopiao), Chi admonishes those who are lured by the seductive charms of money:

\begin{quote}
Whoever created money  
You dominate the world,  
People sell their sons and daughters ‘cause of you  
Others spend time behind bars ‘cause of you  
Money,  
Like a pair of handcuffs  
No one can escape from you.  
Money,  
the knife that kills  
But spills no blood.

Face to face with these crisp banknotes  
People fret and worry themselves sick ‘cause of you,  
While other laugh with glee.  
People race about bowing and scraping  
Money,  
Your power and prestige are enormous.  
Oh money  
So many are seduced by you.
\end{quote}

\(^{71}\) Zeng Yi, ‘What is the Significance of the Popularity of “Prison Songs”?’, GMRB, October 19, 1988, p.1.

\(^{72}\) It should be noted that while feelings of remorse, forgiveness, even anger are reflected in the song titles and lyrics of ‘prison songs’, the music itself does not necessarily have to be ‘gritty’, ‘angry’ or ‘dramatic’, E.g. the poppy and flippant sounding quality of Ten things I Shouldn’t Have Done.


\(^{74}\) It is interesting to note that China, like other societies, has a fascination with crime and punishment. The theme of justice and retribution is well illustrated in traditional Chinese literature and drama as well as in contemporary literary magazines. For example, Zhuomuniao (The Woodpecker). Historical figures such as Bao Zheng, Zhang Ding, Qian Ke and Wei Xiuran frequently appear as wise and perspicacious dispensers of justice in Yuan zaju dramas or ‘courtroom dramas’ (gong’anju). See Chung Wen Shih, ‘Social Justice’ in The Golden Age of Chinese Drama: Yuan Tsa-chu, Princeton University Press, 1976, pp.100–112.
Luring banknotes glittering before me
'cause of you, young girls have been led astray,
'cause of you, young men have been sent to reform camps
bewitched and lured by your charms.
Money is the cause of much worrying and suffering
the knife that kills but spills no blood.

Everyone needs money
If you wanna make a bit,
You'll have to take the straight and the narrow.
But don't let money control your life
like an ox pulled by the nose
With your head stuffed with money
you'll simply take a fall.
Oh money
Necessary in our lives
But it's not everything.75

Zeng Yi, a reporter writing in the Guangming Daily, in October 1988 noted that cassette tape compilations of 'prison songs' had already sold more than ten million copies.76 Who constituted the bulk of their fans? Erstwhile criminals and offenders? Is there any kind of parallel here between the popularity of songs from Red Sorghum after that movie was released and the release of the movie Juvenile Delinquents (Shaonianjian)? The appeal of these songs, as the same writer observed was also inextricably entwined with the already burgeoning consumer demands for pop/rock music:

...people from all walks of life can choose whatever cultural commodities they desire, just as they can freely choose their own wardrobe. When all is said and done, let the people decide what they want for themselves...77

BY WAY OF CONCLUSION
The eclectic foreign influences that spurred on the pop/rock movement, be they pop/rock styles from the West, the presence of foreign pop/rock bands or the 'jazzing-up' of traditional folk songs and regional and revolutionary opera arias, provide us with an insight into popular urban culture in the eighties. Modelling and widespread imitation of musical styles are noticeable features of these hybrid indigenous genres.

75 Music by Xu Peidong, lyrics by Zhang Li. Xu (b. 1954, Dalian, Liaoning Province) and Zhang have been collaborating since 1987 when they first met at a glitterati gathering at Mutianyu, not far from Badaling in Beijing. In December 1993, China Film Publishing House published a song book with eighty eight of their best known pop songs entitled Xu Peidong, Zhang Li - Jingu 88 Shou.
76 Zeng Yi, op.cit. In an article which appeared in the China Daily the same day as Zeng Yi's aforementioned piece, Han Yidan writes that 'the sale of Chi's cassette tape had reached one million', a significant discrepancy with Zeng's figure. See 'Open Policy Opens Ears', in the China Daily, October 19, 1988, p.5.
77 Zeng Yi, ibid. While official thinking and writing on pop/rock music in China may be dismissed by some as commercially parasitic, artistically worthless and a pernicious influence on China's youth, the Party tolerates the pop/rock scene because it recognizes that the pop/rock industry -indeed popular culture- is part of their booming and expanding economy which they are no doubt trying to encourage. One good example of this contradictory relationship is that of Cui Jian, who, while being continually at odds with officialdom, is nonetheless recognized as an official pop/rock star. Geremie Barmé has noted that such 'maverick artists' are used for propaganda purposes, 'assimilated into the Chinese soy-sauce vat'. See 'Official bad boys or true rebels?' in Human Rights Tribune, no.4, Winter 1992, p.18. See also Barmé, "The Chinese Velvet Prison: Culture in the "New Age", 1976–89", in Issues and Studies, vol.25, no.8, 1989, pp.68–69. See especially footnote 47.
Some critics have noted that this musical syncretism had done little more than generate a copy-cat mentality among musicians, singers and songwriters. At least one critic has suggested that many have all along ‘endeavoured to find their own unique style’ without deliberately and consciously drawing on Western pop/rock models. As in the tale of Dongshi, an ugly woman who knitted her brows in imitation of the famous beauty Xishi only to make herself uglier (Dongshi xiaopin), much of these hybrid genres may be described by some critics as assiduously aping pop/rock genres in the West with ludicrous effects. But as our terrestrial friend from the planet Mars has observed, unlike the rock movement in the West which has experienced an orderly progression of pop/rock genres from the fifties onwards, singers, musicians, songwriters and their audiences in the People’s Republic have been ambushed by these random pop/rock influences virtually simultaneously. For these reasons alone we should not be too quick to pass judgement on these mainland singers and songwriters. Rather we should listen to their songs and pop/rock arrangements for what they are, and not dismiss them for what they clearly are not.

POSTSCRIPT: excerpt from *Gazing into the starry sky* (see p. 85)

... The night deepens
I have trouble falling asleep
I gaze at the star unaware of my surroundings
brilliant and resplendent.
I greatly admire your spirit
I’m thinking of you
Are you thinking of me?
The sea may run dry and the rocks may crumble
but our hearts will always remain true.
Even if you decide to leave
vanishing from sight like a shooting star
you’ll shine in my heart forever.

[Music by Tie Yuan, lyrics by Shi Xiang.]

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79 Zi Niu, ‘Chinese Rock and *Tang Dynasty*, *Yinyue Tiandi* (*The World of Music*), March 1993, p.4. While rock ‘n roll is very much a foreign import, rock practitioners such as Cui Jian have melded a number of music styles into their own unique rock expression called *yaogunyue*. In an interview published in 1993, Cui avered that his own ‘northern-style’ rock is quite different from rock in the West and by extension of this, is arguably superior to ‘southern rock’ (Xie Chengqi and al.) and *Gangtai* pop songs. See G. Barmé, ‘Soft Porn, Packaged Dissent and Nationalism: Notes on Chinese Culture in the 1990s’, in *Current History*, September 1994, vol. 93, no. 584, p.274.
81 This important point has also been made by Linda Jaivin, *Indian Pacific*, op.cit.
'BALLS UNDER THE RED FLAG'

Cui Jian Makes His U.S. Debut In Seattle

DENNIS REA
Seattle, Washington

One of rock music's more unusual tangents came full circle when Chinese rock star Cui Jian made his U.S. debut in Seattle in September 1994, an event that would have seemed unimaginable just a few short years ago. Although Cui Jian had previously performed in Europe, Japan, and Hong Kong, his arrival in the birthplace of rock and roll represented a musical homecoming of sorts.

Cui Jian was invited to participate in the city's annual Bumbershoot Arts Festival, a sprawling four-day event that featured hundreds of international, national, and local artists at more than a dozen performance venues. Noted for its globe-spanning eclecticism, Bumbershoot proved to be an appropriate forum for Cui Jian's music, especially since the 1994 festival had a Chinese subtheme, with appearances by authors Su Tong (Raise the Red Lantern) and Anchee Min (Red Azalea) in addition to Cui Jian.

Cui Jian's Bumbershoot appearance was the result of efforts by Seattle concert promoter and self-styled East-West cultural exchange impresario Norman Langill. That Langill managed to persuade the Chinese government to allow such a politically suspect artist as Cui Jian to perform in the U.S. was an impressive feat, prompting much speculation about what this development meant. Had Beijing decided that, in the blasé '90s, Cui Jian no longer posed much of a threat, or had they correctly surmised that few in the U.S. would take notice of the singer's appearance?

Inevitably, the significance of Cui Jian's visit was lost on most of the listening public. The Seattle media provided only cursory coverage of the event, with the result that only the Chinese-American community and a handful of China watchers recognized its importance. Predictably, local media focused almost exclusively on Cui Jian's tenuous link to the events at Tiananmen Square—an association he would gladly jettison—ignoring the broader implications of his status as a role model for China's new lost generation. (A notable exception was National Public Radio's Marci Sillman, who produced a program about Cui Jian for national broadcast.)

ANTICLIMACTIC
Cui Jian's visit came on the heels of the release of his new album, the provocatively titled Balls Under the Red Flag. Musically, the record represents the singer's most radical departure to date from the stirring ballads that inspired China's youth in the mid-to late 1980s. With its harsh textures, insistent dissonance, and snippets of
twisted free jazz, *Balls Under the Red Flag* seems almost calculated to alienate Cui Jian's earlier admirers. The new album balances a more contemporary, musically aware attitude (postmodern musical irony, an industrial oil-barrel drum kit) with a renewed emphasis on native Chinese elements (*suona* and Chinese drums feature prominently). The record also reunites Cui Jian with Eddie Randriama Pionona (guitar) and Liu Yuan (saxophone, *suona*), his former collaborators in the pioneering Chinese rock band, ADO.  

The first of Cui Jian's U.S. performances was disappointingly anticlimactic, thanks to poor planning on the part of Bumbershoot organizers. A free event for many years, the festival had recently instituted an admission fee, a move that drew protests from the public. In an attempt to placate critics who felt that Bumbershoot had become too commercial, festival organizers announced that the first day, Friday, would be free. However, they then culled five of Friday's most attractive acts—including Cui Jian—and lumped them together as an event-within-an-event that carried a separate admission fee of $10. The public was not fooled, and few attended. When Cui Jian and his band took the stage at 5:45 p.m., they found themselves playing to a crowd of fewer than 100 people—in a football stadium. Despite this disheartening reception, the band gamely delivered their set. Bumbershoot officials shrugged off the embarrassment, calling it a "warm-up" for the band's second show. That evening, at a party for Cui Jian hosted by his friends in Seattle, several of his band members expressed an interest in jamming with local musicians in a less formal setting. The following night they got their wish when they were invited onstage at MOE, currently Seattle's trendiest and most successful rock club.

Cui Jian and his band showed up at MOE expecting a low-key jam session but instead found a packed house that had been primed for their appearance by the excited club owners. The Chinese musicians brightened when they entered the room, and it became clear that this, and not the sheltered, overly formal arena events planned by Bumbershoot, was the kind of experience they had been hoping for in the U.S.
After a brief introduction, Cui Jian, Eddie, Liu Yuan, and bassist Ling took the stage and launched into the title song of the 1991 album, *Solution*, accompanied by local drummer Jason Finn, who had been recruited just moments before the show. The band performed a rousing version of the song (with Finn doing an admirable job of blending in), and the audience, who had no idea who Cui Jian was, roared their approval. *Solution* was followed by a version of *Balls Under the Red Flag*, which, with the addition of violinist Eyvind Kang and myself on guitar, evolved into an adventurous, funky improvisation that continued until the club closed. The musicians were visibly elated, glad for the opportunity to let their hair down and participate in the club scene.

**PASSION AND VITALITY**

Cui Jian’s second Bumbershoot concert, at the genteel Opera House, was the centerpiece of his trip to Seattle. The show was attended by close to a thousand people, including a fair number of curious festival-goers and a sizable contingent from the local Chinese community. (Others came as far away as Vancouver and California.)

After a lengthy self-congratulatory introduction from Langill, Cui Jian walked on stage to a chorus of cheers in English, Mandarin, and Cantonese. The band went on to perform most of the songs from their new album and a few numbers from *Solution*, saving the classic *Yi Wu Suo You* (the only tune from the landmark 1989 album of the same name to be performed) for last. In one new song, *The Other Shore*, Cui Jian improvised lyrics in English calling for better understanding between the two cultures. For those who had previously experienced Cui Jian’s concerts, it was like being transported back to China, with the Chinese in the audience on their feet shouting their encouragement and singing along. Those who were being introduced to Cui Jian’s music for the first time were likewise swept along in the surge of emotion, and the applause was loud and long. (Many in the audience later remarked that the music possessed a passion and vitality that has all but disappeared from corporate Western rock.) The band’s focused and powerful performance was marred only by its brevity, the result of an overlong opening set by a forgettable local rock band.

After threading their way through a throng of Chinese-American autograph-seekers outside the building, the musicians were taken to Bumberdum, a minifestival of world percussion music that has become a Bumbershoot tradition. To their surprise, Cui Jian’s drummer and percussionist were invited to participate in the Bumberdum finale, where they found themselves sharing the stage with a Japanese taiko ensemble, a tympanist, Brazilian percussion master Airto Moreira, and spoon virtuoso Artis the Spoonman. After the show, Cui Jian and his band attended a party at the home of former Santana drummer Michael Shrieve, who gave them a taste of his recent music. (While in Seattle, the Chinese musicians also took in George Clinton and the P-Funk All-Stars, didgeridoo-fusion band Trance Mission, Jeff Greinke’s LAND, and several grunge-rock bands.)

On the band’s final night in the States a second jam session was organized at another Seattle rock venue, the Offramp. This was a much looser affair that highlighted the interaction between the Chinese musicians and a number of local jazz and rock players. Initially reticent, Cui Jian was eventually persuaded to sing a couple of his songs. That night he told a Seattle friend that his experience in America had left him finally feeling like a “real musician.” This may seem a curious remark coming from someone who has single-handedly revolutionized popular music in the world’s most populous nation, but in the rock clubs of ultrapop Seattle, where nobody knew or cared who he was, Cui Jian had managed to win people over on the merits of his music alone, as separate from politics. Cui Jian and his band went back to Beijing eager to return to the U.S. for more shows, preferably intimate club dates. However, shortly after their return to China, *Balls Under the Red Flag* was banned by the government, signaling yet another setback for the renegade rocker and for Chinese rock music in general.
BEIJING BASTARDS

The New Revolution

LINDA JAIVIN
(Elizabeth Bay, Australia)

Rock & roll is really bad
Once inside you'll never get out
Rock & roll is really bad
Just like a girl who drives you mad
No way can I refuse that sound
It just turns my body round.

'ROCK & ROLL IS REALLY BAD'
BY HE YONG

It's a Saturday morning in Beijing and I'm having a coffee with Wang Feng, who I think may be the only member of the Chinese Communist Party with waist-length hair, an electric guitar and studded wristbands. I could be wrong. After all, China is changing faster than speed metal. We're in a fast-food outlet a few city blocks east of Tiananmen Square called Shanmu shushu - "Uncle Sam's". They were burning Uncle Sam around the time Wang Feng was born, in 1970, during the Cultural Revolution. Now, Sam sells burgers and as far as many members of Wang Feng's generation are concerned, that's the way it should be. Rock & Roll.¹

Rock & roll has been around in China long enough for some guy at Harvard to write a thesis on it (Like a Knife: Ideology and Genre in Contemporary Chinese Popular Music by Andrew F. Jones, Cornell East Asia Series, 1992). It might have been around a lot longer had Lin Biao - Chairman Mao's 'closest comrade in arms' and chosen successor - not bungled his plot to assassinate the old man. Not that Lin Biao was much of a groover - but it's common knowledge that his son Lin Liguo, who was his chosen successor, lurved the Beatles. So as Chinese rock fans sometimes mischievously speculate over a few glasses of the local brew, if... and if... perhaps then...

By the mid-Eighties, the Party had finally come to the party, after its own fashion, promoting disco dancing as 'healthy exercise for young and old'. Rock was still suss, but pop ruled, okay.

Homeboys who learnt about rock from Voice of America broadcasts bought cheap guitars and figured out how to play them. Copies of rock music cassettes from the collections of the capital's growing foreign population, meanwhile, leaked out into the Chinese community and circulated like secret documents.

Foreign students, journos and diplomats formed bands with names like the Beijing Underground and the Mainland and gigged at small venues around town. Soon, not only were there Chinese fans bopping to the beat, but there were Chinese musicians on

¹ A slightly longer version of this article appeared in Rolling Stone, Australia, April 1994, pp.62-65.
stage creating it as well. Still, it would have to wait until 1985, when Wham! staged the first-ever rock concert in China, for rock to become a mass movement.

Not long after that, an erstwhile trumpeter with the Beijing Symphony Orchestra in his mid-twenties, Cui Jian, emerged as China’s first, genuine, certified boy-n-the-hood Rock Star. Wearing an old-fashioned Red Army uniform with Attitude for epaulettes, he rapped out his signature tune ‘Nothing to My Name’ to hordes of screaming fans: ‘I want to give you my hope / I want to help make you free / But all you ever do is laugh / at me ’cause / I’ve got nothing to my name.

Party officials didn’t know much about rock, but they knew what they didn’t like. How could young people say they had nothing when they had socialism? But unable to come up with a coherent policy, they banned him, they banned him not, they banned him ...

When not allowed to play the stadiums, Cui gigged at functions universally known by the English word ‘party’. Organised by foreign residents or entrepreneurial Chinese proto-promoters, parties may be held in parks, restaurants or bars. Other groups with names like Tang Dynasty and Black Panthers, and even an all-girl band called Cobra soon came on to the scene. The authorities began to think, if you can’t beat it, try to co-opt it. Tentatively embracing rock music in the pages of the leading theoretical journal People’s Music, they gave it a big hug with a positive write-up of Cui Jian in the Party organ, People’s Daily. By early 1989, Chinese rock was on a roll.

That same year, riffs of discontent were heard throughout the capital. By day, demonstrators took to the streets to protest against corruption and for democracy. By night, in Tiananmen Square, they rocked to the music of Cui Jian and others, including the punk rocker He Yong and his band May Day.

I caught a May Day gig at the time of the protests. They were playing behind the Ancient Observatory Tower that used to be part of the old city wall. He Yong is my favourite Chinese rude-boy, even if when you go out with him he smokes all your friends’ cigarettes and pisses off the waiters. A born punk, he doesn’t sing so much as snarl and scream:

The place where we live
Is like a garbage dump,
We’re all insects
Fighting and squabbling
We eat our conscience
And shit out our thoughts ...
Is there anything we can do?
Nope.
Tear it down. ['Garbage Dump' by He Yong]

For a while there, it was anarchy in the PRC. Then came the tanks, guns, massacre, arrests and repression. But they didn’t manage to kill rock & roll.

A REAL SCENE
In 1990, a big night out at a Beijing stadium featuring nearly all the major local bands signalled that rock was finally coming up from underground – even if they weren’t allowed to advertise it as a rock concert and had to call it ‘modern Chinese music’ instead. Now, it’s a real scene. Hong Kong and Taiwan producers fly in and out talking deals and contracts. Compilation tapes with names like ‘China Fire’ are on sale at People’s Department Stores everywhere. A young film-maker, Zhang Yuan, has even made an underground film set in the Beijing rock world (Beijing Bastards).

To borrow a Chinese cliché, rock bands are springing up like bamboo shoots after a spring rain. It’s not an easy life: Instruments are expensive, practice space hard to find and gigs can still be cancelled at the last minute by the authorities. Despite copyright
laws, pirates rule the seas. It's nearly impossible, meanwhile, for local bands to get any exposure on either television or radio, which are only now cautiously introducing foreign rock music. While rock musicians deny vociferously in published interviews that what they're doing is politically subversive, the government clearly still has its doubts.

In Beijing after a few months absence, I decide to check out the scene. I try to round up the usual suspects. He Yong is out of town. His father tells me he's at a wedding. Another friend thinks he's lying low because one of his songs has become a major pop hit and as an attitudinal punk, he finds such success mortifying. I dial Cui Jian's number, and get a 'this number is not in service' recording. I attempt to find the new one, but begin to think it would be easier to discover the home number of Deng Xiaoping. Willie, an American reporter, tells me he's been trying to track down an Inner Mongolian crew that does covers of Beatles songs. Everyone's talking about a new band called Acupuncture Point, but no one seems to know when or where they'll be playing next.

SERIOUS ROCK FANS
The only thing anyone can tell me for certain is that there's going to be a party on Saturday night. That night, at 10:30, I bike over to the Pizza Hut in the eastern part of the city. Waiting for me, on their bikes, are Liu Shen and Fang Hao. Liu is pale and voluble, the son of a playwright and an editor. Fang is dark, almost sullen, the son of railway workers and the grandson of a Red Army veteran. He's got two earrings in one ear, but only puts them in on weekends - they're not keen on piercing at school, where he's a member of the Communist Youth League. Liu and Fang are best friends and serious rock fans. Nearly all their spending money goes to buying cassette tapes of rock music. They've seen Cui Jian in concert. However, they think Cui, who's recently hit 30, is a bit 'old' - they're both 18. Fang, who adores Guns 'n Roses, writes songs and hopes to form a band some day. Neither have ever been to a rock 'party'.

We cycle to the Xuan Hao 'disco hall'. The decor in this place is weird - a promotional pamphlet describes it as "fanciful, yet primitive ... recalling the 'Tales of the Arabian Nights'". Sure, as interpreted by someone with training in Soviet aesthetics, a disco ball and a few fake palm trees. None of us can ever recall seeing anything quite like it. Quaffing Beijing Beer, we check out the scene. It's a mixed crowd of Chinese and foreigners, who appear, for the most part, straight and sedate. The first act takes to the stage, lets loose with a soulless hiphop number and follows this up by crooning Forties and Fifties-style ballads. It's like a night club on a cruise ship. By the time the band takes a break, Liu and Fang are bored shitless. They get up to go. Tomorrow, they promise, we'll have a real rock & roll experience.

The following afternoon we're on our bikes again, riding to the Central Drama Academy. Our destination is a large lecture hall in a newish building on the campus where acting classes are held.

NEW BAND
Liu and Fang are interested in new bands. You can't get much newer than the one about to start rehearsing in this room for their first gig: 1*m. We find 1*m (they don't have a Chinese name) setting up the stage. Liu introduces me to the lead singer, Liangzi. Liangzi is Venus as a boy. At a venerable 28, he's father-figure to the rest, whose ages range from 20 to 23. Originally from Harbin in the far north, Liangzi is a teacher in the acting department. Acting is in his blood. His parents are Peking Opera singers; his father is famous for his role as the hero of the Cultural Revolution revolutionary model opera Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy. Liangzi detests Peking opera. 'My parents are always singing it,' he explains. 'It drives me crazy.'
Liangzi introduces me to the others as they file in: Rhythm guitarist Zhao Ju; bass player Wang Rui and drummer Qi Qi, both students at the China Conservatory; and lead guitarist Wang Feng. They’re waiting for the only woman in the band, Wang Xiao, the keyboard player. She’s giving someone a piano lesson.

To get started, Liangzi borrowed a whopping RMB 40,000 (about $10,000, equal to more than 20 times his annual salary at the academy). He bought a keyboard for RMB 14,000, a drum set, guitars and sound equipment. ‘I’m supposed to pay my creditors RMB 50,000 at the end of three years,’ he says. Will he be able to? ‘If they throw me in jail for bad debts, but I’ve managed to leave behind some good music, then it’s worth it,’ he says with a nervous little intake of breath.

Students from the stage design department file in, kneel down on the floor to draw posters, set up the room. They hang up sketches of the band that recall the style of a Guns ‘n Roses T-shirt. They dress up a male mannequin as another macho fantasy and then, incongruously, decorate the walls cutely with streamers. It’s not Zoo TV. But there’s innocence and enthusiasm.

**ADVERTISEMENT**

This is Liangzi’s rock & roll dream: The first rock songs he heard in his life were by Cui Jian. They came into his life like a revelation. He collected all the tapes of rock music he could find. He discovered the Black Panthers, and foreign acts like Aerosmith, Sting and Bon Jovi. He started to write songs. When Hong Kong’s Star TV began broadcasting into China by satellite, Liangzi channel surfed straight over to MTV. He learned from MTV how to look and move rock & roll.

After enlisting Zhao Ju, one of his students, he put up a hand-written advertisement – we’re starting a band, it’s going to be tough, but join us. Forty people responded. About a month ago, I’m finally came together.

Others – friends of the band, more students – arrive and quietly take seats at the back of the room. Wang Feng seems to be a major babe magnet. Wang Xiao finally rocks in and they start to practice.

Wooden world
Wooden boys
Wooden world
Wooden girls

Wooden boys
Want wooden girls
Wooden girls
Don’t cry or bleed

I wanna get far away
From this wooden world
I wanna get far away
From this feelingless night.  [‘Wooden World’ by I*m]

When they take a break, Liangzi confesses he’s ‘a bit nervous’ about the gig tonight. He didn’t sleep a wink last night. Suddenly, someone spots a red mark on Wang Feng’s neck. ‘Kouhong!’ someone cries out, ‘Lipstick!’, and everyone bursts out laughing. Wang Feng grabs at his neck. ‘No way!’ he cries. ‘Which one was it?’ asks Liangzi. ‘Haven’t a clue,’ replies Wang Feng, setting off another round of laughter. ‘Wo cao,’ he says, ‘well, fuck me.’

Wang Rui tells me he fell in love with rock after the Wham! concert. A provincial boy himself, he says that Beijing is still really the only place in the country where there’s an ‘advanced’ rock scene. ‘In some of the provinces,’ he says, ‘their understanding of rock is pretty crude. They think if you scream a lot, it’s rock.’ Wang Rui thinks that
young Chinese are taking to rock because it’s a good way to let off steam. He’s into Skid Row, Guns ‘n Roses and the band he calls Hong Lajiao – Red Hot Chili Peppers.

They run through the rest of the set and we break for dinner. I to to Liu Shen’s house. Sitting around the table in the cramped dining room with his elderly grandmother and middle-aged parents, enjoying steamed dumplings and literary gossip, I feel a million miles from rock.

We head back to the academy around eight. About 200 people, mostly students, pack the room. I spot only three other foreigners. As the band does a sound check, two guys holding strong torches climb up on chairs on either side of the room – stage lighting.

Liangzi looks slightly dazed as he thanks the school for its support. “Our first song is ‘Red Paradise’,” he tells the crowd, who are by now totally off their faces with anticipation, shrieking, applauding and jumping up and down. A nanosecond later, Liangzi makes the transition from shy boy to rock god, belting out ‘Red Paradise’ while seriously endangering the mic stand and stomping the stage with his mock-Doc Martens.

- Red paradise
- Red paradise
- Wild infatuation
- Explosive illumination

They’re sounding and looking good, though Wang Xiao remains the classical pianist, completely composed, not a strand of her long hair moving. Liangzi’s voice travels easily up and down the octaves; he may hate what his parents sing, but they’ve given him a terrific set of vocal chords. Liu and Fang and I are swept away by the good vibes in the audience. We bob up and down and grin madly at each other, as if we had something to do with it.

Overall, it’s a victory of energy over finesse, but the students love it. When the band finishes, the crowd surges forward to pick up Liangzi and throw him in the air. Wang Feng rushes over and throws his arms around me. ‘Zenna yang?’ he asks. ‘What d’ya think?’ They’re all so excited they’ve forgotten to be cool.

Finally, the fans trickle out, leaving us, the band and a few of their friends. They carry the instruments and equipment over to their tiny rehearsal room, also on campus, and we all crowd in for the post-mortem.

‘How do you think it went?’ I ask.
‘We have to work a lot harder,’ says Liangzi. ‘I was so nervous. But anyway, this school has 300 students, and I teach 50 of them, so I felt pretty sure ... Anyway,’ he laughs down at his feet, letting his hair curtain his face, ‘I think our existence is itself a kind of accomplishment.’

A few days later Wang Feng calls, he wants to see me off to the airport. We go out for coffee first, to Uncle Sam’s. Wang tells me that he hopes the next time I return to China, I’m will be big. Maybe they’ll even have recorded an album ...

China is still a hard place to rock but it looks like Wang Feng, Liangzi and their comrades are at the vanguard of a whole new cultural revolution.
A VIEW FROM THE DORMITORY

The Shanghai Conservatory of Music

C.C. EVANS
(Shipley, West Yorkshire, UK)

From early 1992 until mid-1994 Christopher Evans lived at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. He reports on his experiences as a foreign student and offers some practical suggestions to newcomers. Shanghai is a fascinating place to stay, but it has its problems. Foreign students should expect living to be plain but not cheap. They should be very clear about what their aims are, especially whether their main interest is in performance or musicology. While it is possible to take courses in Chinese music at the Shanghai Conservatory, this institute is focused primarily on Western music. At present approximately two thirds of its foreign students are learning piano, violin or cello. Relatively few foreigners take up the challenge of learning a Chinese instrument. Those who do are usually very enthusiastic about their teachers. But teaching methods and the organization of the curriculum are subjects of on-going debate.

At the end of their report on the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, Schimmelpenninck and Kouwenhoven suggest that, "newcomers at the school [...] write their own reports [...]". I do not know whether any newcomers have taken them up, but the observations of an old lag may be of interest.

In the three years I have lived in Shanghai, two of them at the Conservatory, the city and the school have changed enormously. It is hard to think of a more dynamic, ambitious or exciting city for a foreigner to live in China. One thing that has remained constant though is the friction between foreign students and their host institutions. What I should like to do is suggest some of the possible causes at the Conservatory, and means by which future students might seek to avoid similar problems, and give some other information which may be useful to people considering coming to Shanghai.

The starting point is one that perhaps should not need to be made. It is that the Shanghai Conservatory of Music is a music conservatory, by definition a place where practitioners of music are trained. Teaching is based firmly in the needs of performers, with a minimum of theoretical background. The Conservatory has a Musicology Department, a Music Research Institute and a School for Violin Makers. The teachers in all three are excellent, but their subjects are minor activities in comparison with the training of singers, instrumentalists, conductors and composers.

1 CHIME Vol. 6, pp. 56 - 91, at p. 90.
American student Kim Murley and her yangqin teacher.

Secondly, the Conservatory is dominated by Western music. More students learn piano and Western orchestral instruments than learn Chinese instruments. Of the fifteen or so weekly concerts given each semester only two or three offer Asian music. One cannot overstate the excellence of the Conservatory’s teachers of Chinese music, but foreigners who wish to take general courses in Chinese music may discover that it is not always easy to find at the Shanghai Conservatory. In the city at large it is even more difficult. There is not much of it about, and that little is badly publicized.

LIVING CONDITIONS
Turning to the Conservatory itself, and living conditions here: from the beginning of the 1994 spring semester most foreign students were housed on the third floor of the International Students Building, where there are seventeen twin-bedded rooms. Seven rooms on the fourth floor and nine on the second floor are now used as practice rooms, those on the fourth floor being for pianists and those on the second, for other instruments. The bedrooms are simply but adequately furnished, and the practice rooms basically un-

The communal facilities on the third floor, which are also used by people who live on the fourth floor, are: 1) two showers and two lavatories for men and the same for women; 2) a small kitchen with four gas-rings, a sink and a refrigerator; and 3) a washroom with three hand basins and a washing machine. The showers and the hand basins have hot and cold running water for most of the day, but the kitchen sink and the one in the men’s shower room have only cold water. There is a boiler in the kitchen

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2 I have followed Chinese practice in numbering the floors, except that I call the ground floor the ground floor.
which provides boiled drinking water at 8.00 am and 3.00 pm each day, and students can boil their own drinking water on the gas rings. There is a telephone in the kitchen and another on the ground floor. Both can be used for incoming calls, including long-distance and international calls, and to make city calls within Shanghai. Outward trunk and international calls are best made from the Post Office in Huaihai Zhong Lu, about 15 minutes walk away from the Conservatory. There is also an IDD telephone less than 5 minutes away in Fuxing Lu for those who do not mind its being incompetently manned. The cost of an outward IDD call may well amount to three times the cost of an incoming call from the same country. Calls from China to the UK cost 35 Yuan per minute against about £1 the other way around. It is widely believed by both Chinese and foreigners that international calls and some local calls (such as those to embassies and consulates) are bugged. I am not aware of the buggers taking any action against students at the Conservatory, but their assumed presence is not conducive to spontaneity.3

Access to foreign students' rooms is via a staircase at the East end of the building, leading to the reception area on the ground floor. The door is locked overnight between about 11.00 pm and 7.00 am. A second door, formerly the main door, is permanently locked. There is another staircase at the West end of the building which has its own exit on the ground floor. It cannot be used by foreign students as the wood and glass door to it is kept locked, to prevent unwanted visits by Chinese.4 Should a fire occur, the reception area is flanked by easily opened windows which are low enough to climb through, and access to the West staircase can be got by bursting the door.

Chinese visitors' access to foreign students' accommodation is controlled, somewhat erratically, by requiring them, especially women visiting men, to fill in registration forms which must be signed by the host and returned to the doorkeeper when the guests leave. The Public Security Bureau collects the forms once a month or so. Checks are made on people who visit too often. The effect is to keep out the law-abiding and welcome, but do nothing to deter others. Chinese citizens are not allowed to stay overnight with foreigners other than their spouses, and then only after the marriage has been proved by proper certificates. Foreigners wander in and out at will, no matter how undesired some of them may be. Visits by foreigners to the Chinese students' dormitory are tolerated, but men (Chinese and foreign alike) visiting women have to sign a visitors' book. In the hot months (June to August) men may be banned from the Chinese women's dormitory.5

FOOD & HEALTH
Food is easily got and the cost should not exceed US $100 each month. Cooking for oneself could cost as little as RMB 5 - 10 Yuan per head per day and a bowl of noodles at a street-side cafe costs 2 - 3 Yuan, but a meal in an average local restaurant could easily amount to 20 - 25 Yuan per head. The foreign students' canteen is cheaper than

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3 Consulates and Cultural Offices may sometimes be willing to let their own nationals use their fax machines, and some will accept incoming mail for them. The general practice at European consulates seems to be that, within the limits of their authority, they will give assistance when asked to, but they will not go out of their way to keep in touch. US consulates in Asia are often said by US students to be unhelpful, except when they are being bloody-minded.

4 The foreign students in general, including most of the overseas Chinese, favour limits on visits by Chinese, because the restrictions are the only effective way of stopping our already inadequate cooking and bathing facilities and the telephone being monopolized, and in the case of the lavatories and showers fouled, by Chinese students, their families and friends, and workers from the construction sites on the campus.

5 The reason given is that some of the women shed many of their outer garments at that time of year, but I cannot confirm this from personal observation.
many restaurants, but custom rapidly stales its far from infinite variety and the service is appalling. The Chinese students’ canteen is open to foreign students and serves reasonably nutritious, cheap meals, the menu changing daily. It is reasonably clean and those who do not wish to eat there can do as many Chinese students do and take their food back to the dormitory.

Each evening a number of vendors have stalls near the campus where one can eat for well within 10 Yuan. By way of contrast, a simple meal in one of the foreign or joint venture hotels will cost 70 - 80 Yuan per head, and a more elaborate one up to five times that. The only reason for using these hotels, except for the occasional treat, is that the hepatitis A which occasionally strikes Shanghai tends to pass them by. Vegetarians should expect to cook most of their food for themselves. There are a few vegetarian restaurants in the city and one or two Buddhist temples run public dining rooms, but most food is meaty. Shanghai has a Muslim community, and the Muslims at the Conservatory are happy to tell newcomers how to find halal food. There seems to be no Jewish community in the city, and I do not know of any kosher restaurants.

Medicines for minor illnesses are not expensive, but a stay in hospital can be horrifyingly so. Health insurance is advisable and should include provision for repatriation. People with conditions which require constant medication should think carefully before coming, as not all western medicines can be obtained here. Whenever possible, people with particular needs should bring enough of their usual medication to last the whole of their expected stay and a little more. Asthmatics might consider asking their doctors to prescribe one or two short courses of steroids for use in emergency. People who know themselves to be subject to potentially catastrophic episodes of any kind should not come to China, as neither ambulances nor taxis are always available at short notice. That said, the writer, who has asthma, has lived in Beijing and Shanghai for almost 8 years, with only six short breaks at home in the UK, without significant health problems. But public health services vary widely, and can deteriorate rapidly outside the major cities. Anybody who intends to travel in China should take, and rigorously follow, medical advice about what preventive measures may be necessary, including defence against hepatitis (A and B), malaria, liver-flukes and various worms.6

COSTS OF STUDY & ACCOMMODATION
Only a few of the foreign students at the Conservatory have PRC scholarships. Those who are jiaxiu sheng (advanced students) receive a stipend of RMB 380 Yuan per month and a half share in a 12 square metre bedroom. They can book the whole room if they wish, at a cost of RMB 200 Yuan per month, provided that the second bed stays empty. If it is occupied by a spouse the Public Security Bureau requires that the full charge7 is levied, but no extra charge is made for short-term occupation by a foreigner.8 Gaoji jiaxiu sheng (eg., PhD students and graduates of conservatories outside China) receive a grant of RMB 500 Yuan per month and are entitled to a single room.

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6 There is a risk of catching hepatitis A in many parts of China, but it should not be exaggerated as far as larger cities are concerned. If one uses one's eyes and nose it is often possible to identify places where hygiene leaves something to be desired. As far as I know no foreign student at the Shanghai Conservatory has caught hepatitis, at least since the last major outbreak in 1987/8. For those unlucky enough to catch it, however, repatriation may be advisable. According to an article in the 'China Daily', 27 November 1993, p.3, ‘Parasitic diseases have infected more than 62 percent of Chinese residents and have become a major threat to public health, especially in rural and ethnic areas.' ‘...of the 62 percent of Chinese infected with intestinal parasites, some 43 percent had two or more species of parasites. Some persons had as many as nine species.’ ‘Most are infected with roundworm, pinworm and whipworm.’ ‘The highest infection rate – nearly 95 percent – was reported in South China’s Hainan Province. The lowest – 17.5 percent – was in north-eastern Heilongjiang Province.’

7 Which means an extra US $ 3.50 per day, on top of what the student pays for his/her own bed.

8 The room charges and rules about access to the dormitories illustrate one of the frustrations of living in China. It is not that the rules are conservative, but that they are hard to pin down and inconsistently
For those who pay for themselves or who have scholarships from their home countries, a budget of US $10,000 per year is not unrealistic. Fees change from time to time, details being available from the International Students Office, but students who wish to come for a year starting in September 1995, and not share a bedroom, should allow at least US $6,000 for tuition and housing. The other big items, apart from food, are travel in China or East Asia during vacations, and the cost of the journey from home to Shanghai and back. Most students will also wish to buy souvenirs, books and records. Tuition fees cover one major subject and two subsidiaries, and attendance at the lectures arranged for Chinese students and a small number of courses arranged for foreign students. All other courses are subject to additional fees, even for students who have PRC scholarships. All students have a third share of a practice room and the Conservatory will provide instruments for those who need them. Tuition fees do not include course materials.

Private tuition costs US $7 - 10 for a class of 45 minutes, the teachers generally preferring to be paid in US $ cash. Other expenses are normally paid in local currency. At present one US dollar will buy just under RMB 8.7 Yuan at the bank. Following recent changes to the foreign exchange control rules there is no longer much financial advantage to off-set the risk of a hefty fine for changing money on the black market.

The fees include a day out each semester and lunch or dinner with the Principal or Vice-Principal of the Conservatory once or twice each semester. Students who have PRC scholarships which last more than a year are entitled to a two week holiday in China once each year at public expense, but the problems of arranging something that interests enough of them enough to want to go on it seem to be insuperable. It is not clear whether the difficulties lie with the students, the Conservatory or both. The students do not receive cash in lieu of the holiday.

CLASSES ON CHINESE MUSIC
In January 1994 there were about thirty foreign students at the Conservatory, of whom over twenty were Han from Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia and South Korea. The other six came from Colombia, Ethiopia, Germany, Japan and the United Kingdom. The sexes were evenly represented, but musical interests were not. Apart from the three Caucasians, only the Japanese and a handful of the Han were there to study Chinese music. Probably two thirds of the foreign students were learning piano, violin or cello. All of these students except two of the Singaporeans were here on courses which lead to certificates of 'further studies' (i.e. as in jinxiu sheng) or 'higher studies' (gaoji jinxiu sheng). There is no fixed length or syllabus for these courses, except that it seems they must last for at least one semester. Nor is there much distinction between the two, other than in cost and the wording of the certificate. The two odd men out were taking degree courses, which last four or five years depending on the major applied. Why should one have to pay extra to live with one's wife, but not for a short visit by a brother? Is it a consequence of bad drafting, or sloppy enforcement?

9 There is a reasonable and improving selection of recorded Western art music, much of it on CD, but recordings of Chinese music, other than Taiwanese and Hong Kong pop, can be difficult to come by. Books about Chinese music are hard to find, as print runs tend to be short. In the case of both books and records, success in buying is very much a matter of being in the right place at the right time.

10 The fee for an extra instrument is in the region of 1,200 Yuan for two semesters.

11 In China even professional musicians often rely on their orchestras to provide instruments.

12 At present (June 1995) there are about twenty foreign students at the Conservatory.

13 If one leaves Chinese music out of consideration, the Conservatory's great strength is in violin teaching.
subject. No student should commit himself to one of these courses without first living in the Conservatory for a semester or so, to acclimatize himself to conditions here. Most of the present foreign students are enrolled in the Piano Department, the Orchestral Department or the Chinese Music Department, with one or two in the Composition and Conducting and the Musicology Departments. Here I will limit myself to Chinese music, as that is what most of CHIME's readers would come to the Shanghai Conservatory for.

A student who takes an instrumental major has two 45 minute classes with his teacher each week for his main instrument, and one class each week for each second instrument (provided, of course, he is willing to pay). The teaching of performance is excellent. The teachers are first-rate musicians and have outstanding pedagogic skills. The only problems are that some teachers do not see the foreign student's limited time in China as a reason for limiting the amount of time spent on basics, and that the last month or so of each semester is spent practising examination pieces. The second is unavoidable as long as there are examinations, but eats away a large part of the time available for learning new things. The first can be managed to some extent by discussions between the student and the teacher. One might say, for example, that the aim is to understand Chinese music rather than play it to professional standards; that Western audiences usually have low expectations as regards the technique of Westerners playing non-Western instruments, but hope for fluent oral or written expositions of the instrument and its music; and that future students from the West are likely to be put off coming to Shanghai if the present ones go home unable to play anything except exercises.

There has been debate among the foreign students about replacing examinations with monthly concerts which the examiners would attend. Proponents argue that this would give the examiners a better idea of each student's progress, whilst giving the students
more experience of playing in public and more incentive to practise; at the same time
the concerts would reduce examination stress and the amount of preparation time at the
end of each semester. Those who argue contra say that, for most Westerners at least,
experience of playing in public has little value because they will not do it when they go
home, that far from reducing stress the concerts would prolong it, and that instead of
having a month of preparing for examinations the whole semester would be nothing
else. One hopes the idea’s opponents will carry the day, but if they do not, any change
will have to be approved by the Conservatory and the Ministry responsible for it (the
Ministry of Culture, and possibly the State Education Commission). To meet the de-
mand for more concert experience some students propose voluntary monthly concerts
where audiences would be limited to the performers, their teachers and invited friends.
It is likely this would receive support within the faculty. Future students may wish to
follow it up if the present crop is unable to arrange anything.

The classes with Chinese students are, in the main, general introductions to Chinese
music and its history. They are compulsory for the Chinese students, some of whom
use them as an opportunity to chat to each other. People who are interested should sit
as near the front of the room as they can. But they should know that their teachers
rarely depart from approved texts, or refer to conflicting theories within their subjects.
A student who cites views different from the course teacher’s is more likely to be re-
garded as tactless or unnecessarily inquisitive, than as showing legitimate academic cu-
riosity and initiative.14

In the autumn 1993 semester there were five courses arranged specially for foreign
students. One was a general introduction to China, and another a simplified form of
Taiji Quan. The three music courses were ‘An Outline of Chinese Folk-song’, ‘An
Outline of Chinese Instrumental Music’ and ‘Music and its Aesthetics in Ancient
China’. In each case the course is available only if at least five foreign students register
for it.
The courses in folk-song and instrumental music are based on courses given to Chi-
inese students, and which foreign students may attend if they wish. The folk-song
course, taught by Huang Bai, lasts for two semesters and has two elements, one being
singing a number of songs and the other a general introduction to Han songs. In two
years I have not met a Chinese student who did not speak of Ms Huang with affection
for her personal qualities and respect for her erudition. From the foreigner’s point of
view she is willing to involve them in her fieldwork if she can get the necessary
permissions, and if she has the time will give extra theory classes to those who do not
particularly wish to sing.

The introduction to instrumental music lasts only one semester. It is a brief overview
of the main instruments used in Han music and analysis of some of their most famous
pieces. It is copiously illustrated with recordings of pieces played in the traditional way
and of modern arrangements and variations. Jin Jianmin has added a great deal of skill
and enthusiasm to his considerable knowledge, to make the course as interesting and
informative as possible. This and the folk-song course should be automatic choices for
all foreign students.
The aesthetic course, which also lasts for one semester, is available only to foreign
students. It covers Daoist, Confucian and Buddhist musical aesthetics. The teacher,

14 cf. de Toqueville’s fears for the USA: ‘Above this race of men stands an immense and tutelary
power, which takes upon itself alone to secure their gratifications and to watch over their fate. ... It
would be like the authority of a parent if, like that authority, its object was to prepare for manhood;
but it seeks, on the contrary, to keep them in perpetual childhood; it is well content that the people
should rejoice, provided that they think of nothing but rejoicing.’ (Toqueville, Alexis de. 1945.
Liu Minglan, is clearly fascinated by her subject, but rightly makes no allowances for those whose Chinese is less than fluent. She makes generous use of recordings, but inevitably much of the material is written. For people with the necessary language skills the course is indispensable, but it should not be considered by those who are weak in classical Chinese or modern academic vernacular. For most courses a year at the Beijing Languages Institute will suffice, but it is emphatically not enough for Ms Liu’s. The course’s only weakness is that the Conservatory cannot supply a synopsis, though it can for most others.

Examinations for main instruments are taken each semester, and those for subsidiary instruments every second semester. Examinations in ‘book’ subjects are either by essay, set two or three weeks in advance, or by multiple choice question, often with open textbooks, and may include an element of continuous assessment. People who register to sit in do not have to take examinations, but they do not count towards the minimum number of five which the Conservatory needs before it arranges a course.

Notwithstanding the Conservatory’s brochures, which courses are available will vary from time to time. At present those mentioned above appear to be the only theory courses available to foreigners whose major is performance. There are no classes in the background to individual Chinese instruments or, apart from the classes with Chinese students and the three courses already mentioned, China’s traditional musical culture. To give one example, the course in the history of the guqin has been withdrawn. It is no longer available, even privately, even to students who take guqin at the Conservatory. Given this, it may be that most Western students would benefit more from courses in the Musicology Department; few, after all, plan to make their living from playing Chinese music. There appears to be almost no information, though, about what courses are available. It seems most likely that they are arranged ad hoc.

BUILDING PLANS
Former students may find that what I have said about accommodation differs from what they saw during their time at the Conservatory. I should like now to touch on some of the changes over the last two years. The first is that the upper floors of the old ‘Foreign Experts Building’ have been let to a company for use as offices, though the foreign students’ canteen and the Conservatory’s entertainment suite still occupy the ground floor. Visiting foreign teachers are now housed in the North-facing rooms of the ground and second floors of the foreign students’ building. Foreign students from other universities in China and other people making short visits are housed in the South-facing rooms of the ground floor, and the International Students Office has moved into two of the South-facing rooms on the second floor, next to the foreign students’ practice rooms.

The Conservatory is also the site of the proposed ‘Art’s City’, which aims at being China’s best arts centre. It involves the replacement of the old houses on the Huaihai Zhong Lu (or North) side of the campus by a new 30-storey building and a 4-storey entertainment complex with restaurants and bars. Because of this the primary school, the Musicology Department, the Music Research Institute and a number of ancillary departments which used to inhabit the old buildings have been moved. The primary school is currently housed in the North Lecture Block, and the practice rooms which

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Some students think they can get by by having a more fluent friend sit next to them and translate. Apart from its inherent inefficiency - very few foreign students have enough Chinese, or Chinese students enough English, to be able to act as simultaneous interpreters - this distracts both the teacher and the other students, and brings teaching down to a snail’s pace. A better method is to record the class, and have the friend translate it later.
the Piano and Orchestral Music Departments used to have there have been moved to the 5th and 6th floors of the foreign students’ dormitory, along with the living quarters of some of the younger teachers. The Musicology Department’s offices have been moved to the 4th floor of the foreign students’ dormitory. A brick wall has been built across the 4th floor corridor to keep the musicologists and foreign students apart. The ‘Chinese’ parts of the building now use separate doors and stairways from the ‘foreign’ parts.
A new 18-storey teaching and administration building is to be put up on the site of the present administration block, and when that is finished the North Lecture Block will be pulled down and replaced by a concert hall for 1,000 or so people.
It will take some six years to finish enough work to relocate the dislocated. Until then, provided the pianists are having a day off, foreign and Chinese students alike will be treated to the sound of bowed and blown instruments, including brass, being practised, close to their bedrooms from about 7.30 each morning to 10.30 each night, with short breaks for meals and the midday siesta.

PLAIN BUT NOT CHEAP
The burden of this note can be divided into two parts. One is that foreign students who come to study in Shanghai should expect living to be plain but not cheap. The other is that they should be clear what their aims are, and especially whether their main interest is in performance or musicology. They should make their wishes absolutely clear to the Conservatory and ask the Conservatory to be equally clear in its reply. People who apply for PRC scholarships should inform the Conservatory direct about their study aims; some students have found that after being translated and bureaucratically summarised and classified the full, explicit statements they made in their home countries were so chopped about as to be misleading, if not unrecognizable by the time they reached Fenyang Lu.
It is very unlikely that the reply from China will be clear, for a variety of reasons, linguistic, cultural and financial, but it may offer the student some clue as to what to expect on arrival. The student’s original statement also provides a starting point for any renegotiations which may be necessary. Students should also investigate other schools, not least those outside China. The Shanghai Conservatory may well be the best in China, but some of its teachers who have been abroad will volunteer that for some subjects there are better collections outside China than in. The advantage of hearing Chinese music in its birthplace in increasingly illusory. It is being displaced by apathy and Kara-OK.

A final, personal note: Schimmelpenninck and Kouwenhoven say, ‘Everyone should learn the guqin, with its interesting tablature and importance in Chinese intellectual history.’ Guqin students are used to hearing that sort of thing; I would dearly love to believe it, but have never heard it justified by argument. The guqin may be capable of the most expressive music, it may be a thing of beauty in itself, but intellectually important? An instrument which since the Tang dynasty has been confined to a small number of the literati, themselves a tiny minority of China’s people? Which in the whole of mainland China can today boast only a thousand or so players?
Show me!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
Before putting finger to keyboard I discussed the situation at the Conservatory with Mauricio Martinez, a Colombian broadcaster who is learning sheng, and Robert Zollitsch, a professional composer and zither player from Germany, learning guqin. I am grateful for their ideas. Nonetheless what I have written is mine. They are innocent.

16 op. cit., p. 88.
FIELDWORK REPORT

Learning Guqin in Shanghai

HARRIET GAYWOOD
(Durham University, UK)

Harriet Gaywood, an MA research student from Durham University spent the summer of 1994 in Shanghai having lessons in guqin with Dai Xiaolian, history lessons with Chen Yingshi, language lessons with his wife Ying Shihua, and meeting various musicians. Below she outlines her activities and some of her principal observations as a Western trained musician and string player.

The Shanghai Conservatory of Music places equal importance upon both Western music and Chinese traditional music and the two musics coexist within the institution but do not mix. Students either specialize in Western performance or composition, in particular voice, string instruments, woodwind and piano, or they concentrate exclusively upon the study of the traditional music of China.

It was the coexistence of these two distinct categories that provided the basis of my principal observations. Each of the musics could be further divided, demonstrating both conscious and subconscious choices regarding performance, influence of pitch and characteristics. Western music as I observed it seemed to include (1) Western compositions performed as Western music, (2) Western music performed as Chinese music. The former represented a conscious attempt to recreate the music of Western composers, as it would be performed within the ‘West’. The most successful renditions were generally only achieved by those who were given an intensive training within the Conservatory, and I suspect, had never been given great exposure to Chinese traditional music. The performance of Western music – as Chinese music – could be divided between those who believed that the music was being performed and sounded as Western music would in Europe, and those who were making a conscious attempt to create a unique music through the addition of Chinese characteristics. One person with reference to his choir which sang Beethoven, Brahms and Schubert told me “Western notation and music is much easier than Chinese because it is very simple,” he then added that they wanted the music to sound Chinese so they made no attempt to adjust pitches from their own Chinese pitches into Western pitches.

Chinese music also divided into two categories, (1) Chinese music performed per se, (2) Chinese music performed in a Western style. All of these categories are in constant flux, as they include various influences of infiltrated music and political rules. Chinese music performed per se refers to the pitches and characteristics of the music as accepted today, but other important factors include regional variation such as Shanghai pitch which is slightly sharper than other areas of China. Chinese music performed in a
Western style refers to both a conscious process of acculturation and a subconscious one. It is perhaps inevitable that as Western music is performed in China, some of its characteristics may be subconsciously absorbed.

Although I was not an official student I stayed at the Conservatory and was able to benefit from the music being performed around me. The primary purpose of my visit was to learn guqin with Dai Xiaolian, a guqin player now considered to be one of the best of her generation. She learnt guqin with her great uncle, Zhang Ziqian of the Guangling School of guqin playing.1 Perhaps restricted by its quiet timbre, guqin is one of the few instruments that still play ‘Chinese music as Chinese music’ since it has a limited function in ensembles.

TRANSCRIPTION
Each week I was given two lessons in guqin. As my lessons progressed I soon realized that the Western notation above the guqin notation was of little use and that there really was no substitute for the original tablature. During my lessons Dai Xiaolian demonstrated to me some of the inadequacies she had found with Western staff notation as a medium for notating guqin scores. She had made various transcriptions into Western notation from guqin music but had problems in overcoming the rigid nature of staff notation. In recent years she has replaced barlines with broken barlines, and included additional symbols with an explanation of what they designate since many could be confused with similar Western symbols. An example would be the Western symbols for crescendo and diminuendo, which, when used in guqin playing refer to ‘full’ and ‘empty’ sounds.

One problem with transcribing guqin pieces results from the improvisatory nature of many pieces, and the importance placed upon the skill of individual interpretations as against ‘copied’ performances. If transcriptions were made and used after each performance then pieces would change very quickly. Original pieces would be lost and replaced by pieces reflective of genres of the time rather than of the specific period of the original composition. Consequently conscious efforts in recent times are being made to preserve the use of original manuscripts so that individual interpretations are still possible but they remain closer to the original.

MEETING MUSICIANS
I was fortunate to be introduced to many musicians who shared with me their views about music performance, and notation. I was given history lessons by Chen Yingshi, a musicologist who lectures at the conservatory. The history lessons took the form of a general survey of Chinese Music from 28 000 BC up until the present day. Particular emphasis was placed upon the music of the Tang dynasty and the manuscripts of Dunhuang, both areas of specialization by Chen Yingshi. As my knowledge of Mandarin was very basic, it was of great benefit that these lessons could be supplemented by a series of twelve videos made by Chen Yingshi several years ago for Shanghai Television. These videos follow the course of history and include performances of transcriptions by both Chen Yingshi and Laurence Picken.

Among the musicians I met were Gu Ying, and Zhen Jinhai, two of the oldest guzheng players in Shanghai. I was able to meet them in Gu Ying’s home, a small room in the Chinese concession of Shanghai where I was received with great hospitality. Both players had begun playing the guzheng in their sixties. Now 81 years old, Gu Ying was originally a professional painter, who also taught erhu at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. His musical training was interesting because he had begun playing the

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erhu as a child to complete the ensemble of instrumentalists in his family, reflecting a common tradition among Chinese families. Whilst learning to play erhu he was taught to play from Suzipu (Popular Character notation), but later on in his life he began learning guzheng and so was given training in sol-fa notation. Gu Ying believed that while the technique of the guzheng is essentially simple to learn for both Chinese and Westerners alike, the inherent characteristics of the music could not be achieved by Westerners. He paralleled Chinese music with language citing the differences regarding phrasing and attack of notes, but the main problem was with the interpretation of modes and regional styles.

GUZHENG NEW STYLE
By comparison with Zheng Jinhai, Gu Ying appeared to have had reasonably formal musical training. Zheng Jinhai learnt the guzheng by playing with other players and copying what they were doing. He had never used a notation of any kind. The guzheng is now predominantly taught from Western staff notation, tuned to an A of 440 Hz., and without the oral knowledge it will soon be played as a Western instrument. Consequently it is now reliant upon the oral tradition - not to preserve it as an instrument, but to preserve its tradition of techniques and teaching methods. Zheng Jinhai’s daughter is currently in Norway broadcasting on national radio with a fusion of guzheng and electric guitar music.
Both Gu Ying and Zheng Jinhai were very optimistic about the future of guzheng music. During their lifetime they had witnessed many changes in the instrument
including the development of models with increased numbers of strings from thirteen and sixteen string models to twenty-one string versions. A more recent development includes a diezheng 'butterfly zheng' designed by He Baoquan of the Shanghai Conservatory whom I met at a performance of the instrument. The diezheng is a fusion of two zhengs to produce an equal-tempered instrument, giving it much greater versatility. Neither Gu Ying nor Zheng Jinhai envisaged further technical development of the instrument but felt that the repertoire would certainly develop since the instrument is not confined to particular styles or speeds. The 1980s saw an upsurge in compositions written for guzheng and traditional ensemble, a trend which looks set to continue. In addition to this the guzheng is becoming widely taught in music schools and children's palaces.

The use of Western staff notation as a teaching aid for Chinese traditional music is currently an area of heated debate at the Conservatory. The notation I used for learning guqin pieces was wenzipu, with a line of Western staff notation written above to outline the tune. Western notation could not be used by itself without the addition of several characters to replace the wenzipu. I was offered several interpretations of different pieces which emphasized to me the fundamental difference in function between the two notations. Western notation describes a result, while wenzipu prescribes specific actions regarding the way to create sounds, but gives little indication of the expected result.

HOW TO HEAR THE RIGHT THING?

Whilst Chinese music and Western music may differ with regard to their notation it is essentially the philosophy and attitude behind the music that differs. It is perhaps only when Western music is played by Chinese musicians and Chinese music is played by Western musicians that the difference of these musics are apparent. When listening to the students at the Conservatory playing Western music, they could obviously read the notation very accurately in melodic and rhythmic terms, but harmonically they appeared to be unaware of mistakes reflecting a fundamental difference in their 'hearing' of Western music. Conversely I found that when I played guqin pieces it was initially very difficult to 'hear' the phrasing and desired characteristic slides and ornamentation. I was following the teaching of the Guangling school which is characterized by its flexible use of rhythm, placing great emphasis upon tone colour, the use of portamento, slides and vibrato. If I observed the Western staff notation I strictly adhered to it as if I was playing a Western instrument, but by reading the guqin notation it was easier to achieve the characteristic style.

It will be interesting to see how characteristic styles and tonalities of Chinese instruments develop, whether or not the use of Western notation as a teaching aid will continue, how it will influence the music, or how its influence will be resisted. With increasing contact with the Western styles it is possible that some of the Western repertoire will be adopted by traditional instruments.

I found my time in Shanghai very stimulating as it provided me with a valuable experience for a reassessment of Western attitudes toward the interpretation and performance of Western music. Chinese notations seemed to be used as learning aids contrasting the function of Western staff notation as a performance aid. A valuable element of any essentially oral tradition however developed must surely be the emphasis upon music as an auditory perception, instead of dependence upon notation to communicate a sound.

In addition to the musical experience, it was interesting to note the attitudes of various people towards me. Some people would talk to me quite openly and honestly, while others were anxious to portray an image of China as a model country in political, economic and social terms. Children were naturally less conscious and embarrassed about poverty while older people would attempt to hide it.
Daoism and Instrumental Music of Jiangsu

STEPHEN JONES  
(School of Oriental and African Studies, London)

The forthcoming CHIME meeting in Rotterdam (11 to 14 September 1995) will host, amongst others, a fine ensemble of Daoist musicians from Suzhou (Jiangsu province, China). Apart from their vocal liturgy, they are also renowned for their instrumental music, for a combination of winds, strings and percussion, with prominent roles for bamboo flute (dizi), plucked lute (sanxian), drums and percussion ensemble. Traditionally, this music is performed at ceremonies such as gods' birthdays, funerals, and longevity celebrations. Stephen Jones takes a closer look at the repertoire of the Daoists and views it against the wider backdrop of instrumental traditions in southern Jiangsu. The area was also the cradle of Kunqu opera, often performed by folk music societies (known as tangming) until the 1950s, and closely related to the instrumental practice of the Daoists. What is the relationship between Kunqu and various instrumental genres in Jiangsu? Have folk musicians retained their own aesthetic despite the 'Hollywoodized' style which has dominated the Chinese media since the 1950s? While folk ritual practice has resurfaced in other areas of China, fieldwork is now needed to assess the current state of folk ritual practice in southern Jiangsu.

This article was initially inspired by the visit to Europe in Spring 1994 of Daoist musicians from the Xuanmiao guan temple in Suzhou, introducing the ensembles of strings, winds, and percussion often called Shifan gu (Shifan drumming) and Shifan luogu (Shifan gong-and-drum: Shifan, literally 'Ten times' may be translated 'multiple variation'). While I am no expert in this music, I love the melodies, first solemn then breathlessly syncopated, and the frenetic drum solos and percussion ensemble movements with their complex additive rhythms; I have also long admired the work of Yang Yinliu and Cao Anhe on the instrumental music of the southern Jiangsu region. So there follow some random notes on its folk musical culture.1 After introducing some sources, I will sketch the background of Kunqu, tangming societies, Daoism, and the different musical styles of Shifan. While I concentrate on Shifan (following Chinese scholars), my purpose is partly to suggest that future work...

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1 This article is based on chapter 13 of my book Folk Music of China: Living Instrumental Traditions (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), supplemented by talks with the musicians of the Su-zhou Daoist Music Ensemble in Spring 1994. I am most grateful to them all, and especially to the wonderful Zhou Zufu. The British visit was organized by the Asian Music Circuit; Rowan Pease and Jiang Anxi were fine hosts. I am also most grateful to Yuan Jingfang (Central Conservatory, Beijing), the leading expert on Chinese instrumental music, for her supervision of my studies in 1987.
should document the whole context: the musical culture of southern Jiangsu, the ritual practices and liturgy of Daoism, and village ceremonial. Happily, a couple of fine archive recordings have just been released: one made by Yang Yinliu and Cao Anhe in 1950, the other by Wuxi People's Radio in 1964. You can also arrange to hear some recordings of Suzhou Daoist music from the 1950s at the National Sound Archive in London.

2 China: Folk Instrumental Traditions, 2 CDs, Archives internationales de musique populaire (AIMP), Musée d'Ethnographie, Geneva, VDE-GALLO CD 822-823.
YANG YINLIU, CAO ANHE, AND SOURCES
The reputation of Shifan music in southern Jiangsu is based on the outstanding research of the great musicologist Yang Yinliu (1899-1984) and his cousin and lifelong companion Cao Anhe before the Cultural Revolution. This, indeed, was the music on which they were brought up in their native Wuxi. Several of Yang's early teachers were Daoists (notably the blind Abing), and he also associated with folk tangming musicians, besides joining the elite Tiansyun she society (see below). By the time he was 16, in 1915, he had mastered the styles of Kunqu and Shifan.
By the 1930s Yang was busy on a variety of major musicological projects in the northern and southern capitals, but in the summer holidays of 1937, he again visited Wuxi, editing Shifan scores with the help of his old Daoist friends Kan Xianzhi, Zhu Qinfu, Wu Junfeng, Hu Huqian, and Wang Yunpo. Consulting scores from various local traditions, he edited pieces into the scores Fanyin pu and Luogu pu; he continued editing them in the autumn in Nanjing. The copy he gave to Zhu Qinfu became authoritative in Daoist circles. Indeed, it is this work which is the basis of the two definitive books on the music (Yang 1980; Yang and Cao 1982).

Yang Yinliu and Cao Anhe not only consulted many current folk scores, but also found that some early Daoist manuals preserve scores of pieces in the Shifan gu repertory. The Huanglu keyi and the Fanyin douke, both printed around 1750, have gongche scores of pieces used in Shifan (see Ex. 8 below).
There are also three volumes from the late 18th century, Juntian miaoyue, Guyun cheng'gui and Nishang yayan, known as the 'Cao scores', and said to have been compiled by Cao Xisheng. I do not know how many traditional scores are still circulating among folk musicians today; in Hebei, for instance, we have already collected well over fifty scores of the local instrumental ensemble music from different villages, some of which have reliable traditions going back to the 18th century.

Yang Yinliu made trips back to Wuxi in 1946 and 1947. A stellar gathering of musicians in Shanghai in 1947 is introduced below. An important visit was in 1950 just after Liberation, when, with Cao Anhe, Yang made several major recordings of folk musicians in Wuxi: the celebrated pieces of Abing in the last year of his life, Shifan, and the drum and clappers of Kunqu. Local scholars also studied folk traditions in the early 1950s; another useful source is Jiangsu 1955, a collection of

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7 See Suzhou 1956: 75, 80-4; Zhang Fenglin 1990. However, the dates, authorship, and content of the various scores in the Music Research Institute, Beijing, await thorough study: see Zhongguo yinyue shupu zhi 1984: 43 (nos. 1602-4); 45 (no. 1704); 32 (no. 1177); also Yang Yinliu 1957: pl. 9 and booklet p. 12. For Shifan luogu, apart from Yang and Cao's sources, Ye Dong (1983: 48) also cites scores of twelve suites printed in Juxue yuekan [Drama study monthly] 1933, nos. 2 and 3.
transcriptions, with essays, on local opera and narrative-singing in southern Jiangsu. Remarkably, given the prevailing suspicion of ‘feudal superstition’, it even includes material on the folk narrative-singing called xuanjuan.

The same period saw another remarkable project, a major fieldtrip of the Chinese Dance Arts Research Association (Zhongguo wudao yishu yanjiu hui) documenting a Daoist ‘Offering’ (jiao) ritual in detail (Suzhou 1956), including gongche transcriptions of the music, and photographs.

Conditions soon deteriorated with the Anti Rightist Campaign of 1957 and the abortive Great Leap Forward. In early December 1962, soon after the ‘three years of hardship’ which followed the Leap, Yang Yinliu returned to Wuxi to take part in a festival of Shifan music organized by the Wuxi cultural authorities, including recordings. I don’t know if he was present for the 1964-5 recordings by Wuxi People’s Radio. By this time the Four Purifications (Siqing) campaign was already under way, and these were some of the last recordings of folk music to be made before the destructions of the Cultural Revolution.

Yang Yinliu and Cao Anhe had published their book on Shifan gu in 1957 under the title ‘Blowing-and-beating pieces from southern Jiangsu’ (Sunan chuida gu), but for the subsequent edition in 1982 they revised the title to the more explicit ‘Shifan gu pieces from southern Jiangsu’ (Sunan Shifan gu gu). Yang’s book Shifan lougu was only published belatedly in 1980, again based on research before the Cultural Revolution, indeed largely from his work in 1937.

These studies are amongst Yang and Cao’s finest achievements. For all its excellent musical detail, their work was based not on fieldwork but on recordings in controlled conditions. Their remarks on the social background of the music are circumscribed by the need to defend the music as that of the working masses rather than of feudal superstition and the exploiting classes.

Later, Shifan music was an important subject of study for other Chinese scholars, notably Ye Dong (1930-89) and Li Minxiong of the Shanghai Conservatory, Gao Houyong in Nanjing, and Yuan Jingfang from the Central Conservatory, Beijing. Like Yang Yinliu, all these scholars had studied with the great drum-master Zhu Qinfu (see below). Li Minxiong is an accomplished local scholar of instrumental music.9 The complexities of the percussion music have been much taught in the conservatories of Shanghai and Beijing, and have indeed influenced the new generation of Chinese avant-garde composers such as Tan Dun and Qu Xiaosong.10

The Shanghai Conservatory is a likely base for study of the folk music of this area. While foreigners in Shanghai have been regular visitors since the mid-1980s to the teahouses and leisure-centres where amateurs play ‘silk-and-bamboo’ ensemble music,11 access to folk and ritual practice in the countryside has still not been easy.

IMAGE

The Shifan genres were popular before 1949 in the Wuxi-Suzhou-Changshu area, and their former glories are mainly accessible through the sources mentioned above. Despite these thorough studies, largely referring to practice before the Cultural Revolution (indeed, before Liberation!), work is urgently needed on living traditions of rural and ceremonial music since then. The authority of Yang and Cao’s work in Wuxi may even have created a static image of the music which has discouraged further research. Surviving practice remained largely hidden to outsiders through the 1980s.

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9 Li Minxiong (b. 1932), a scholar, composer, and performer of percussion music, has also popularized modified stage versions of the percussion music of Jiangsu and Zhejiang. He leads the ‘Chinese orchestra of the Shanghai Music Conservatory’ on the 1990 recording Drums: Chinese percussion music, CD, Hugo (Hong Kong) HRP 719-4, a salient illustration of ‘conservatory style’ modifying folk originals.


11 For a definitive study, see the forthcoming published version of L.Witzleben’s PhD, Hong Kong.
It was interesting to learn from the Suzhou Daoists’ visit that the instrumental pieces in Suzhou and Wuxi are basically similar. It is always worth bearing in mind that there are no standard versions: different versions of the major pieces of the urban Jiangnan silk-and-bamboo repertory have been notated from Suzhou, Hangzhou, and Yangzhou, for instance,\(^\text{12}\) not to mention the variants of still less standardized folk melodies found from village to village.

A problem I look forward to seeing solved is: how lively is folk practice today? Is folk instrumental music serving village ritual as active in southern Jiangsu as we have found it to be in Hebei and Shanxi in north China, or in Fujian and eastern Guangdong in the south? As ever, we need to get into the countryside: villages and small towns in places like Wuxian and Wujiang surely still have Daoist families and folk instrumentalists with long traditions.

THE MUSICAL CULTURE OF SOUTHERN JIANGSU

The Jiangnan (‘south of the Yangtze’) area is most distinctive culturally. It comprises southern Jiangsu, with the great imperial centres of Nanjing, Suzhou, and Yangzhou, and northern Zhejiang, including Hangzhou. In particular, the Suzhou-Wuxi area before 1949 was one in which all kinds of musical culture thrived.\(^\text{13}\) Other important centres are Changshu, Jiangyin, Changzhou, Yixing,\(^\text{14}\) and the Daoist mountain Maoshan.\(^\text{15}\) Shanghai has become a major city only since the 19th century.

\(^{12}\) See the definitive collection Gan Tao 1985.

\(^{13}\) See e.g. Jin Zuli and Xu Ziren 1983, translated by Witzleben 1987a: 201-15; see also ibid. pp. 18-34. The dance volumes of the *Anthology* (Zhongguo minzu mingliang wuda jicheng) for Jiangsu were published in 1991. The dance volumes are part of a bigger series with separate volumes on traditional instrumental music, folk song, dance, narrative singing etc. arranged per province. In my article this series is henceforth referred to as *Anthology*.

\(^{14}\) The National Sound Archive in London again has some archive recordings from Yixing.

\(^{15}\) Chen Dacan 1987a and b.
There are several regional operatic forms, such as Huju, Suju, Xiju, Yangju etc., and
genres of narrative-singing such as pingtan and Yangzhou qingqu. Antoinet
Schimmelpenninck and Frank Kouwenhoven have been doing fine work on folk song
in the area. It is a cliché of the music of this area that it is ‘melifluous and undulating’, in contrast
to the harsh, more angular music of the north. This concept may at least be of some use
with regard to silk-and-bamboo music, referring to both instrumentation and melodic
contour, but requires more detailed exposition incorporating material from all genres.
Chinese literati culture since the Ming dynasty has been exemplified by the solo
traditions of the plucked lute pipa and plucked zither qin, and by Kunqu vocal-
dramatic music. The music of the Suzhou Daoists is thoroughly imbued with the spirit
of Kunqu.

KUNQU AND THE TANGMING
Southern Jiangsu was the cradle of Kunqu; Suzhou was its most lively centre. One
should distinguish Kunqu opera troupes, whose social status, like that of other actors
in China, was very low, from the ‘refined gatherings’ of literati meeting to perform
‘pure [i.e. unstaged] pieces’ from the Kunqu heritage.
The performance of Kunqu, staged or unstaged, was a common context for
instrumental music until the 1950s. At least until the 1950s bands of instrumentalists
received payment for performing at many types of festivity: calendrical and life-cycle
ceremonies, temple-fairs, and dragon-boat races. A common type of instrumental
ensemble in southern Jiangsu was called tangming (literally ‘hall name’). These
organizations were the main training-grounds for staged Kunqu; they were professional
groups of young musicians performing unstaged vocal excerpts from Kunqu.
Tangming instrumentalists often graduated to accompanying staged Kunqu operatic
groups, and would play ‘flute melodies’ (diq) as a major part of their repertory.
Teachers of the tangming sometimes formed an ensemble called kao taijiao, which gave
performances (tang hui) for happy occasions. Apart from civil and martial instrumental
pieces, they also sang unstaged pieces from Kunqu.
The tangming musicians were lower class: Yang Yiniu and Cao Anhe state that they were
‘almost all peasants’. The tangming also often seem to have included Daoists.
The term sometimes merely denotes the common shawn-and-percussion band, hired for
weddings and funerals. I look forward to data on the current survival of
tangming.

According to Zhou Zufu, more common today are ‘fine music bands’ (xiyue ban),
which he likens to the northern ‘blowers-and-drummers’, shawn-and-percussion

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17 See e.g. Mackerras 1972: 79; Zhang Ming 1963; Wei Ren and Wei Minghua 1985. For local
operatic genres, note Huadong 1955; Jonathan Stock is preparing a bibliography.
18 See their articles in CHIME, Intercultural Music Studies and Oideian.
20 For pipa styles since the Qing dynasty, see Yuan Jingfang 1987: 170-238, 1986a: 87-91, and
several biographies; Ye Dong 1983: 220-41; Lin Shicheng 1982 and 1992; Han Shude and Zhang
Zhinian 1983: 166-205; Yang Yiniu 1981.2: 999-1003; Lin Yinzh 1989; note the articles of Wu
Ben; for a standard vol. of transcriptions, Minzu yueqi 1982; in English, see Myers 1992, and
forthcoming work by Deng Wei; in French, Picard 1991: 162-7. For the qin, we await an annotated
bibliography from Bell Yung, Lau Chor-wah, and Lin Youren; meanwhile, see Yung 1993. For a
delightful taste of the qin and associated arts in the region, see the 1937 Jinyu qinshe journal.
21 See e.g. Lu Etching 1980, and Gu Duhuang 1987, notably the Zeng Changsheng article, pp. 230-61.
schools called tang ming in Beijing.
24 Wu Yiming 1989: 40 gives further alternative titles for these and Daoist groups. See also Yang and
bands. Apart from shawm music, they may also play silk-and-bamboo, but they are low-class and play new pieces rather than the solemn ancient repertory (including Kunqu) of the Daoists. They are professional, but not expensive.

AMATEUR GROUPS
A prestigious type of ensemble, apparently defunct since the 1940s, was sometimes called 'refined gathering' (yaji), such as the group which met near the Longtan an temple east of Wuxi, or the celebrated Northern and Southern Wanhe tang('Halls of Myriad Harmony') near Wuxi. This seems to be similar to the 'strings of pure guests' (qingke chuan), 'pure tones' (qingyin), or 'music friends' (quyou), mainly denoting groups of educated amateurs performing unstaged Kunqu and instrumental chamber music. These were musical and dramatic clubs of well-to-do amateurs meeting for self-cultivation, hiring flute masters from the professional groups as teachers. Their meetings were called tongqi; sometimes they were called 'music societies', qushe. Their traditions, often hereditary, sometimes went back to the 18th century.

The music society in Wuxi called Tianyun she was active from the early 17th century until the 1930s; its members practised Kunqu, pipa and qin besides being thoroughly versed in the local ensemble genres. Its last great leader was Wu Wangjing (1847-1926), a master of the classical traditions of vocal and instrumental music. As we have seen, Yang Yinliu and Cao Anhe were brought up in this artistic environment. The American violinist and composer Henry Eichheim (1870-1942) was a rare and privileged foreign visitor to this musical treasury in 1921, hearing the drum master Zhu Qinlu in his prime. However, such clubs were already said to be in decline by the 1930s, and the disruptions of the War against Japan curtailed their activities.

INSTRUMENTAL GENRES
Since the 1950s, musicologists studying instrumental music in southern Jiangsu have popularized the terms Shifan gu, Shifan luogu, and Jiangnan silk-and-bamboo. The three are in fact closely related; indeed, the distinction needs re-examining with reference to living practice. Local terminology is confusing. It may help to bear in mind two broad styles of instrumental music often distinguished throughout China, 'fine and coarse', or 'civil and martial', applied also in opera and Daoism. These concepts apply both to different genres and to contrasting styles within a genre.
A common term for Shifan ensembles is 'blowing-and-beating' (chuida); this term is commonly used by folk musicians for different types of instrumental ensembles throughout China. Yang Yinliu and Cao Anhe distinguished Shifan gu and Shifan luogu styles. Although the two Shifan genres are popular in the same area, and are performed by many of the same musicians, the musicians regard them as quite different. They are distinct in instrumentation, style, and both melodic and percussion repertory. Shifan gu is mainly used for solemn ceremonies, such as gods' birthdays and funerals — neither the Shifan gu ensemble nor Daoist priests would take part in weddings — while Shifan luogu is more popular, and performed for rituals for the living, such as weddings and longevity celebrations. Shifan gu music, when played

mainly by Daoist or Buddhist priests, might also be called fanyin 'pure tones'. The nucleus of both types of Shifan ensemble in southern Jiangsu is the same as that which accompanies Kunqu vocal music (called changmian); dizi flute, sanxian plucked lute, and small drum (or woodblock) and clappers. Shifan instrumental music was often used as an adjunct to Kunqu, as overture, at transitional points, and as coda. Folk musicians indeed call this ensemble 'silk-and-bamboo': it is similar to that of the more familiar 'Jiangnan silk-and-bamboo'.

The flute, essential accompaniment to the voice in Kunqu, plays an important role in the music of southern Jiangsu. 'Flute melodies' (diqu) derived from Kunqu are often part of Daoist ritual and instrumental music in the region. Kunqu instrumental 'standards', largely inherited by Peking opera, may be classed as civil (for the ensemble led by flute) and martial (for shawms). Shawms, accompanied by percussion, also have a separate repertory, in Kunqu, Shifan, and Daoist ritual. Both civil and martial standards of Kunqu have been transmitted, and transformed, throughout China. Shifan luogu is closely related to Kunqu vocal and instrumental music, whereas urban silk-and-bamboo repertories today owe little to Kunqu.

Percussion plays a major role in Shifan; in Shifan gu, mainly two types of drum are used, while Shifan luogu also adds other percussion instruments, including gongs and cymbals. Rural silk-and-bamboo groups with augmented percussion section are called 'silk-and-bamboo with gong-and-drum' (sizhu luogu). These same instruments are also the core of 'silk-and-bamboo' ensemble music, although in most genres now the instrumentation is augmented. What is widely known as Jiangnan silk-and-bamboo, the style performed in Shanghai, has evolved since early this century mainly in urban centres, partly by modifying the percussion section, retaining only the more chamber-like accompaniment of woodblock (or small drum) and clappers. This transition from rural to urban has accompanied a transition from ceremonial to secular function.

Instrumental music in southern Jiangsu, then, comprises several categories. Drumming is important; percussion ensembles are also common, and shawm-and-percussion music may also be performed. The melodic instruments of both Shifan and silk-and-bamboo genres are basically similar, with winds and strings, but their repertories are distinct. However, further data are much needed on the specific functions of each genre, and their interaction in the changing social conditions since the 19th century.

RELIGION

Daoism is – or was? – a pervasive element in the musical culture of the region. Apart from vocal liturgy, Daoism also uses the local instrumental music. Drumming is a

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31 Seemingly 'Indian music', but, as pointed out by Wu Yiming (1989: 42), actually a gloss for qing 'pure' going back to the time of Ge Hong, and thus Daoist rather than Buddhist.


33 See Kunju 1956. Several Ming and Qing sources also refer to the double-reed pipe guanzi in the silk-and-bamboo ensemble accompanying vocal music, but it seems now to be used only rarely for ritual in this region.

34 See Witzleben 1987 a and b, and forthcoming.

35 For Daoism in Suzhou, note Suzhou 1956. See also the Daoist music vol. of Suzhou 1984; Huang Changlun 1988; and Zhang Fenglin 1990, also referring to a mimeograph from the late 1970s edited by Jin Zhongying et al., 'Suzhou Daojiao yinyue xuan' [Selections from the Daoist music of Suzhou]. For Daoism in other areas of southern Jiangsu, see e.g. Yangzhou 1958; the writings and recordings of Chen Dacan on Daoist music in Shanghai, Maoshan, and Changshu; Wu Yiming 1989. For a bibliography on Daoism in general, see Seidel 1989; for Daoist music, Tsao and Shi 1992; Tsao and Law 1989, and forthcoming vols. of conference papers from Hong Kong; Jones 1995: ch. 2. An early work (drafted in 1945) on the history of Daoist music was Chen Guofu 1985. Ken Dan and John
A minority of abbots (guanzhu, anzhu) had the seals (fengzeng) of the Zhengyi sect and had formal titles like Daoweishi or fashi; they mostly owned land, but did not take part in production; they had contact in the towns or villages with the landlords and bourgeoisie, and regulary accepted engagements for litanies (baichan), summoning and hiring ordinary village Daoist priests to take part in the rituals. These ordinary Daoists (daoshi) mostly took part in agricultural production, and were hired temporarily, taking part in rituals as a subsidiary job (fuye). In both agriculture and Daoism they were an exploited class. The money they received per day for performing in rituals, even the most indispensable and musically outstanding drummer or flautist, was very little, whereas the payment to the Daoweishi and fashi for officiating at rituals like the faju, zoubiao, or yankou, of a mere few hours, was generally several times more than the others. The people who could play music were mainly the ordinary Daoists who were semi-peasants; very few Daoweishi or fashi could play music. This shows that in the past it was the practical life of the peasant which produced and developed music.38

Of course, we might like to refine this picture (ritual skill is not to be neglected; there is more to music than instrumental music; Yang Yinliu would be the last person to deny that literati culture also made a certain contribution to Chinese music!! etc etc.), but if one takes the language with a pinch of salt, the comment surely reflects a genuine social distinction of which the outsider might not be aware.

Lagerwey are doing exciting work on living Daoist traditions in southern China. The Daoist music of Suzhou is now also part of a research project directed by Tsao Pen-yeh at the Chinese University, Hong Kong.

36 For Chen Dacan, see References. The Baiyun guan recording is sadly flawed by conservatory-style additions; the music in the temple itself is authentic, however. The Baiyun guan in Beijing, despite its excellent tradition of vocal liturgy, has fabricated an ‘orchestra’ in recent years, and has marketed highly questionable cassettes.


38 Yang and Cao (1982), 1957 edn.: 11-12, expurgated from the 1982 edn.!
Although Buddhist temples in the area are major national centres of vocal liturgy— notably the T’ienming si temple in Changzhou— melodic instrumental music in Buddhism seems always to have been of less importance in Jiangsu. Yang Yinliu and Cao Anhe also distinguished two sects of Buddhist practitioners before 1949, parallel to the Quanzhen and Zhengyi Daoists also practising in the area. One, the Ch’an sect, adhered to the Buddhist precepts, not eating meat or marrying, whereas the ‘subsidiary sect’ (fumên) were lay Buddhists living among the people. The former accompanied ritual only with the ritual percussion, while the latter used a wide range of melodic and percussion instruments. Generally in China one hears more of folk Daoists than folk Buddhists in the countryside; sometimes the distinction itself is dubious.

DAOIST MUSIC IN SUZHOU

Several short-lived Daoist societies for instrumental music were formed in Suzhou in the years before 1949—apparently needed because the abbot of the Xuanmiao guan held instrumental music in low esteem, as do many Quanzhen Daoists and orthodox Buddhists. These associations were quite separate from the t’angming, according to Zhou Zufu.

After Liberation, we can only imagine the change in mood: despite the benefits of peace, religion was suspect, the old patrons disappeared, and campaigns were waged against ‘reactionary’ religious societies. In 1950, on the basis of the previous groups, the Suzhou cultural authority Wenlian formed the Suzhou city Daoist Music Research Association (Suzhou shi Daojiao yinyue yanjiu hui ). As ever with such official groups, this was perhaps as much to control as to support practice: traditions were barely preserved into the 1950s, as Daoists were unable to continue ritual practices, or were even persecuted. Some, like Zhu Qinfu, Mao Zhongqing, and Zhou Zufu, joined the new urban opera or ‘folk music’ troupes. While folk ritual specialists continued to struggle to perform in northern China through the 1950s, I get the impression that it was even harder to persist with the old ‘feudal superstitious’ practices in Jiangsu.

ZHU QINFU (1902 – 1981)

The reputation of the Shiian traditions since the 1940s is largely due to Yang Yinliu’s collaboration with the great drum-master Zhu Qinfu. Brought up in a musical Daoist family near Wuxi, he showed exceptional aptitude for music at an early age. His formal teacher from the age of 11 was his uncle Zhu Xiuting. By his late teens he was acting as a part-time Daoist priest, performing ceremonies throughout the Wuxi-Suzhou-Changshu region. Zhou Zufu also remembers him as a fine dizī player. Zhu Qinfu often visited the T’ianyün she society, and around 1940 he set up a group of ten outstanding Daoist musicians called Shi’i wu ch’ai. As we saw above, Yang Yinliu began working with Zhu Qinfu in 1937. Recordings were made of a dazzling assembly over three days in Shanghai in October 1947, with Zhu and his group and the T’ianyün she, with other great musicians such as Mei Lanfang and Yu Zhenfei in attendance; though published and broadcast, the recordings were apparently destroyed in the Cultural Revolution.

40 Tian Qing was also the recordist of a new CD from Ocora, of the Longhua si temple in Shanghai. For an introduction to Buddhism in Shanghai until 1949, see You Youwei 1988. Lin Pei’an of the Shanghai Conservatory has done much work on Buddhism in the region; see References. However, his video and audio recordings seem to be chronically unavailable.
41 Suzhou 1956: 79-80, also in Zhang Fenglin 1990: 11, citing the Suzhou gazetteer.
42 Zhou Zufu, interview.
44 Qian Jiandong 1988: 36.
45 Wu Yiming 1989: 43. Can anyone find a copy?
In 1952 Zhu Qinfu was incongruously enlisted by the orchestra of the Central Opera and Ballet Academy in Beijing. He was liberated from this job by the cutbacks of 1962 following the 'three years of hardship'. On his return home, the major conservatories, to their credit, seized on the chance to employ him to teach and record his old art. This was interrupted by the Cultural Revolution; he was only able to continue his conservatory teaching in 1978. The Shanghai Conservatory made audio and video recordings of his art shortly before his death in 1981.

THE XUANMIAO GUAN TEMPLE IN SUZhou
There has been a Daoist temple on the site since 276 AD. It belongs to the Zhengyi sect. The revival of the temple in the 1980s, with government support and control, is part of the encouragement of tourism and the economy, partly aided by the encouragement of tourism and the economy, partly aided by the rapprochement with southeast Asia, which is most evident along the southeastern coast in southern Fujian and eastern Guangdong, and in great contrast with poor isolated villages and towns of inland northern China; it is also in great contrast with the state of ritual in the surrounding rural areas, never encouraged, indeed often harassed.
The Suzhou Daoist Association was formed in 1986, a preparatory committee having been formed in 1981, inviting senior priests back to the temple. The restoration of Daoist music was a major part of the brief of these bodies. Attempts have been made in the 1980s to train younger Daoist musicians, but the troupe was only formally established in 1989 for the Festival of Buddhist and Daoist music which was to have taken place in Beijing that September. The group was again to take part in the same festival planned for June 1990, and also postponed at short notice for political reasons, but the Music Research Institute make audio and video recordings of this and most of the other groups who came to Beijing.
In musical terms, the tension with the conservatory-professional style continues. The commercial recording of the Suzhou Daoists in China is mixed, including some genuine vocal liturgy, but too many imported conservatory musicians for my taste. The
group which performed in Europe was excellent, largely traditional, the elders of the tradition carrying respect, while the three younger members are diligent in their studies with them. I look forward to hearing them again in Europe. The good news is that this is emphatically not a group which performs only for laowai (foreigners), or which fabricates a style pandering to a distorted notion of audience taste. The instrumental music is one small part of their duties in the temple, and they are busy performing rituals. Contacts with benevolent foreigners (and benevolent Chinese!) are no doubt most welcome, and tourism is a sad fate for serious Daoists who would rather be practising their religion than parading their long white beards for the cameras, a fate only too rife, but it is a functioning temple working for the community.

THE DAOIST MUSICIANS
The four senior musicians on the European tour all come from the background of the tangming groups before Liberation. Zhou Zufu (b. 1915) is a senior musician today, who would be considered a ‘living cultural asset’ in other parts of East Asia. He studied music from the age of twelve, and was brought up in the Tianfu tang outside Suzhou. In the early 1930s, eight musicians from his tang invited the great Daoist musician Zhao Ziqin (d. 1962) from the Xuanmiao guan to instruct them; he lived with them, returning to the temple occasionally. He ‘consolidated’ their music, and taught them new pieces. Other Daoist musical masters who influenced Zhou Zufu were Xu Yinmei and Xu Jinnian (d. 1975), both outstanding drum players, and Zhu Peiji. After 1949 Zhou joined the ‘Suzhou opera and Kunqu opera troupe (Su-Kun jutuan) in Suzhou. He took part in several of the major folk music festivals of the 1950s. Since his retirement he has been at the Xuanmiao guan. He used to be a fine dizi player (he accompanied Yu Zhenfei once when he visited Suzhou), but now acts as drum master and plays exquisite banhu and tiqin. He is the only member of the group to have been abroad previously, having taken part in the 1984 tour of Italy, when a folk ensemble from Suzhou performed to great acclaim in the Fenice theatre in Venice (which is twinned with Suzhou!), sharing a programme with the venerable qin player Wu Zhaoji, another ‘living cultural asset’ of Suzhou.³⁷

Mao Liangshan (b. 1926) was adopted by the great Daoist drum master Zhao Houfu (87 in 1994) when he was seven. Zhao’s father was Zhao Ziqin. Mao was trained in the Rende tang in Suzhou from the age of ten. He became a village book-keeper after

³⁶ I adopt the Chinese system of counting a year at birth. However, elderly people tend to be rather impressionistic with such dates.
³⁷ ‘Wumen qin music’ Hugo (Hong Kong) 1989, 2 audio-cassettes in an important series of qin music. For the Venice concerts, see Gallio n.d.

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1949. Apart from his fine drum and sanxian playing, he also excels at the ‘flying cymbals’ (feibo). Xue Jianfeng (b. 1925) belonged to the Jube tang outside the Old Gate of Suzhou. His father Xue Song-qing died in 1951 at the age of 55; he played all the instruments, was a fine drummer, and sang Kunqu well. Xue Jianfeng’s older brother Xue Zhixian, 77 in 1994, is a senior priest at the Xuanmiao guan. Xue Jianfeng takes pride in playing his father’s natural trumpet (changjian), whose fanfares open and close martial pieces.

Jiang Jiarong (b. 1926) was brought up in the Jiuru tang in Likou in Wuxian. Nearby was the Wanhe tang of Huangdai. He became a village factory worker after 1949. The three younger musicians are also refreshingly sincere, and are fine musicians and conscientious students of Daoism. Han Xiaodong (b. 1972) has spent two years at the Daoist Training Academy at the Baiyun guan temple in Beijing. He is already an excellent musician, playing bowed fiddles and the end-blown flute xiao well. Xie Jianming (b. 1971) is a dizi player, Lu Jianzhong (b. 1966) a sheng player. They all have respect for the traditional style of their masters, and, equally important, are learning the ritual practice of Daoism diligently. They come from hereditary families of Daoists, although for instance Han’s father was unable to practice; his grandfather, in his 70s, is glad to see him restoring the tradition.

The senior Daoist drum master Mao Zhongqing was alas unable to come to Europe, since he is now in his 80s and frail of health; he has been hard-of-hearing for many years. Formerly of the Xuanmiao guan temple, he was recruited to a secular professional urban troupe in the 1950s. Though retired, he has been in attendance at the Xuanmiao guan since the end of the Cultural Revolution, and has been an important informant for scholarly collections of Suzhou Daoist music.49

THE MIGRATION OF SHIFAN
Yang Yinliu and Cao Anhe discovered considerable material on Shifan music in Ming and Qing literary and anecdotal sources, which are plentiful for the Jiangnan area. Future study of Ming and Qing literature will surely reveal yet more sources. The titles

48 Suzhou 1956 has a photograph.
49 See Suzhou 1956; Suzhou 1984, Daoist music vol.: 186-98 (and await the Jiangsu instrumental vol. of the Anthology); Zhang Fenglin 1990. There is a brief film of Mao’s drumming in Jeremy Marre’s documentary series ‘Beats of the Heart’ shown on British Channel 4 in 1985. The accompanying book (Marre and Charlton 1985) has a photo (p. 23) and interview (p. 26) under the garbled name of Mo Zhong. Mao was 80 in 1992.
*Shìfān gu* and *Shìfān luògu* both go back at least to the early 16th century, but terminology is again confusing; Yang and Cao’s fielding of material invites further study. Such instrumental ensembles are generally mentioned in the context of vocal and dramatic performances, and of popular festivals. The use of such titles in historical sources and their application in modern folk contexts needs careful scrutiny. Throughout the Qing dynasty, *Kunqu* and the music of southern Jiangsu, including *Shìfān*, was popular at the capital Beijing, and in Tianjin and elsewhere in northern China, transmitted by the court, merchants, opera companies, artisans, and migrants. Again, literary sources from the Qing offer some clues.50 Indeed, there are still amateur *Kunqu* societies in Tianjin.

*Shìfān* was transmitted not only to the north, but also to Zhejiang, Fujian and Guangdong further south; several genres in these provinces bear signs of transmission from the Jiangsu region.51 Most remarkable is the fourteen-gong *yunlú* mentioned in the 1795 *Yangzhou huafang lu* and still used in Lianjiang county northeast of Fuzhou; I have not heard of it anywhere else.52 Of course, music always modifies when transplanted; regional and historical variation are constant topics in Chinese music.

**SHIFAN MUSIC & INSTRUMENTATION OF SHIFAN GENRES**

Again, we should remember that this instrumental music is performed largely within the context of ritual, whose main content is vocal liturgy, as yet still less well understood than *Shìfān*.

For the instrumentation of *Shìfān* genres see Table 1. The nucleus is drum and clappers, with flute *dízì* and plucked lute *sànxiān*;53 *érhu* and *pípa* are said to have been added more recently, and other aerophones and lutes may also be used. Urban silk-and-bamboo has further added a *yángqín* dulcimer since early this century.

The basic percussion component of *Kunqu* is drum and clappers, but for some scenes this may expand to the full percussion section with gongs and cymbals; this is deployed in *Shìfān luògu* and also rural silk-and-bamboo, and is sometimes called ‘plain’ (*su*, vegetarian) — as opposed to the full ensemble with melodic instruments, called ‘meaty’ (*hun*).

In both *Shìfān gu* and *Shìfān luògu*, the drum master plays two types of drum, the small ‘single-skin’ drum *bān gu* and the large barrel-drum *tóng gu*;54 his solo ‘drum sections’ in *Shìfān gu* are accompanied throughout by a regular pulse on the woodblock and clappers, played by another musician.

Both ensembles usually consist of six to ten musicians. For *Shìfān luògu* they double on melodic and percussion instruments, as in Table 2.55 Yang Yinliu described a minimal quorum of six musicians, and the group visiting Europe managed with only seven, with some virtuosic doubling, Jiang Jierong and Mao Liangshan doing amazing feats alternating phrases on shawms and cymbals in the fast ‘great four sections’, sometimes with shamów in one hand, cymbal in the other, struck against a cymbal on a

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50 For the northern *Shìfān*, see Jones 1995: ch. 11. For mobility of regional genres, see Jones 1995: ch. 5. Titles prefixed ‘Yangzhou’ are still common in northern China. I trust that this always refers to the Yangzhou in Jiangsu, rather than the homonymous Yangzhou which is the region of the underworld peopled by hungry ghosts; this is a subject the Yangzhou tourist board should also look into! 51 Jones 1995, chapters 14 and 15.

52 Liu Chunshu and Wang Yaohun 1986: 601-3. 53 For a detailed account, with historical deductions, of *sànxiān* and percussion playing in the similar ensemble which accompanies *Kunqu*, see Yang Yinliu 1981:2: 904-22. This is based on recordings made in 1950 (since lost) and the resulting mimeographed analyses ‘Kunqu guban jièzǒu’ [Scores of the rhythm of *Kunqu* drum-and-clappers]. For the *sànxiān*, see also Yang and Cao 1982: 15-16. 54 Note that the *tóng* here is a different character than that of the *tóng gu* knobby gong in the north. The term *tóng gu*, more common elsewhere, is also used. Cf. Yuan Jingfang 1991: 103, 104.

55 Cf. again the ensemble which accompanies *Kunqu* Zeng Changsheng 1987: 240 and Table p. 239. The *Kunqu* musicians also double on gongs and cymbals, but traditionally avoid using the *érhu*. 130
Table 1. Shifan gu (SFG) and Shifan luogu (SFLG) instrumentations.

Melodic instruments:
di transverse flute with kazo membrane
sheng free-reed mouth-organ with 13 sounding pipes
(sha or end-blown flute)
shuantian ('wute') alternate melodies with the other
melodic instruments for SFLG 'coarse- and
fine silk-and-bamboo and gong-and-drums'.
Small shuans sometimes replace the other
allophones for SFG.
changan natural transmits introduce & conclude
some suites.
bowed fiddles: erhu (2), one usually tuned a fourth
lower than the other, as in Jiangnan silk-
and-bamboo b); baohu (or baohu)
plucked lutes: sanxian (small), pipa yueqin
(listed as optional, for SFLG only)
yunluo, frame of ten pitched gongs b)

percussion instruments:
Common to SFG and SFLG: tong gu; ban gu drums; dian
gu drum (or muiyu woodblock) and ban clappers (pishan)
SFLG adds:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SFLG adds</th>
<th>pure</th>
<th>coarse</th>
<th>fine</th>
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<tr>
<td>gongs (tso), from large to small:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>large (da)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ma (zhong)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>xi</td>
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<td>chun</td>
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<td>tang</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>yue (ye)</td>
<td>(x)</td>
<td>(x)</td>
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cymbals, from large to small:
| large bo | x |
| large mao | x |
| qi cymbals | x | x | x |
| small bo | x |

* pure, coarse, fine: categories of Shifan luogu percussion. Pure: the ensemble without melodic in-
struments; coarse: the percussion section which accompanies shuan melodies; fine: the full percus-
sion section which plays the complex movements in suites with the full melodic ensemble.

a) Yang & Cao 1982, 14; for the folk tuyin erhu and tunings, cf also Yuan Jingfang 1986a: 66; 1991
142-3. This table omits bowed fiddle lihu & plucked lute shuangqiang played by the Suzhou Daoists.
b) The most common form of yunluo, with three rows of three gongs and a single gong in top, was
described for SFG (Yang and Cao 1982: 10-11); but a different type for SFLG, with two rows each of
five gongs (Yang 1980: 10 and 11). The Suzhou Daoists use the former.
c) Two small metal cymbals fixed back to back, mounted, and struck with a stick. Not to be confused
with the shuangqiang plucked lute: Yang 1980: 5. The shuangqiang, second woodblock, and the small
tong gong are played by the drum master; cf. Table 2.
d) Listed in Yuan Jingfang alone: the sign xing otherwise denotes the shuangqiang cymbals.

Table 2. Shifan luogu, seating and doubling for
an ensemble of six musicians. Sources:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>clappers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wood-</td>
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<tr>
<td>block</td>
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<tr>
<td>sanxian</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(large cymbals)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>erhu</td>
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<tr>
<td>(xi gong)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>sheng</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(da, ma, chun gongs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>di</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(qi, small cymbals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tong gu (shuangqiang, ban gu muiyu, tang gong)</td>
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Table 3. Some percussion signs used in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>sheng</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(da, ma, chun gongs)</td>
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<tr>
<td>di</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(qi, small cymbals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tong gu (shuangqiang, ban gu muiyu, tang gong)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>tong</th>
<th>tong gu drum, centre (T)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wang</td>
<td>miao (zhong/guo) gong (W)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qi</td>
<td>qibocymbals (Q)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nei</td>
<td>xiluo (or nei) gong (N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zhang</td>
<td>daizuo large gong (K)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>da</td>
<td>ban gu drum, centre (d)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xia</td>
<td>ban gu drum, rim (i)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shao</td>
<td>clappers (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ge</td>
<td>woodblock (G)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Shifan luogu suite 10 - 8 - 6 - 4 - 2

1) 'HAT' (MAOTOU):
Jii feng | Qi Ji yin | Xi Zhuo
Quitu | 2) GREAT 4 SECTIONS:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>II: refrain head (Je tou)</td>
<td>variation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X: refrain tail (he we)</td>
<td>X: Zoum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2) GREAT 4 SECTIONS:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>II: refrain head (Je tou)</td>
<td>variation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X: refrain tail (he we)</td>
<td>X: Zoum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3) YUHE BA
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X: Zoum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4) CODA (SHOUTOU):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jii feng</td>
<td>Golden olive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jii feng</td>
<td>Screw</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
cushion on the table before them – this is common also in village ritual I have witnessed. Zhou Zufu indeed prefers ten to fourteen musicians for Shifan luogu. Mao Liangshan had to alternate on drum and sanxian for the Shifan gu suites.

SHIFAN LUOGU REPERTORY
The repertory recorded and transcribed by Yang Yinliu and others remains the most accessible material. It may be considered under two headings, firstly, the pure percussion music, which dominates, and secondly, suites where percussion and melodic movements interact.

The pure percussion repertory 56
As ever, familiarity with operatic percussion is a good basis for study. Individual 'percussion standards' (luogu paizi) are combined into 'percussion sections' (luogu duan). The 'standards' have been considered to belong to 2 types: a) short standards in simple metre, such as Ji ji feng, Qiutou, Qi ji yin and Xi Zouma, related to opera; b) longer pieces in additive metre, introduced below, including Shi-ba-liu-si-er & Yu he ba. Percussion suites are made up of sequences of both types, the pieces in simple metre generally serving a transitional role between the substantial movements in additive metre.

In order to study this percussion music, Yang Yinliu invented a kind of notation, derived from the folk notation, which we adopt here. Note that the traditional percussion scores of folk musicians are written versions of their oral mnemonics, as elsewhere in China. Each sign represents a different percussion instrument, and many individual instruments have different signs for different effects, such as striking the centre or rim of the drum, laissez-vibret or damped cymbals, etc. Some of the most common signs are shown in Table 3.57 This system appears to show only the individual roles of one percussion at a time, and the geometric patterns are structured on single instruments playing in sequence. However, they also often play simultaneously, and the roles of the other percussion instruments in the whole ensemble are learnt by oral-aural transmission, since the mnemonics do not express them explicitly. Yang Yinliu gives both transnotations showing modified versions of the traditional single-part percussion notation, and full scores transcribing performances. The sign zhang, for instance, while mainly indicating the large gong, often denotes a compound sound, as in Ex. 1.

Basic concepts in Shifan luogu percussion
A) 1, 3, 5, 7. The musicians use these terms to indicate the lengths of different types of phrase. In principle, each phrase consists of a given number of eighth-notes (x), ending with a quarter note (x).

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{x} & \text{ is a single-note phrase of one beat,} & \text{a} '1' \\
\text{xx} & \text{ is a phrase of 3 notes, actually 2 beats,} & \text{a} '3' \\
\text{xx xx} & \text{ is a phrase of 5 notes, actually 3 beats,} & \text{a} '5' \\
\text{xx xx xx} & \text{ is a phrase of 7 notes, actually 4 beats,} & \text{a} '7'
\end{align*}
\]

56 In English, see also Liang Ming-yuch 1985: 214-16 and 223-9, based on Yang 1980.
57 For the full table, see Yang 1980: 4, modified in English by Liang 1985: 226. For convenience, the characters are transcribed in standard Chinese, although they are of course read in local dialect.
One might consider them as respectively 1/4, 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4 patterns, with the main accent on the final beat. In practice, the patterns are considerably more ornate, as in the "7" shown in Ex. 1.

B) Contrasts in timbre. The music feeds on contrasts in timbre between the different percussion instruments, mainly the tong gu drum, the maluo gong, the qi bo cymbals, and the xi luo gong, which play phrases consecutively in a fixed order.

C) Geometric additive phrasing. Individual phrases of 1, 3, 5, and 7 are combined, exploiting contrasts in timbre, by controlled mathematical series of augmentations and diminutions, both horizontally and vertically. Chinese scholars have paid much attention to the analysis of this system. Folk musicians have three important geometrical concepts, 'pagoda', 'screw' and 'golden olive':

Ex. 2 shows a simple version of the pattern of the 'golden olive': each phrase on the alternating instruments (qi bo cymbals, xi luo gong, tong gu drum, and ma luo gong, QNTW) is followed by a phrase of the same length on the ban gu drum. These basic patterns are combined in many ways. This is best shown by examples.

10-8-6-4-2 and the 'Great 4 Sections' .

The percussion suite Shi-ba-liu-si-er ("10-8-6-4-2") is a major part of the whole Shifan luogu repertory. Its core is the 'great four sections' (da si duan), a miniature suite used commonly in many pieces. This is followed by another important sequence of variations, Yu he ba. Each section is punctuated by the standard Xi Zouma. The structure of the suite is outlined in Table 4. These pieces also demonstrate the characteristics of Shifan luogu percussion: additive geometric shapes and contrasts in timbre. Ex. 3 shows the 1st variation of the 'great four sections'.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QQ</th>
<th>Q'</th>
<th>QQ</th>
<th>Q</th>
<th>KK</th>
<th>K'</th>
<th>KK</th>
<th>OK</th>
<th>OK</th>
<th>K'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N' N</td>
<td>NN</td>
<td>ON</td>
<td>N'</td>
<td>K'</td>
<td>KK</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>K'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TT</td>
<td>TT</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>T'</td>
<td>K'</td>
<td>KK</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>K'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>WW</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>W'</td>
<td>K'</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>K'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q'</td>
<td>Q</td>
<td>K'</td>
<td>K'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


- Q
- NN N
- T TT TT T
- WW OW OW W
- NN N
- Q

58 See also Yuan Jingfang 1987: 563-6.
60 The title appears to mean 'Fish (?) combine in eight'. While 'combine in eight' plainly refers to the structural principle, the meaning of 'fish' is not clear: it may refer to the wooden fish woodblock, or it could be a pun on 'abundance' (yu).
Successive variations change the sequence of instruments thus: QNTWQ, NTWQN, TWQNT, WQNTW. There are several possible forms of the ‘great four sections’:

refrain head, Variation, refrain tail : || x 4
refrain head, Variation, refrain tail, Xi Zouma : || x 4
refrain head, Variation, refrain tail, melody, Xi Zouma : || x 4

Ex. 4 shows the 1st variation of Yu he ba. This pattern is followed in successive variations, again changing the sequence of instruments: QNTW, NTWQ, TWQN, WQNT. For the further complexities of this system, the reader is referred to the analyses of Yang Yinliu, Yuan Jingfang, and Li Minxiong. Ye Dong has discovered this fourfold variation structure in the percussion ensembles of other areas such as Tianjin, Xi'an, Zhejiang and Sichuan.

Table 5. Shifan luogu: structure of Xi xi feng suite

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A: Jiji fang</th>
<th>melody (J = 126 – 152)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jiji feng</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B: percussion</th>
<th>melody (J = 63 – 80)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>percussion</td>
<td>melody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xi Zouma</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C: Great four sections</th>
<th>(J = 96)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D: Qiduan</th>
<th>melody (J = 138 – 168)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Xi Zouma</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E: Yu he ba</th>
<th>(J = 160 – 168)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Xi zou ma</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiji feng</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F: Golden olive</th>
<th>(J = 168 – 208)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Xi zou ma</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiji feng</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screw</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shifan luogu suites for melodic and percussion instruments

Apart from pure percussion pieces, melodic movements may also alternate with percussion movements in long suites. A widely studied suite (which you can hear in a 1964 version from Wuxi on the new AIMP recording, cf. note 2) is called Xia xifeng, classified as ‘flute-blowing coarse gong-and-drums’. Melodic sections seem to compete with the percussion; as the percussion is finally victorious, the melody is splintered into submission.

Table 5 shows the overall pattern of the suite. My simple summary owes much to Yuan Jingfang’s analysis. The framework (A, C, E, F) is the same as for ‘10-8-6-4-2’, with the addition of the sections B and D, where melody is introduced. As can be seen, the role of melody is subsidiary, and indeed diminishes further as the percussion becomes more insistent. The melodic instruments play three types of role: a) independent melodic movements (as in B and D); b) exchanging phrases with the percussion, as in the ‘refrain head’ of the ‘great four sections’, shown in Ex. 5; c) dizi flute solo, interpolating phrases during percussion sections, in free-tempo, known aptly as ‘peony riding the wind’ (mudan chuan feng).

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63 Ye Dong 1983: 36, 50-1.

Shifan luogu melody is itself diverse in style. Rather few pieces have titles; those which do, tend to use the opening words of a text formerly sung to the melody. Conversely, titles in Shifan gu are in the more ancient national tradition of 'classical' labelled melodies. It took Yang Yinliu's encyclopaedic knowledge of Chinese music for him to discover that many Shifan luogu melodies are adaptations of Kunqu and other early vocal melodies, as in this suite.\(^{66}\) Zhou Zufu told me that his master had told him that the Shiba pai suite was named after the first 'fine' melody in the suite, originally called Hujia shiba pai, which once had vocal texts.\(^{67}\)

Instrumental melodies throughout China, from Chaozhou 'string-poem' music to Shanxi sheng-guan suites, are commonly supposed to derive from earlier vocal melodies whose texts have been lost.\(^{68}\)

Another melodic style in southern Jiangsu seems to relate to the percussion phrasing, with short disjointed phrases of 3, 5, or 7 eighth-notes. Indeed, this is also a feature of some of the nuclear melodies of Jiangnan silk-and-bamboo, such as the final section of Xingjie (Ex. 6).

While the rhythms of some melodies obey similar principles to the percussion pieces, there are some percussion pieces derived from melodies with texts.\(^{69}\) Yuan Jingfang has made some fascinating speculations about the relation of the 1-3-5-7 metric patterns of Shifan luogu to those of Song dynasty ci lyrics.\(^{70}\)

Large shawms, considered 'coarse', may alternate melodies with the 'fine' silk-and-bamboo instruments: this is called 'coarse and fine gong-and-drum' (cu xi luogu), and also 'pair of mandarin ducks' (yuanyang pai, conventionally denoting marital bliss). This title is also found in the 18th-century guide to the culture of Yangzhou, the Yangzhou huafang lu, and scores and performances were transcribed by Yang Yinliu.\(^{71}\) The Suzhou Daoists played Shiba pai in this style; their concert version, at least, is again shorter than that transnotated by Yang Yinliu.\(^{72}\)

For the Suzhou version of the suite Xi yuanxiao, again rather shorter than the version in a traditional score transnotated by Yang Yinliu, a small shawm and flute lead the ensemble.\(^{73}\)

A good way of absorbing the 1-3-5-7 patterns is by listening to sections where melodic phrases of 1, 3, 5, or 7 are followed by equivalent percussion phrases, as in the 'great four sections' of Shiba pai and Xi yuanxiao.

The Ode of the General

The martial standard Jiangjun ling is an important shawm-and-percussion piece, often used as an overture for opera or ritual occasions. This, like the standard Kaimen, is among the most ubiquitous titles throughout China, played by shawm bands everywhere. There are also many versions in China for strings, as for the pipa, in Cantonese music and, in Sichuan, for the yangqin. As ever, which versions are related, and how, is a complex problem; one could easily spend a lifetime studying variants of this tune-family, and the related Desheng ling ('Ode to victory').\(^{74}\)

Yang Yinliu made a detailed study of two versions recorded at Wuxi in 1950 and 1962. His transcriptions and analysis are most worth studying.\(^{75}\) This is the same as the piece often used as overture for Kunqu and Peking opera. The version played by the Suzhou

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\(^{67}\) Can anyone help identify this? Yang Yinliu didn't seem to know it.

\(^{68}\) Jones 1995: ch. 6.

\(^{69}\) Yang 1980: 18.

\(^{70}\) Yuan Jingfang 1983: 210-17.

\(^{71}\) Yangzhou 1795: j. 11, p. 244; Yang 1980: 3, 169-231.

\(^{72}\) Yang 1980: 225-31; cf. the 1950 recording.

\(^{73}\) For the Wuxi version, see Yang 1980: 123-9.

\(^{74}\) For some further refs., see Jones 1995: ch. 8. Note that I take ling to refer to the lyric form, not 'command', by analogy with other titles such as Nezha ling, Zhengui ling, etc.

Daoists is very similar, but again shorter. It is a remarkable piece, varied in melody, rhythm, and metre, quite beyond the grasp of urban professional ensembles. The two shawms play close to unison, unlike the upper-lower, and complex-simple, roles of some northern shawm bands. Long notes, a feature of military music, are sometimes sustained. To the Western ear the piece may sound attractively disorienting in key, with heptatonic scales, and temporary modulation. The main accompaniment is the large tang gu drum, with a regular pulse on the small cymbals, and damped cymbals at the exciting conclusion.

SHIFAN GU REPERTORY
The repertory of Shifan gu is remarkable for the complexity of both its melodic and drum sections. Whereas the role of percussion in most northern Chinese wind-and-percussion music is relatively minor, in Shifan gu the drummer is a virtuoso; only the drumming of Xi’an or Chaozhou approaches it in complexity.

The ‘drum sections’
The core of a Shifan gu suite is the ‘drum section’, whose reputation in the Chinese musical world derives largely from the brilliance of Zhu Qinfu. There may be one, two, or three such sections punctuating a suite. They have been discussed under three types, slow, mid-tempo, and fast. The slow and mid-tempo drum sections generally use the large tong gu drum, the fast sections the smaller ban gu. But slow drum sections can be played on tang gu or ban gu: in the 1950s Wuxi version of Manting fang, the slow drum section was played on tang gu whereas in the Suzhou Daoists’ version all the drum sections, including the slow one, are played on the ban gu. The slow sections are fixed, but there is some latitude in the mid-tempo and fast sections. The only accompaniment is a regular pulse from the clappers and woodblock. Drum sections are virtuosic and rhythmically complex, with many syncopated accents against the steady pulse of the woodblock. Again, additive rhythm is often used, as in Ex. 7. The fast drum sections on the ban gu drum have a rich vocabulary for drum patterns, such as ‘leaping the golden railings’ (tiao jin menlan) or ‘butterflies flying in pairs’ (huodie shuang fei). However, Yang and Cao noted in the 1950s that even since 1937 when they had first collected the drum music, the patterns of fast drum sections had become more flexible and difficult to distinguish.\(^{36}\) Zhou Zufu is none too keen on these poetic descriptions, finding them rather vulgar. I wonder if these names are not traditional – were they perhaps even Zhu Qinfu’s glosses in conversation with Yang Yinliu?

Shifan gu: melodic repertory
The Suzhou elders reiterated what many musicians have told me throughout China, that in the old society you needed a large repertory, because when doing a ceremony with another band (shuangtang, also often called duipeng), you must not perform the same pieces as them; and anyway rituals lasted many days. Yang Yinliu and Cao Anhe transcribed many pieces from old scores, but the repertory which they recorded in performance was much smaller. The bulk of this repertory consists of classical

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'labelled melodies' related to pieces found further north. Yang and Cao considered these pieces generally more ancient than the melodies of Shifan luogu, many of which derive from vocal melodies of more recent times. In style, too, most Shifan gu melodies are more stately and solemn than those of Shifan luogu.

Traditional gongche notation is still used by the Suzhou musicians. Most of them can read cipher notation and sing Western solfege too, but gongche is still the basis of their study. In the workshops in England the Suzhou musicians performed the slow melody Qingluan wu, singing the gongche for us before playing it on the instruments. Yang Yinliu published and transnotated an 18th century gongche score of this piece in the important vol. 4 of his 1957 Zhongguo yinyue shi cankao tupian, from the ritual manual Fanyin douke (see Ex. 8). Although it was not in the repertory of all the musicians, when they saw I had copied it for the workshops, they quickly relearned it, and were delighted to perform it; they much value its refined feeling.

Both Shifan genres, like Jiangnan silk-and-bamboo, use the key system of Kunqu instrumental music. Only two keys are commonly used, sometimes called zheng'gong diao (G) and xiaogong diao (D). Other keys, rarely played in Shifan, are mainly used for shawn pieces, using the common gongche key system of shang-note key, fan-note key, etc. 77

As to heterophony, the dizzi stays close to the nuclear melody. 78 Zhou calls the embellishment of the nuclear melody 'bridging' (jiaqiao).

Three positions are traditionally used on the bowed fiddle tiquin, used in Kunqu, and played lovingly by Zhou Zufu. But when playing the erhu he never leaves first position. I have long wondered why Abing used such high positions on the erhu when traditional musicians stay in first position. Did he adapt the technique of the tiquin to the erhu, perhaps? Did his life as a beggar stimulate him to experiment?

'Small pieces' played by the Suzhou Daoists on their tour included Putian le ('Universal rejoicing'), a slow solemn Kunqu piece of 44 measures of 2/4, used in opera for court audience scenes (for a score cf. Kunju 1956: 64-5). It uses a beautiful ambiguous heptatonic scale, with fan (fa) prominent and also yi (ti), led by the haunting sound of the Kunqu flute, its syncopations full of suspense.

They also played an intimate version of Bubu jiao, led by the end-blown flute xiao, in which the young Han Xiaodong's sensitive playing had a certain professional

77 See e.g. Kunju 1956.
78 Yang 1981.2: 905.
refinement without abandoning the simplicity of tradition; the twangings of the distinctive plucked lute shuangqin resemble a banjo. But their most substantial repertory consists of suites of melodic and percussion movements, in which solo drum sections punctuate sequences of melodic movements; the drum also sometimes accompanies and punctuates the melodic movements.

Again there is a rich folk vocabulary for many techniques relating to melody and percussion. One of the most common may be translated as ‘break’ (chaitou or zhongchaoi), whereby a brief percussion phrase ‘breaks in’ between phrases of a melody. This resembles the northern zhatechnique (are the terms perhaps related linguistically?). The interruption may be ‘single’, ‘double’ or ‘half’: 4, 8, or 2 beats respectively. Like their northern counterparts, these ‘breaks’ may be filled in by simple phrases called ‘transitional notes’ (guoyin) on the melodic instruments. These are cadential syncopated phrases revolving around the previous cadential note. These melodic breaks are common to Shifan gu and Shifan luogu (see Ex. 9), and they are also a distinctive feature of some Jiangnan silk-and-bamboo pieces – see Ex. 6 again. However, they are optional, and the Suzhou musicians tend to use the melodic breaks much less than the drum breaks.

They play a version of the suite Manting fang, which they call Baihua yuan. The 1950s Wuxi recording of Manting fang has a great reputation in the Chinese academic world, and is the basis of several thorough analyses. In Suzhou it was arranged – mainly abbreviated – in 1950 (see below). The 1950s musicians also played it much slower, but Zhou says it shouldn’t be too slow. They like an abrupt ending for this suite, without the coda documented in the 1950s; they retain the solemn coda for the Bitao hua suite, however.

The Suzhou Bitao hua suite has nine melodies, interspersed with three drum sections, all played on the large tang gu; some of the later melodies include drum breaks in between phrases. Most of these melodies are in Yang and Cao 1982, but they do not give this sequence as a suite. The musicians listed these melodies: Jinzi jing, Yuzhong hua, Jin lianzhi (Zheyi feng), Yifeng shu, Xiao chi’er, Bitao hua, Guizhi xiang, Dongxian ge, and Meixiao yue. Some of them are varied rhythmically by augmentations and diminutions of metre in between drum breaks. The opening melody Jinzi jing is a version which I studied in Jones 1989; such pieces, used only as slow preludes, cannot take breaks, Zhou said.

TRADITION AND MODERNIZATION

According to Zhou Zufu, their arrangement of Manting fang, with its question-and-answer phrases, is not ‘changing’ (gai), it’s ‘dividing up’ (fen) the parts: ‘We wouldn’t dare change!’ But they have, evidently, if unconsciously. They have also clearly been depressed for decades about the external pressure which tells them that

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79 See Jones 1989: 33.
their music (instruments, scales, everything) is 'backward' and 'unscientific'. They have managed to resist the official line passively, but they see the tide is against them. We need to keep debating this vexed issue; the Durham debate (Fang Kun 1981), well before many of us laowai had heard the folk music of the majority of China's peasant population, was based on little material – I'd say the conservatory style got off lightly!

The acclaim which they received in England feels most welcome to them because they feel quite unappreciated in China. In fact, as we see in this article, Chinese scholars certainly appreciate them, since Yang Yinliu in the 1930s, and even now with the esteem of music research institutes in Beijing and Shanghai. Indeed, they must have popular support with all the devotees who come to the temple, or when they perform folk rituals in the villages outside Suzhou. But I guess this feels like small consolation amidst the welter of karaoke bars, and in particular in the teeth of the local cadres who are responsible for sanitizing their music and cajoling them into modernizing their music, as on the commercial tape. For the European tour, they were fortunate to have such an enlightened cadre in Chen Zhen'gang from the Suzhou Religious Affairs Department, who was keen to learn from them and concerned for their welfare, something which one can by no means take for granted!

In our enthusiasm to acknowledge the ethnomusicological shibboleth of the continuum between traditional and modern styles, the sheer impasse between traditional musicians and the patronizing attitudes of insensitive cadres seeking to inflict modernization from outside since the 1950s is rarely made explicit. Yang Yinliu, in a sad and acute comment from 1953, describes the aesthetic chasm then opening up between the 'realms of consciousness' (yijing) of traditional musicians and the new urban professional ethos:

Once [1950?] in Wuxi, there was a technically brilliant and enthusiastic comrade directing a group of twelve folk artists who were thoroughly versed in performing the local wind-and-percussion music. He announced his opinions to them about the 'improvement' [of the music], considering the peasants' music too long (around half an hour), and that it would only be right if all the pieces were abbreviated so that the whole suite lasted about five minutes; further, the peasants' percussion music was too complex, with too many decorations; the workers only liked simple pieces, and they should eliminate all the decorations on the drum and other percussion instruments. The result was that the folk musicians began to feel insecure, and their interest dwindled. They felt that after abbreviating the pieces, not only would it be difficult to make the transitions, but the transmission of the pieces would be endangered if the greater part of them were cut; and completely to eliminate the decorations was simply to make them regress to the stage of beginners.\textsuperscript{82}

As Yang wisely points out, 'these opinions of folk musicians cannot be neglected', but the same patronising attitude towards folk musicians and audiences alike remains endemic today. A good way of understanding this problem seems to be the old 'insiders and outsiders' dichotomy. Folk music is constantly changing, whether the musicians recognize it or not, but the change inflicted on folk music since the 1920s by modernizers came largely from outsiders.

Folk musicians were indeed recruited to the modernizing cause: many musicians from hereditary families in the villages became teachers at the new conservatories or soloists in the new urban professional 'folk music troupes', but in adopting the new ethos they plainly abandoned their traditional background. There are of course degrees: in Chaozhou the urban professionals seem rather close to folk music, in Shanghai silk- and-bamboo the conflict is more acute, and in the north there is virtually no contact between the two poles.

Rural musicians today feel thoroughly alienated from the slick sentimental Hollywoodized versions of folk music which they hear on TV. Worse, they have been bludgeoned into parroting the cliché that this music is 'better' and 'more scientific' than

\textsuperscript{82} Yang Yinliu 1986: 226, from an article written in 1953.
their own. One senses that the Suzhou Daoists have felt intimidated by the official line in the past, for they were relieved and amazed in England that their music was ‘all right’, not too long, primitive, or out of tune, and all the rest of the insecurities which official culture has given them. This is a difficult area, but I can only cite many long years of contact with folk musicians, and the persistent glories of their unadulterated style.

One aspect of this ‘contradiction’ is in language. Folk and urban professional musicians use entirely different vocabulary. One wouldn’t talk to a peasant about daiji yue ‘percussion’: most know only luogu, ‘gong-and-drums’. The term suona (shawm) is used mainly by educated urban musicians, and found in historical texts, whereas folk musicians have many local terms, of which laba is perhaps the most common: they may know the term suona, but I am reluctant to inflict the term on them. Zhou Zufu, when talking to me, sometimes used the term xuanlù, melody, foreign to most folk musicians, a sign of his years in a relatively ‘educated’ urban musical milieu. So while the interface between traditional and modern styles may be complex, I would nevertheless hope to see more recognition of the traditional end of the spectrum. Despite the growth of urbanization, and musicologists’ interest in change, China is still largely an agricultural society, and our perspective should take account not only of the accessible urban (secular, modern) styles but also of the more traditional music-making which is part of the fabric of life in rural society.

GO AND SEE THE DAOISTS
The visit of the Suzhou Daoists was marvellous; lovely people playing fantastic music from a deep cultural background. In this article I have tried to broaden the subject to show that their ‘concert’ repertory is only a small part of their musical and ritual curriculum, and that still further we need to see this music not as some finite fossilized Shifan concert repertory, but as part of living ritual practice, in temples and in popular village ritual and folk custom throughout southern Jiangsu. However, I haven’t even attempted to introduce the vocal liturgy of the Xuanmiao guan temple, or of Daoist and Buddhist priests in the temples of southern Jiangsu. I suspect this instrumental music is a rather small part of their activity.

Our interest in these ‘classical’ instrumental genres is natural enough: we have a classical bias towards nicely tangible things like symphonies with instruments and scores, and the melodies are accessible to our ears; but we must try and see them as part of the whole ritual corpus. Without doing detailed fieldwork it is impossible to assess the state of ritual practice in southern Jiangsu; Daoism is undoubtedly a pale shadow of the days before 1937, but we mustn’t assume that it is a thing of the past. While it may not have seen such a spectacular revival as in Fujian, there is always more than meets the eye as long as we free ourselves of inherited assumptions and sanitized official versions.

Do go and see the Daoists at the Xuanmiao guan, and observe their daily ritual calendar, of which Shifan is a small part; and let’s also go to the villages, and seek all kinds of traditional music-making throughout this complex changing society.

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ZHONGGUO yinyue shupu zhi
Like a Knife


Like a Knife is a very welcome publication. It presents in concise and well-ordered format an analysis of contrasting genres of Chinese popular music. A brief Introduction examines Chinese pop singer Cui Jian’s metaphor (and song-title) ‘Like a knife’ as an interpretation of Chinese rock and sets the author’s historical, geographical and methodological frames of reference. Firmly rooted in the period between 1988 and 1990, the study proper opens in chapter 1 with the definition of key terms (such as ‘popular music’, ‘genre’ and ‘ideology’), a sketch of the rise of popular music in China and an initial comparison of the two contemporary genres, state-promoted tongsu yinyue or ‘popularized music’ and largely independent rock (yaoqun yinyue). This comparison is developed in the remaining chapters. Thus, chapters 2 and 3 focus on the production, performance and interpretation of tongsu music while chapters 4 and 5 discuss and illustrate these aspects of Chinese rock. A short Conclusion rounds up main issues by returning to the metaphor of the knife and the disparate groups by and for whom it is wielded. Selected song lyrics are given in translation in the Appendix. Bibliographies of Western and Chinese sources follow, but there is no index, glossary or Chinese character list. Throughout, lyrics appear in English translation only, though pinyin titles are usually cited as well.

Song lyrics are, in fact, central material to the study. This is hardly surprising, since texts are for many the basic interpretational index of popular music, and Andrew Jones uses them well, as also comments distilled from interviews with a wide variety of musicians, lyricists and listeners. Of course, lyrics and discourse around them appear to be couched in similar communicative modes, which makes the shift from dealing with the one to the other seem a straightforward operation. Such is not the case with the ‘non-lyric’ elements of the songs. Here, the scholar is not faced with words, whether sung, spoken or written, but instead with musical sounds which need to be interpreted and translated or reduced to words before they can be woven into the scholarly text. Perhaps for these reasons, Jones give rather little attention to the musical dimensions which frame the presentation of the lyrics in which he is so interested, although there are occasional examples, of which the following is perhaps the most extended:

The song begins with thirty-two measures in which a slow tempo is coupled with a recurring, minor arpeggiated chord. Over this harmonically static music structure, Zhu [Xiaomin] pensively delivers the following verses: ...

Minor harmonies, ..., are often used by Chinese rock musicians to evoke a sense of oppression (yayi) in the listener. If the first thirty-two bars are evocative of the ‘oppression of the past,’ then the
following eight signal a decisive breakthrough to the release afforded by a ringing rejection of that past. The drums, bass guitar and rhythm guitar break into double-time. The acceleration of the tempo and the pounding homophony of the band provide the audience with a visceral sense of excitement and release. The audience begins to leap up and down en masse, breaking into a spontaneous, collective chant in time with the staccato rhythms. In the next thirty-two measures, Zhu triumphantly sings out the verse he had recited at the beginning of the performance over a major harmonic progression that repeatedly descends to resolution in a tonic chord (p.111).

In deciding to largely bypass ‘musical issues’, Jones is admittedly in good company; much writing about Western popular music is similar (but see Moore 1993). And Jones could certainly defend his decision by pointing out that lyrics are the key to ideology in Chinese pop, and ideology the linchpin of genre, the two facets promised in his subtitle. But still, to this reader at least, a chapter rounding out this crucial dimension of the topic would have made fascinating reading. I remain curious as to how such features as melody, rhythm, harmony, timbre, texture and song structure contribute to the overall effect of songs in each of the two genres, how conscious individual musicians are of their manipulation of these devices and techniques, whether there are ironic instrumental undertones which support ambiguities in the lyrics or provide a subtext to seemingly innocuous phrases and many other such questions.

Nonetheless, when engaged with lyrics and their interpretations, Jones’ analyses are sensitive, searching and flexible. In gauging the nature of access to the public sphere in China, the impact of TV contests on tongsu music and its performers, the modes of operation of cultural hegemony in this music and the rise of the ‘negotiated’ Northwest Wind style, the author is clear and informative. We learn much about how Chinese musicians envision their own work, how different groups categorise the sensibilities and ideological stances implicit in tongsu music and rock and how popular music functions as an ideological arena. The examination of both tongsu and rock music is one of the study’s great strengths, since some might have been tempted to examine only Chinese rock, alluringly unsanctioned, at the expense of the ubiquitous, state-mediated genre of tongsu music. In fact, as Jones demonstrates, there is much to be gained from studying the two together, since both are often seen by those involved as alternate, even opposed, modes of speaking ‘for the people’.

Briefly commenting on the technical side of the book’s production, there are quite a few typing mistakes in the text of the book that a good proof-reading or even use of grammar-checking software should have exposed. Most of these are immediately apparent, although the family name of composer He Luting is given as Jia, a similar written character (footnote 14, p.12). Also, not every reference in the text appears in the bibliography, for instance Zhang Jianguo and Kong Jun’s article (p.15). This, coupled with the lack of an index, makes finding for a second time the exact details of the article difficult once one has passed that particular page.

However, to end on such a note would be wholly inappropriate. Andrew Jones’ book is a significant achievement in the study of contemporary Chinese popular music. It is full of insights and stimulating interpretations, only a few of which have been mentioned above. Apart from scholars of present-day China and Chinese music, who are likely to find this modestly-priced volume a very worthwhile investment, the book would also appeal to those investigating the popular music of other parts of the world and music sociology in general.

Jonathan Stock
(University of Durham)

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NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

The editors of the CHIME Journal encourage all 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 in the field of Chinese music. For the announcements below, we gratefully acknowledge the assistance of: Alexander Knapp (AK), Andreas Steen (AST), Francois Picard (FP), Jonathan Stock (JS), Keith Howard (KH), Laurence Picken (LP), Stephen Jones (SJ), Sue Tuchy (ST), Tang Yating (TY), Wang Hong (WH), Xu Pingxin (XP), Zhang Boyu (ZBY), and Zhang Haolu (ZH). These announcements were compiled by Antoinet Schimmelpeppinck (AS) and F. Kouwenhoven (FK).

PEOPLE & PROJECTS

IN MEMORIAM HENK ARENDS

We deplore the untimely death of Henk Arends, a great collector and connoisseur of Chinese art and culture. Henk died in Amsterdam on 27 September 1994, at the age of 72. He started collecting materials on Chinese culture and traditional music (from any part of the world) when he was still in his teens. In 1956, he founded the ‘Exotic Music Society’. He was the sole editor and publisher of the (bi-) monthly Bulletin of this Society until 1979. In the 1980s, he assisted the Dutch ethnomusicologist Wouter Swets in a number of fieldwork trips to the Balkans. In his native country, Holland, Henk Arends was widely known as a unique source of information on Oriental culture, especially on Chinese music. People who visited him would invariably find him surrounded by piles of books, records, journals, ‘exotic’ musical instruments and countless interesting artefacts. Pouring Chinese tea from one of the beautiful Yixing pots in his impressive collection of Chinese teapots, he would overwhelm visitors with lively accounts of his experiences with Chinese music, and would always tell the most wonderful stories. Henk Arends was particularly fond of telling anecdotes. He was a regular and popular guest of the Dutch Society of Story-tellers. His personal interpretations of Chinese tales, drawn from a variety of narrative genres, were widely appreciated. He performed them in Dutch, clad in a Chinese outfit, and complete with teapot, and fan! We only learned to know Henk Arends in the mid-1980s, and shared some of our Chinese (folk song collecting) experiences with him. It is hard to forget the broad smile on his face after the Tianjin Buddhist Ensemble’s inspired performance at the Tropical Institute in Amsterdam. Henk was absolutely passionate about music, and he knew how to enjoy life!

The Chime Foundation is very proud of having acquired Henk Arends’ complete collection of music books, records, journals, slides, newspaper clippings and field recordings, and many of his musical instruments. This is an invaluable addition to our library and archive at the Chime office in Leiden. We are very happy to be able to make this collection publicly available for the first time. We hope that, in this way, we can also help to pass on the torch of his inspiration!

Antoinet Schimmelpeppinck
Frank Kouwenhoven

MA THESIS: ROCK MUSIC IN BEIJING

Andreas Steen (Münchenu University, Germany) recently finished a MA thesis entitled ‘Rockmusik in Beijing – Aspekte von Subkultur und Wertewandel in der urbanen Jugendszene Chines’. The thesis is partly based on Andrew F. Jones’ publication ‘Like a Knife, ideology and Genre In Contemporary Chinese Popular Music and contains translations of the songs of five Beijing rock-bands (Cui Jian, The Breathing (Huxi), Black Panther (Hibao), Tang Dynasty (Tangchao) and He Yong). Andreas hopes to return to China for a longer stay in Beijing in 1996. He would like to get in closer contact with the rock scene and possibly participate in a Chinese band. (AST)

TANG YATING IN DURHAM

CURT SACHS AWARD FOR L. PICKEN
The Curt Sachs Award, the highest honour bestowed by the American Musical Instrument Society, was presented for 1995 to Laurence E.R. Picken, Honorary Fellow of Jesus College, University of Cambridge, UK. The award, named for one of the founders of the modern systematic study of musical instruments, was established to recognize those who have made important contributions to the Society's goals of promoting knowledge of all aspects of musical instruments of all ages and all peoples. No doubt Dr. Picken received the award partly in recognition for his monumental study Folk Musical Instruments of Turkey (CUP, 1975), which Karl Signell (in The Journal of the American Musical Instrument Society) has called 'the most significant work in organology since Curt Sachs'. Picken also published writings on Chinese instruments. In spite of health problems, Dr. Picken is currently working on the sixth and presumably final fascicle of the equally monumental series Music from the Tang Court, which he hopes to send to the Press before the end of this year. According to the author, volume 6 can hardly be described as a 'fascicle' any more, since it has grown to a volume of 530 pages of A4 typescript, not counting music examples. Music from the Tang Court 6 will be published by Cambridge University Press. (LP)

JEWSH MUSIC IN CHINA
Professor Alexander Knapp, Research Fellow in Jewish Music at City University, London, visited the People's Republic of China in December 1993 and in October 1994 to present lectures on Jewish music and to search for traces of Jewish music in China. In 1993 he spent several weeks as a guest of the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, on the invitation of its President, Professor Liu Lin. In 1994 he travelled to Beijing, Suzhou, Wuxi and Shanghai as a member of the International Organization of Folk Art (IOV, a Unesco body based in Vienna). During his first stay, Mr. Knapp gave six lectures, four on different aspects of Jewish music (Ashkenazi, Sephardi, Oriental; liturgical, folk, popular and art), and one each on Ernst Bloch and Arabic music. His audience comprised professors of ethnomusicology, composers, postgraduate researchers, undergraduates, and interpreters. Each session lasted two-and-a-half hours and was recorded for the purposes of translation into Chinese and subsequent publication. There was also a roundtable discussion of over three hours, covering numerous aspects of Jewish culture. Reporting on his experiences in the ROM Magazine (London), Mr. Knapp remarked that the Chinese whom he met seemed fascinated with Jewish culture and Jewish music, and he noted 'remarkable similarities in the temperament and outlook of both peoples'. There are many documents pertaining to the history of Jewish culture in China, but Mr. Knapp has not discovered any remaining traces of former living traditions of Jewish music in China. (AK)

SHAKUHACHI EXPERT
Yoshikazu Iwamoto (Japan) has joined Durham University for a year as a Visiting Research Fellow. He specializes in shakuhachi performance. (JS)

XU KUNRONG'S WORK ON CONFUCIAN MUSIC
Xu Kunrong is Chairman of the Institute of Kunqu Opera in Suzhou, editor of the Kunqu Newsletter and curator of the 'Wu music palace' collection of ancient Chinese instrumental music. Although much of his work as a music scholar takes place in Suzhou, Mr. Xu lives in Nanjing. One of his more recent projects is also situated in Nanjing. In September 1992, Xu became the artistic director of the Youlan Orchestra, a group of professional and amateur musicians with a special interest in ancient Chinese instruments traditionally used in Confucian temple music. The Confucian temple of Nanjing financed the reconstruction of a number of such old instruments, including chime bells (tuned in intervals of perfect fifths), qing (chime stones), xun (ocarina), yu (a wooden percussion instrument in the shape of a tiger, and scraped with a stick), zhu (a square open wooden vessel used as a drum), qin and se (plucked zithers), wo konghou (horizontal harp), chi (a bamboo flute with six equidistant holes), xiao (vertical bamboo flute), guan (reed pipe), sheng (mouth organ), jian (drum), and bo tao. All of these are now on display in the main hall of the Confucian temple, but they are also played once every week by
the Youlian orchestra, usually for tourist audiences. The repertoire varies from ancient qin solo pieces like Youlian to new compositions in ‘ancient’ vein, including song poems selected from the Book of Poetry (Shijing). Sometimes microphones and amplifiers are used during performances, so that the music can also be heard outside the temple. Most of the members of the orchestra play music as a second job. There is some debate among the musicians about the best ways to deal with the ancient repertoire. Xu Kunrong has advocated an authentic approach. While most musicians tend to agree, some have some difficulty with getting used to (for example) the tuning in perfect fifths. (ZBY)

BUDDHIST MUSIC & RITUAL VILLAGE BANDS
François Picard has visited Nepal and Fujian in the period from September to November 1994 to carry out fieldwork on Buddhist music and rituals. At present he has a scholarship from the Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient, with support of former and present professors at the College de France, Jaques Gernet and Pierre Etienne Vill. Recently, several CDs with recordings by Dr. Picard were published in France: a second CD of Fanbai Buddhist music, with a Morning Lesson, recorded at the Shanghai Longhua si temple under supervision of China’s Buddhist music specialist Tian Qing, who also wrote the sleeve notes. The CD was published by Coora. Furthermore, Buda records "Musiques du Monde" published 2 cds with field recordings made by Dr. Picard in Liaoning Province: one of Liaonian chui du yue (“blowing-and-hitting” music from Southern Liaoning), and one of Jingju (Beijing Opera), performed by the Dalian Troupe which made a tour of Europe in early 1995. (FP)

STUDY ON HUA’ER
Sue Tuohy was appointed to a full-time faculty line and is now teaching ethnomusicology within the Folklore Department at Indiana University, Bloomington, USA. Prior to this she was the Associate Director of the East Asian Studies Center and adjunct faculty. She teaches World Music and Culture at the undergraduate level, and a graduate course which varies each semester. Last year she taught ‘East Asian Music and Culture’, and ‘Fieldwork’. In the coming year she will be teaching a course called ‘The Ethnography of the Performer’ (focusing on the study of the individual) and a ‘History of Ideas in Ethnomusicology’ course. This summer she will be doing some additional fieldwork for a book on hua’er songs of Gansu and Qinghai. The book will focus on the singer Zhu Zhongliu and then move out from there in terms of the songs and contexts. (ST)

PAPERS READ AT CHINOPERL MEETING
The Chinoperl 1995 annual meeting was held from 5 to 8 April at the George Washington University, USA. The following papers were read: ‘Genre and Gender Images: Misery & Eroticism in jiu chang ben’ by Fan Pen Chen; ‘A Struggle for Survival: the Present Status of Suzhou pingtan in Shanghai’ by Wenwei Du; ‘Recent Public Support for Chinese Performing Arts in the USA’ by Terence Li; ‘Studies in Chinese Ritual & Ritual Theatre: A Bibliographic Report’ by Ch’iu Kui Wang; ‘The Relationship between Chinese Opera & Japanese Kabuki’ by Xi Lu; ‘A Recording of the Story & Song of a Venerable Hangzhou Raconteur’ by Richard Vanfless Simmons; ‘Prosodic & Linguistic Analysis of Two Bai songs’ by Grace Wiersma; and ‘I Am a Mongol – Ethnic Pop & Cultural Politics in Inner Mongolia, FRC’ by Almas Khan.

CHENG SHUI-CHENG: HAKKA STUDY
In 1994, Dr. Shui-cheng Cheng of CNRS in Paris received a CCK grant to conduct research on Hakka music. The Hakka are an important sub-group of the Han Chinese who originally lived on the northern plains of China, but who due to various causes were forced over the centuries to migrate further and further south. Today, the total world population of Hakka exceeds a hundred and ten million. About a hundred million Hakka still reside on the Chinese mainland while approximately four million have migrated to Taiwan. As the Hakka moved to each new location, they were forced to adapt to the natural and cultural environment of their new surroundings. Thus, mutual influence between Hakka and local cultures was inevitable. While the Hakka were able to spread elements of Han culture to indigenous peoples, indigenous people in turn influenced Hakka culture, particularly in the areas of music and art. Continuous contact with indigenous cultures contributed to the creative development of Hakka music.

INSTITUTIONS

YANG YINLIU FOUNDATION
There are plans for the founding of a ‘Yang Yinliu Musicology in China Research Foundation’ (YMCRF) in China. The YMCRF will be attached to the Music Research Institute in Beijing. The aim of the YMCRF is to carry on the torch of the well-known Chinese music historian and ethnomusicologist Yang Yinliu (1899-1984). The Foundation will sponsor wide-ranging projects in support of important historical, cultural and folk musical traditions. It will also help to sustain research in new disciplines, and new directions. The council committee of the YMCRF is composed of and implemented by music experts in China. Membership of the foundation is open to people in mainland China, Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan who are doing musicological research or are teach-

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ing music. It also welcomes scholars from abroad to visit China and to do research in Chinese music. The main resources of the YMCRF are private and institutional donations. Gifts from abroad are welcome. Funds will be used for collecting music materials, supporting fieldwork in China (including travel and living expenses), organizing small-scale conferences in the framework of specific projects, etc. For further info contact the preparatory group of the YMCRF at the following address: Dongzhimenwai Xinyuanli West Bldg. No. 1, 100027 Beijing, China. Tel: 010-6874416 (w), 5015522 ext. 2065 (h). Fax: +86-10-6874416. US dollars account: Bank of China No. 4009901-0114-00025048, attn: Wang Zhaoren.

SOAS OFFERS NEW MUSIC DEGREE

In September 1995, SOAS (the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London) will launch a new three-year modular BA degree in Music Studies. This is an unusual and encouraging new development, because the focus is on World Music. Western music provides only a minor input but, importantly, will be taught jointly with the prestigious King's College, London.

SOAS has a long history of teaching World Music and current lecturers include David Hughes, Richard Widdecombe, Owen Wright, Keith Howard and Lucy Duran. The new degree will run alongside the existing dual subject BA in which music can be taken with a discipline (e.g. Anthropology, Geography, Art and Archaeology, Religious Studies) or language (chosen from five departments: East Asia, South-East Asia, South Asia, Near and Middle East, African).

The performance segment is chosen from Balinese and Javanese gamelan, Korean samul nori, African drumming and kora, with occasional options in qin, shakuhachi, Persian singing, and Indian and Middle Eastern instruments. Students additionally take one "flavor" in a discipline or language chosen from amongst SOAS courses.

The degree is extremely versatile, allowing students to mould their course of study to their own regional and disciplinary interests. For detailed information, contact: Keith Howard, Centre of Music Studies, SOAS, Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG, UK. Tel: +44.171.323 6266, fax: +44.171.436 3844. (KH)

MEETINGS

4TH EMAS MEETING, JULY-AUG 1995

The fourth meeting of the Dongfang yinyue xuehui (Eastern Music Association, Shanghai) will be held from 30 July to 2 August 1995 at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. The main theme of the conference is 'Instrumental music and musical instruments in the Orient'. At the arrival day, 30 July, there will be an evening concert of the 1995 National Young Guzheng Players Competition. There will be two days of paper presentations and discussions.

For more information, contact: Sun Shen, Dongfang yinyue xuehui, Shanghai Conservatory, 20 Feng yang Rd., 200031 Shanghai, PRC. Tel: +86.21.4370137, ext. 2961; fax: +86.21.4330886.

GUQIN CONFERENCE IN SICHUAN

An 'International Exchange Meeting on the Art of the Guqin' will be held from 18 to 23 July 1995 in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China. Qin researchers, Qin performers and Qin makers will participate in a series of papers, panels and performances. An exhibition with books, photos, paintings and artefacts has also been planned. Special attention will be given to the construction of the instruments. Collectors and Qin-makers are invited to put their instruments on display. For more information, contact Tang Zhongliu, Shudu dadao Congfulu 15, 610016 Chengdu, Sichuan Province PRC. Tel: +86.28.67515633 or 6751511 ext. 2001; fax: +86.28.6547686.

'HEALING DISRUPTED SOCIETIES'

The International Association for Research in Vietnamese Music, in cooperation with the Association of Literature and Art of Thua Thien Hue Province, will hold an international conference on music and culture in Hue, Vietnam, from 29 December, 1995, through 8 January 1996. The theme 'The Role of the Arts in Healing Disrupted Societies' is viewed as particularly appropriate to Hue, the old imperial capital and cultural centre under the Nguyen Dynasty (1802-1945). Hue suffered more than most Vietnamese cities during the Vietnamese-American War. As the organizers of the conference write, "time has helped heal many of the wounds, and as the process of rebuilding continues, the arts in Vietnam flourish once again."

The programme consists of a three-day conference (29-31 December) followed by a period of field recordings and sight-seeing in the Hue area (1-8 January). This includes visits to some of the most prominent Buddhist temples (where Buddhist chants will be performed) and to a fishing village. Papers for the conference may pertain to any geographical area and should consider the issue of how the arts can help societies through stressful periods, how they can help in the healing process, or how the arts might help elsewhere in the future. Papers may be read in English, Vietnamese or French. For further info contact The International Association for Research in Vietnamese Music, P.O.Box 16, Kent, Ohio 44240 USA, Fax/phone +1-216-677.9703. E-mail: saras13748@aol.com
ACMR REPORTS
During its 17th semi-annual meeting in Milwaukee, the Association for Chinese Music Research (ACMR) decided to change the ACMR Newsletter into a genuine journal. The name of this publication has now been changed to ACMR Reports. To accommodate increased production costs, annual membership fees of the ACMR have been raised to $10 for individual members and $15 for institutional members in the USA and in Canada. (Add $5 for overseas mailing.)

The first issue of the ACMR Reports (Vol. 8, no. 1, Spring 1995) has 53 pages and contains the following items: 'Autobiographical Sketches' by Rulan Chao Pian, a 'Bibliography on Tibetan Music' by Wu Ben, a review by Lee Tong Soon of Themes and Variations: Writings on Music in Honor of Rulan Chao Pian (ed. by Bell Yung and Joseph Lam), a review by Peter Mcllcr of Zhongguo Xiao Di (written by Lin Keran and Chang Duming), and a section with news and announcements (pp. 34-51). Editor: Bell Yung. Editorial Assistants: Wu Ben and Helen Rees. ISSN: 1071-0659. Make checks payable to the University of Pittsburgh and send them to Wu Ben, Music Department, University of Pittsburgh, PA 15260, USA. Enquiries: Wu Ben, fax: +1-412-6244186, e-mail: bwxst@vms.cis.pitt.edu.

CHINOPERL PAPERS
Chinoperl Papers # 17 (1994) is a special issue with a monograph-length article by David Rolston: 'Nonrealistic Uses of Oral Performing Literature in Traditional Chinese Fiction: The Model of the Jin Ping Mei Chhua and its Influence.' A limited number of copies are still available at a cost of $20 (individual) and $25 (institution). Please add $2.50 (domestic) or $5 (international) for postage and handling. Chinoperl Papers # 18 includes 'A Note on the Oral Transmission of a Late Nineteenth Century Hangjou Lyric' by Richard Varney Simmons, 'Narrative Voices in Yangzhou Story Telling' by Vibeke Bordeshi, 'Xuetou: Comic Elements as Social Commentary in Suzhou Pinghua' by Wenwei Du, and 'Food and Political Satire: Two Themes in Mullan Ritual Drama' by Lindy Li Mark.

MISCELLANEOUS


CHANG, Lulu Huang - From Confucius to Kubai Khan: Music and Poetics through the Centuries. Wissenschaftliche Abhandlungen, Bd. 58, 1993. Institute of Mediaeval Music, Ottawa; Asian-Pacific Cultural Center, Taipei. xii, 184 pp., bibliog., illus., music.


DEAN, Kenneth - Taoist Ritual and Popular Cults of Southeast China. Princeton University Press, 1994. Publication supported by the CCK Foundation. Dean argues that Taoist rituals provides the underlying structure for the expected revival of regional cults in China. Historical sources show how local gentry, merchants, Taoist ritual specialists, and government officials interacted to transform local gods into Taoist deities, while epigraphy, Taoist-liturgical manuscripts, temple gazetteers, and Dean's own first-hand observations clarify the role of popular cults and ritual frameworks in contemporary local Chinese society and economic affairs.

DEUTSCH, Werner and Franz Fördermayer - Zum Problem des zweistimmigen Sologesanges mongolischer und Turkvölker. 'In: Von der Vielfalt musikalischer Kultur, ed. by R. Schumacher, 1992, pp. 305-310. Bibliog., illus.'
DUDBRIDGE, Glen - 'The Goddess Hua-Yüeh San-niang and the Cantonese Ballad Ch'en-hsiang Ta-lzu'. In: Hanxue yanjiu/Chinese Studies 8/1, 1990, pp. 627-646.


HOO, Ki Mantle - 'Stratification polyphonique dans les musiques d’Asie du Sud-Est', in Cahiers de Musiques Traditionnelles: Polyphonies vol.6, Genève (Switzerland), 1993, pp.3-10.


KIM Eung-Suk - 'Creating Sacred Sound of Drum.' In: Koreaea 3 (2), 1989, pp. 38-44.


LEE, Sbornwon - 'Contemporary Musical Culture.' In: Korea Briefing 1993, pp. 121-138.


MASAYUKI, Kawanishi - 'Following the Festivities of the Lisu People in Yunnan Province.' In: Koukin Journal 4, 1992, pp.4-7. Photo. Eng. summary p.32.


PARK Il-young - 'Communion Feast in Korean Shamanism.' In: Korea Journal 31/1, 1991, pp. 73-86.


--- 'Text Setting and the Use of Tune


STUART, Kevin and Hu Jun – 'That All May Prosper: The Mongour (tu) nadun of the Guanting/Sanchuan Region, Qinghai, China.' In: Anthropos 88 (1-3), 1993, pp. 15-27. Bibliog., illus.

SUH Yon-Ho – 'The Revolutionary Operas and Plays in North Korea.' In: Korea Journal 31(3), pp. 85-94.

TADAGAWA, Leo – 'An Account of a Journey 4: Yunnan Province, China.' In: Koukin 4, 1992, p. 3. English summary p. 32.


CHINESE PUBLICATIONS

SOUNDS FROM TAIWAN
A new quarterly, Taiwan de shengyin ("Sounds from Taiwan") was published from July 1994. Each issue is about 90 pages and is accompanied by several compact discs. The journal is packed with information, short articles, interviews, musical analyses, reports, news and advertisements. It is lavishly illustrated: photographs on virtually every page! The only problem is a somewhat chaotic lay-out, which makes it difficult for the reader to find his way in the journal and in the sleeve notes of the CDs.

The series of CDs is called Taiwan yousheng zi-laoku quanji, 'Collection of Taiwan's Sound Archive'. Up till now, the following issues have been published: Issue One (July 1994) includes 2 CDs with selections of the Luantan opera Futu Changqiang starring Wang Jinhao, Pan Yuliang and others, 2 CDs with Oianwang Gezhen (Singing for the Dead) by the Cheng family in Sanchong City (Taiwanese funeral music with rock-and-roll influences), and 1 CD with the Jinguang ("high-tech") hand-puppet show of the Mingzheng hand-puppet theatre group - the music combines Chinese and western elements, including a synthesizer for 'special effects'.

The second issue (October 1994) incorporates field recordings made by Hsu Tsang-houei in 1978 of aboriginal music in Taiwan, featuring songs of the Ami, Puyuma, Yami, Tayal and Siassiay.

The third issue (January 1995) deals with New Year's festive music of the Hakka people on Taiwan. It includes various CDs: one with Belgian music, entitled Tianguan Cifu (Heavenly officials bestowing good fortune), sung by Qiu Huorong and others; one with the ritual play San xian hui ("The Meeting of the Three Immortals"), played by the Minzheng hand-puppet theatre group; and one CD entitled Kejia Bayin ("Eight Sound" music of the Hakka), performed by Chen Qingsong and the Kejia Chenjia Bayin tuan. The series is published by Shuijing yousheng chubanshe (Chrysal Records), and can be ordered from Chrysal Records, 18F-2, No. 37, Sec.2, San-Min Rd., Pan-Chiao City, Taiwan ROC. Tel: +886-2-8854.305; fax: +886-2-964.9212. Prices: annual subscription US$180 (surface mail); Single issues: US$ 57. Cheaper rates for Asia. (AS/ACMR Reports)

CHINESE SHADOW THEATRE

Jiang Yuxiang - Zhongguo yinxu, 'Chinese Shadow Theatre', Sichuan People's Publishing House, 1984. The author, Associate Professor of the Historical Museum of Sichuan University, undertook a special research project on Chinese shadow theatre, funded by the First Youth Research Foundation of the National Education Commission on the PRC. He conducted fieldwork for several years, visiting the most important centres of shadow play performances all over China. He collected a wealth of information, ranging from oral and written documents to material objects. The book has 332 pages and 100 illustrations. It can be ordered from Sichuan Renmin Chubanshe, 3 Yandaqiao, Chengdu, Sichuan Province, PRC. (WH)
MINORITY INSTRUMENTS  
 Zhongguo shaoqiu minzu yueqi daguan ‘Overview of Musical Instruments of the Chinese Minorities’ by Wu Yanwei and Chen Chuan, Sichuan People’s Publishing House, 1993. The author of this book collected 172 instruments from 37 Minorities. He provides a systematic description of these instruments, sometimes supplemented with folk myths related to particular instruments. The book has 306 pages. It can be ordered at the above-mentioned address. (MH)

COMPOSERS

OPERAS BY QU XIAOSONG & GUO WENJING

"The Chinese language is an enormous obstacle for Western singers. Such a strange idiom makes it incredibly hard for them to articulate all the sounds in a proper way... But their diligence and persisting efforts have really touched me. God, make them succeed to learn it all by heart!"

[Guo Wenjing, May, 1994]

The music of Chinese composer Guo Wenjing (born 1956) is deeply influenced by the folk music of his native region Sichuan, particularly by local opera and folk song, but also by Western music. The impact of both worlds is best felt in his chamber opera Wolf Cub Village (1994), which is generally regarded as one of his strongest pieces up to date. The opera was premiered with great success in June 1984 in the Holland Festival. A concert performance is planned for this autumn in the Festival d’Automne in Paris.

The early symphonic and chamber pieces which Guo wrote during his student years at the Beijing Conservatory were suffused with Bartókian rhythms and dark moods reminiscent of Shostakovich. His attractive Violin Concerto (1987) demonstrated a new kind of sophistication through a free adaptation of rural folk music, but Guo only found his true voice in She Hue, a piece for Western ensemble with added Chinese percussion (1991). It was his first work commissioned by the Nieuw Ensemble in Amsterdam.

She Hue, which evokes the atmosphere of outdoor rural folk festivities, also set the tone for his next work, the opera Wolf Cub Village, which was premiered by the Nieuw Ensemble under Ed Spanjaard in the Holland Festival. The opera was directed by Gilis de Lange.

Guo Wenjing is very much a ‘Chinese’ composer, in the sense that he is interested in exploring elements of his native culture. But he does not readily yield to Western expectations with respect to Chinese culture. Guo is not fond of the spiritual and artistic refinement of Chinese calligraphy or classical poetry. The philosophy of tiny gestures, acquiescence, ‘emptiness’. Taoism - much of what is so often regarded as the very essence of Chinese culture - does not really appeal to him.

He grew up in rural Chongqing, amidst the rough cries of boat people, the loud banging of percussion players in ritual opera, and this world is brought to life again in his own music. In his youth he was also confronted with some of the harsher realities of Chinese society: during the Cultural Revolution, Chongqing was the scene of violent street fights and gun-battles between Red Guards and army units. It is not without significance that his parents managed to keep him away from the streets only by buying a violin for him to play on. Indirectly, the Cultural Revolution became his personal road to music.

The darker sides of Chinese history ring through many of Guo Wenjing’s works, and perhaps nowhere more convincingly than in Wolf Cub Village. But he always mixes feelings of social torment with other elements, notably with the eerie atmosphere of his native Chongqing - a town eternally clouded in fog. Last but not least, Guo likes to exploit major elements of traditional Chinese folk tales: ghosts, witchcraft, fantastic and mysterious events.

According to Guo, his decision to base his opera Wolf Cub Village on a short story by one of China’s best-known prose writers of the 20th century, Lu Xun, was entirely based on literary preference. Guo says he simply liked the tension of Lu Xun’s Diary of a Madman [as the story was called originally]. "Of course the things that happen in Lu Xun’s tale can no longer be found in China today. We don’t have witch doctors nowadays, or people who believe in the medicinal power of consuming human blood or flesh." He emphasizes the universal meaning of Diary of a Madman in his view, the story depicts an individual’s loss of contact with his environment.

On the outer surface, Diary of a Madman is the tale of a man who thinks that he lives in an environment of man-eaters. He imagines that the people in his village are all cannibals or wolves. They have begun to cast strange glances at him. Will he be the next victim of their murderous hunger? He is also haunted by ghost voices, and everything he hears and sees around him seems to confirm his fears. Ultimately he confesses his worries to his brother, who calls for a doctor.

The man concludes that not even his own brother can be trusted. Surely the doctor is only prescribing him rest in order to fatten him and to prepare him for a meal! The village mob enter his house to stare at him, the madman, and he is afraid they will attack him. At the end of the story, he is left in utter despair.

In Guo Wenjing’s opera the doctor and the mob force the poor man to eat a drug. He then calms
down and it seems as if he is 'cured'. In fact he realizes that he, too, is a man-eater, just like the others. He is co-responsible for 'four thousand years of man eating' which have gone on in his village. His last words in the opera are: 'It is hard to find a real human being.'

Significantly, the 'madman' in Lu Xun's story is a well-educated man, a scholar who keeps his own diary, who is fond of reading and writing. As an intellectual he readily recognizes the forces which threaten to tear his society apart, but he is also the first to recognize that intellectuals like himself share responsibility for what happens.

Cannibals and wolves may no longer be found in China today but social tension has not abated. The massive demonstrations of Tiananmen, June 1989, and the bloody repression that followed are an uncanny reminder of May 1919 and of earlier protest movements in China and the way they ended in violence. Lu Xun's dark and compassionate oeuvre remains important, not only as an impressive set of metaphors for China's 20th century tragedy but also as a universal warning against moral deterioration and social disintegration.

Guo Wenjing has turned *Diary of a Madman* into a shattering theatrical statement. The remarkable concentration of his music and the tragic fate of the main character – admirably portrayed by the British tenor Nigel Robson – will remind many listeners of Alban Berg’s *Wozzeck*. But the tormented spiritual world of the 'madman' is pictured in an entirely personal musical idiom with a strong emphasis on percussive and single sounds. Guo likes to experi-
Oedipus meets his daughters; an emotional scene in Qu Xiaosong's opera.

ment, particularly with sound colours, but he does so only as a natural exercise: music comes to him easily, not as a 'construct'. He makes no preliminary sketches but writes down his music directly in full score. This directness is immediately apparent in Wolf Cub Village, which is his first work for the theatre, and an opera with a straightforward musical appeal. There were exquisitely scored supporting parts for baritone Shi Kelong (as the madman's brother), bass John Tranter (who was absolutely marvellous as the doctor) and soprano Elena Vink as a spirit.

A similar 'directness' marked Qu Xiaosong's opera The Death of Oedipus, which was premiered on the same occasion in the Holland Festival 1994. Qu and Guo's operas were actually presented as a double-bill – both last approximately 45 minutes – and were performed by the same ensemble, including the same vocal soloists. Qu's opera – mostly quiet and subdued, but with some awesome dramatic outbursts and some wonderful percussion sections – deals with the final quest of the blind Oedipus. The composer does not depict Oedipus' search as a dark tragedy but rather as a Buddhist journey towards enlightenment and spiritual liberation. While the stage in Wolf Cub Village was a raised platform illuminated in splashing shades of blue, the scene of The Death of Oedipus was as bare as any modern stage could be, with all the light coming from a single (moveable) spotlight! Qu Xiaosong remains a revolutionary, not only in the extreme simplicity and lucidity of his instrumentation, but also in his scenic ideas. As Mark Timmer, the director of Qu's opera remarked after the performance: 'We wanted to go to the very extreme. It was all or nothing. But it worked out wonderfully!' There was some risk involved. 'After all, if you have only one light, and it fails to work...' The actors were dressed in white costumes and wore egg-shaped masks. There was a minimum of movement on the stage, with every step or nod stylized and formalized. The stern and static setting seemed to be very much in line with a genuine Greek tragedy. Qu Xiaosong's libretto is primarily a half-stammered and rather fragmented philosophical monologue by Oedipus – which was sung admirably by the Dutch baritone Romain Bischoff. His words were frequently echoed by a cho-
rus. Although the text hardly resorts to Sophocles' original play, and contains many passages reminiscent of Chinese poetry - "he saw the sound of moving water / saw the wind in the still valley" - it is still remarkably close to the Greek dramatist in spirit and in expressive power. Much is left to the music. In the beginning scene, Oedipus' cry for help sounds literally like a wolf's cry, and in a moving scene where the blind old man senses the approach of his two daughters (parts sung by Annette Daniels and Elina Vink), we hear the crying of three wolves. References to wolves are not the only elements which link the two operas by Qu and Guo. In a way, both pieces address the issue of a visionary who is violently rejected by the environment, and who has become a victim of his own qualities.

Wolf Cub Village and The Death of Oedipus deserve many more performances. For some reason, no professional video registration was made, but the good news is that the stage settings have been stored for later re-use. Those who have an opportunity to visit Paris this autumn should go and listen to the concert performance of Guo's Wolf Cub Village (19 October, Opéra Bastille/Amphithéâtre, the same concert features Tan Dun's L'Orphelin and Snow in June', for cello and four percussionists). Note that the Festival d'Automne has adopted new Chinese music as one of its main themes. There will also be concerts on 27 and 30 October by the Ensemble Contretemps (Genève) conducted by Tan Dun, with works by Mo Wuping, Xu Shuya, Qu Xiaosong, Ge Gannu and Tan Dun. Supporting soloists in these concerts are Wu Man (pipa) and Margaret Leng Tan, piano. (FK)

ZHANG HAOFU

Chime no. 7 included a brief report on composer Zhang Haofu (p. 153). Unfortunately the text was mixed up with a report on another composer, Zhang Xiaofu. We duly apologize! Below we offer a correct report on Zhang Haofu, as it should have been printed.

Zhang Haofu was born in Xi'an (Shaanxi Province) in 1952. He studied violin and piano, and later composition at the Xi'an Conservatory. For four years he was a first violinist in the Orchestra of Shaanxi Province. He became resident composer of the China Radio Philharmonic Orchestra in Beijing in 1982. His works were awarded several prizes and were performed in China and in Japan. As from 1987, he studied with Jacqueline Fontyn at the Conservatoire Royal de Bruxelles, and with Yoshishishi Taira at l'École Normale Supérieure de Musique de Paris. He attended master classes by E. Denisov in Luzern, a workshop by Elliot Carter at the Centre Acanthes d'Avignon, and the 'Cursus de composition et informatique musicale' at IRCAM in 1992-93. In 1990, he was awarded the First Prize at the 4th Concours International de composition for the 'Orchestre d'harmonie' at Havre. In the same year, he won the 13th International Composition Competition Prize Valentinio Bucichi in Rome, with a piece for cello and orchestra. His works have been played at the Festival Ars Musica in Brussels, and in Switzerland and France. He received commissions from Radio China, Radio-France and Radio 3 RTBF, Belgium. Works that have been premiered in 1994 include 'Arpizico' for violin and electronic equipment (at IRCAM), 'Crépuscule' for cello and orchestra (in Brussels, Yin-Yang, (by the piano duo Fatchamps-Plouvier, Brussels) and a Trio for violin, cello and piano, commissioned by the Trio Alma in Belgium. (ZH)

CHINESE COMPOSERS MISCELLANEOUS

- An Chengbi (b. 1967) from Shanghai came to Paris in June 1994 to take entrance examinations for the Conservatoire National Superieur de Musique. He has been accepted and ranked fourth. As a member of the Korean minority, he received little support from the Chinese government, but was sponsored by a Korean business company.

- Ye Xiaogang has returned to China, after having lived and worked in the United States for six years. In America he had a scholarship from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester (NY). After obtaining a Master Degree he moved to Pittsburgh. He is now a professor of music in the Composition Department of the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing.

There was a major concert of Ye Xiaogang's orchestral works in Beijing, 26 April 1994, featuring The Silence of the Sakyamuni, shakuhachi and orchestra (1990), The Last Paradise, for violin and orchestra (1992), A Chinese in New York, for vocal soloists, chorus and orchestra (1993, based on poems by Liu Sola), and an older work, Horizon, for soprano, baritone and orchestra (1985).

- Kui Dong, currently a graduate student of composition at Stanford University, won the 1994 ALEA III International Composition Competition with her work The Blue Melody, scored for flute, clarinet, violin, cello and piano. The work was premiered on 28 September 1994 at the TSAI Performance Centre of Boston University by an ensemble led by Theodore Antoniou. The jury included, amongst others, composer Betsy Jolas.

- Shen Yi's Piano Concerto, commissioned by the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra, was premiered in October 1994 in New York. New commissioned works have been scheduled for performances in 1995 by the San Jose Chamber Orchestra (Shuo, for string orchestra), the Oakland Youth Symphony (The Linear, for orchestra), The Women's Philharmonic (Ge Xu , for orchestra), vocal ensemble Chanticleer (Tang Poems) and the Orchestra and Chorus of Bradley University Illinois (a chamber cantata).
Composer Lu Pei with his wife and son.

- **Lu Pei's Symphony no.2** in three movements was premiered on 25 April 1995 in Bowling Green City (KY, USA) by the Symphony Orchestra of the University of Western Kentucky. Lu Pei currently lives and works in Louisville.

- **Qin Daping**'s *Vox of 1969*, for electronics, was performed during a 'computer music concert' in the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, 19 November 1994. Qin Daping is currently based in Helsinki.

- **Zhu Shirui**'s Second String Quartet, his Wind Quintet, and various new works for chamber ensemble were performed by the Varianti ensemble conducted by Rupert Huber, 16 May 1995 in Stuttgart (where Zhu is currently based).

- **Chen Qigang**'s *Yuan* for orchestra (1988) was performed by the Nürnberg Philharmonic Orchestra, 30 June in Bochum, Germany, during the ISCM World Music Days 1995. A new work for flute and orchestra, *Une pétale de lumière*, was premiered in Paris, February 1994. Chen Qigang visited China in the spring of 1996 and had his first concert in the People's Republic since eleven years on 25 March in Shanghai. The Shanghai Symphony Orchestra performed *Une pétale de lumière, Voyage d'un Rêve, Poème Lyrique II* and *Yuan*. The concert was a big success. The most recent work by Chen Qigang, for oboe and orchestra (working title *Extase*), is commissioned by the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie and the Ministry of Culture in France. It will be premiered 11 October 1995 in Bremen. His next work will be a Cello Concerto for Yo Yo Ma. It will be premiered by the Orchestre National de France conducted by Charles Dutoit, 13 June 1996. Chen Qigang is also involved in the organization of a festival of new Chinese music, to be held early next year in France, in co-operation with Radio France.

- **Zhou Long's** Concert for String Quartet and Orchestra will be premiered 17 and 18 November 1995 by the Kronos String Quartet and the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra in the Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York. Zhou Long is currently in Bellagio in Italy (June/July 1995) to attend a music conference. A CD with some of his major works was published recently in the United States (see section on "Sound Recordings").

- **Su Cong**, who is a professor of film music at the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg in Germany, is currently working on a music theatre piece called *Van Dammes Tod*, which will be premiered by the Staatstheater of Kaiserslautern, 27 October 1996. The work focuses on the final days in the life of of the Dutch businessman Johannes van Damme. He was sentenced to death in Singapore last year, after he had been found guilty of smuggling drugs. Another theatrical piece by Su Cong, *Marco Polo und China*, will be premiered in the Dortmunder Theater, September 1997.

- **More new Chinese music** can be heard in London, 22 October 1995, in a concert by the London Sinfonietta featuring works by Tan Dun (Circle), Chen Qigang (Poème Lyrique II), Guo Wenjing (She Huo) and Ge Ganru, and during the Festival d'Au- tomne later that month in Paris (see also the final section of the entry on 'Operas by Qu Xiaosong & Guo Wenjing' on p. 161).

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**TAN DUN — A 'COMET CAME THUNDERING'**

Football matches in China are never major events, but some concerts of contemporary music are. After an absence of many years, composer Tan Dun returned to China in the winter of 1993-4 for a series of performances of his own works. His appearance created a considerable impact on the home front. Newspaper critics dropped their usual formal jargon and some turned into instant poets who heard 'the melting of the distant snow of the Himalayas' or suddenly saw the ceiling of the concert hall 'shaking with vibrations'. A remarkable achievement for a composer who had fostered very different emotions in the past. If a number of people now still predicted that Tan Dun's art would 'destroy Chinese music', this was primarily an expression of the general excitement surrounding — as Chinese newspapers called it in headlines — 'The Tan Dun phenomenon'.

It was probably the first time since late 1985 that native listeners in China had the opportunity to attend live performances of Tan Dun's music — and the first opportunity for the composer to find out whether his magic worked on Chinese soil. After the Beijing premiere of pieces like *Re, Orchestral Theatre II*, with the audience chanting happily along with the music, it was hardly a question. In music historian Liang Maochun's words: 'In serious music, nothing like this has happened for decades.'
There was a small incrowd who firmly supported Tan Dun’s art when he left China in the mid-1980s, but the composer and his music – and contemporary music as a whole – were, at that time, still fairly controversial subjects in the People’s Republic. Now, nearly a decade later, things have changed completely. Contemporary composers who went to study and live abroad but who returned to China in recent years for lectures or concerts – Chen Qi gang and Ye Xiaogang were among them – have attracted generous attention, but Tan Dun was a special case.

His homecoming was celebrated as a national triumph, possibly – but this may be my wishful thinking – as a symbol even of China’s cultural renaissance in the 20th Century. Tan’s successes abroad did not escape Chinese people’s notice. Many who were sceptical about Tan’s music in the past were now more than willing to acknowledge Tan’s position as China’s (if not Asia’s) foremost composer.

True enough, some critics who opposed him for formal and political reasons – ‘music should express deep and sincere feelings’ – have continued to do so, but their voices no longer dominate the scene. Most people who attended last year’s concerts in Beijing were proud of this ‘comet’ who came ‘thundering into the serious music of silent China’ (as one poet of the China Business Times called it).

There was little or no advance publicity for Tan’s music, but concerts were sold out well in advance (with queues in front of the box office of up to half a kilometer). Tan Dun was recognized by hotel personnel and by people in the streets as a genuine celebrity. A taxi driver in Shanghai offered him his cap for protection against the cold. He was not only recognized as Tan Dun, but also as Mao Dun (a novel writer from the ’30s), and even as Ni Dun (Newton)!

There were orchestral performances of Tan’s compositions in Hong Kong (18 October and 9 and 10 December 1993), Shanghai (18 December) and Beijing (8 January 1994) with the Central Philharmonic Orchestra performing his symphony Death and Fire: Dialogue with Paul Klee (1992) and other orchestral pieces conducted by the composer. There was also a concert with his ritual opera Nine Songs (1989) on 4 December in Guangzhou.

In general Tan Dun’s music was received enthusiastically, although the mood of the concerts and of other public activities in connection with Tan’s visit was rather different from one place to the next. Shanghai was neatly organized, with a quiet and polite audience; ‘almost like a concert in the West’, according to the composer. Beijing gave its former prodigy an exceptionally warm reception. A public lecture presented by Tan Dun at the Chinese Conservatory of Music attracted as many as two hundred students. Another one, given at the Central Conser-
Orchestral Theatre ii, told that he did not like contemporary music but had been persuaded by his son to cooperate in the concert. "The first time I was confronted with Re I thought it was a horrible piece, but the second time I began to feel that it was interesting, and the third time I felt it was very moving!"

The composer himself could only draw this conclusion: "People in China are dying to hear new music!" His lecture at the Chinese Conservatory of Music attracted the attention of prominent senior composers like Wu Zuqiang, Li Yinghai, Luo Zhongrong and many others. The audience in the premiere concert included Deng Pufang, the son of Deng Xiaoping. Musicologists like Wang An'guo and Liang Maochun, staunch supporters of the new generation, told Tan Dun that "last time you were an 'event', but now you and the other composers have grown up. You have a 'face' now. Let all of you, Qu Xiaosong, Zhou Long and the others please come back to China!" Tan Dun remains based in New York for the time being, but recently he went back to China for another tour, and there are plans for further performances of his music in China.

The 'phenomenon' resulted in more than seventy newspaper reviews, of which some were published several months after Tan's visits. The concert in Beijing was broadcast on national radio eight times. The only genuinely negative response in writing came from the Wenhui bao, the most important newspaper of Shanghai. It declared Tan Dun 'fake' and the story of his success a repetition of 'The Emperor's New Clothes': 'this kind of music does not belong in our concert halls'. But there was little support from other Chinese critics for such a view. One paper daringly printed a full list of Tan Dun's compositions to date, including his Memorial 19 Fucks - possibly the first time the word kao (fuck) appeared in any official Chinese newspaper.

In the meantime, success for Tan Dun is not limited to enthusiastic responses at home. Recent performances of his music (some with Tan as conductor) in New York, Helsinki, Amsterdam, Tokyo, Edinburgh, Berlin, Munich, Mexico City and Taipei have all received critical acclaim. Tan's Ghost Opera (1994) for string quartet and pipa with water, stone, paper and metal was premiered in February in New York by Wu Man and the Kronos quartet. Further concerts, with Tan Dun as conductor and performer of his own music, are planned in Norway, France (in October 1995), Canada, the United States and Britain. His opera Marco Polo will be premiered in Europe in the course of 1996 (in June 1996 in the Holland Festival). Tan was recently appointed Associate Conductor of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, which he regards as a great honour. Looking back at his career over the past few years, he admits: 'I was very lucky!' (FK)
PERFORMERS

DUNHUANG MUSIC ENSEMBLE
The Dunhuang Music Ensemble in San Francisco consists of a group of professional and amateur performers of Chinese instrumental music, who migrated from various parts of China, Hong Kong and Taiwan to the USA. The ensemble was founded in 1992. It has won the support of the California Arts Council. With thematic programmes like *Silk Road Music* and *Southwest Music* the ensemble has toured the United States, playing in concert halls as well as in colleges and schools. The repertoire consists of traditional pieces and new compositions in conservative style. The group promotes Chinese music in concerts as well as via lessons and public demonstrations. Members of the ensemble include some of China's current top instrumentalists in the field of traditional music: Liu Weishan (*guzheng*), Chen Jiebing (*erhu*), Zhao Yangqin (*yangqin*) and Min Xiaofen (*pipa*). All of them received major awards in China, produced CDs and toured many countries in the world. For information contact the ensemble at the following address: Dunhuang Music Ensemble, 450–2nd Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94118, USA, Tel & Fax (415) 386.5883 or (415) 751.6549. Manager: Adela Lee; director: Liu Weishan; executive director: Wang Hong. (WH)

SAN FRANCISCO GUZHENG SOCIETY
The San Francisco *Guzheng* Society is a non-profit organization founded in 1983. Since its inception it has been active in the cultural circles of the Bay Area. The society organizes lectures, demonstrations, excursions and concerts in which musicians from mainland China, Taiwan and various parts of the United States are invited to participate. The society, led by *guzheng* master mrs. Liu Weishan, frequently performs at local senior citizen centres or nursing homes and offers free lectures and seminars on music to young children. The society receives financial support from the California Arts Council. (WH)

TRADITIONAL ORCHESTRA BEIJING
In May-June 1994, the Central Broadcasting Traditional Instruments Orchestra of Beijing, conducted by Peng Xiwen, featured at the annual Singapore Arts Festival with a series of instrumental concerts. The orchestra was founded in 1953. At present it has over 70 members, including a choir which performs folk songs in choral arrangements. The orchestra's performances are regularly broadcast on Chinese TV and radio. Over the past few decades, the orchestra made several guest appearances in the USSR, Czechia, Bulgaria, Romania, Yugoslavia, Albania, Germany, Italy, Japan and Malta. (WH)

STEWART KINGSTON, THEATRE CLOWN
British actor Stewart Kingston (40) spent eight years in Israel as a member of the Maharabi Theatre Company before he made his way to China in September 1991 to study Chinese opera. He was originally trained as a performer of Greek tragedy and commedia dell'arte. He specialized in the role of the masked buffoon. Stewart was among the first of a handful of foreigners to live and study at the Beijing Opera school. His idea was to explore the role of the masked buffoon from a different perspective. In his view, there are basic universal roots in the acting of the clown. In Beijing Stewart tried to find out where the links are between the different origins and perceptions of the clown in West and East. The character has apparently developed along similar lines in both traditions, but Chinese clown's satire turns out to be less blunt than that of his Western counterpart. Stewart Kingston: "In commedia dell'arte, the buffoon functioned like a sort of medieval Monty Python. He was out of the fold and had carte blanche to mock the norms of society and the church. The Beijing Opera clown also attacks societal norms, but at a higher level. The satire is much more subtle." Kingston stayed in China for two years. In addition to him and four other foreign students, nearly two hundred teenage Chinese students from all over the country studied at the school in Beijing, which is China's premier training ground for Beijing Opera performers.

After his return to London, Stewart has incorporated his Chinese experiences in subsequent stage performances. These include monologues from the opera *Shuang Xia Shan* ('Two People Coming Down From the Mountains'), but also Chinese spear fighting, Taiji quan and Taiji sword play. For further info contact Stewart c/o the British Embassy, Cultural Section, 4th floor, Landmark bldg, No.8 North Dongshanhu Road, Beijing 100026, PR China. Tel. +86–1–5011903 (fax 5011977). London contact: Tel. +44–171–229.7896. (SK)
XU PINGXIN, YANGQIN PLAYER
Professor Xu Pingxin, a professional yangqin (hammer dulcimer) player and lecturer at the Chinese Conservatory of Music in Beijing, is currently a Visiting Scholar at the School of Music, Kingston University, UK. He hopes to make many friends in Europe who love Chinese music and the yangqin in particular. He participated in the Dulcimer World Congress in the Czech Republic (1993) and gave various solo performances in Hungary (1993) and Britain (1994-95), most recently at the South Bank Centre in London. At Kingston University, his current research is focused on Tension and Anxiety in Musical Performance. He can be contacted at the School of Music, Kingston University, Kingston upon Thames, KT2 7LS, England, Tel/Fax +44-1-916.216962. Home address: 44 Homersham Road, Kingston upon Thames, KT1 3PN, England; Tel +44-1-811-548669. (KP)

SOUND RECORDINGS
TAN DUN: NEW MUSIC ON 4 CDS


Tan Dun – Paper Music, from The Pink, a paper ritual in sound and dance. Muna Tseng, choreographer. With Marika Blossfeldt, Dina Emerson, Bruce Gremo, Lisa Karrer, Tan Dun, City Contemporary Dance Company, Muna Tseng Dance Project and La MaMa ETC New York. 1 CD, total playing time 51’31”. Parnassus CD 81801, produced 1994. (Parnassus, 134 Henry Street, New York NY 10002, USA, fax +1-212-406.1072.)


No less than four CDs with Tan Dun’s music have been published over the past two years. Schwann Koch has issued authoritative performances of three of Tan’s finest works for symphony orchestra, with the composer conducting the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. What can I still say about On Taoism (1985) and Orchestral Theatre I (1990) except that these pieces are likely candidates for the epitaph ‘modern classics of the orchestral repertoire’? There may be some argument about Death and Fire (1992), based on Paul Klee’s paintings. Strands of Shostakovich, Bach and other composers in this piece have led some critics to call it a work of ‘acculturation’. But more likely it is a summary of Tan Dun’s musical development to date, and arguably one of his best pieces. It reflects his interest in ritual concepts, his persistent occupation with spatial contrasts, his love for sudden transitions, primal rhythms and – more than anything else – sound colour. The work is a kaleidoscope of rapidly changing moods, including moments with genuine humour, a precious quality in ‘avant-garde music’.

‘Snow in June’, a CD produced on the American label CRI, combines a number of Tan’s most distinguished works for chamber ensemble, impeccably executed and splendidly recorded. The most prominent pieces are Circle with Four Trios, Conductor and Audience (1992, based on an ancient, hauntingly beautiful Greek melody) and Elegy: Snow in June; for cello and four percussionists. Cellist Anssi Karttunen and the Talujon Percussion Quartet produce a truly memorable performance of Snow in June, a piece which I find more convincing, more concentrated, than Tan’s (more recent) Concerto for Cello and Orchestra. Eight Colors (the Second String Quartet) is a series of concise miniatures which constitute an organic whole. This fine, filigree work which almost reads like an in-depth study of the glissando, in all its possible manifestations – plucked, bowed, bounced, in single tones, and in compound statements – is played wonderfully by the Arditti Quartet.

‘Tan Dun live in Japan’ was issued (and is available
only) in Japan. The main interest of this CD lies in the fact that it contains the only available recording so far of Re, Orchestral Theatre II. But the high noise level of the recording makes it difficult to appreciate to the full extent the softer parts of this work, and the Japanese public remains rather shy in the section where they are supposed to participate in the Buddhist-like chanting "hong mi la ga yi go" – not an ancient prayer but syllables invented by the composer. The work ends with the sounds of dripping water. It is interesting to follow Tan's excursions in the realm of symphonic music and to see how he uses and re-uses the same elements to gradually achieve new expressive possibilities. Whatever one may think about this composer – he continues to change the definition of music. What more can any musician hope to achieve?

One of his most remarkable achievements in this respect is Paper Music, from The Pink (1993), a work inspired by the sixteenth century erotic novel Jin Ping Mei. Following his experiments with ceramics and water music, Tan Dun's Paper Musictables solely on natural sound resources – in this case papers, stones and human voices. In the composer's own words: 'To blow the paper, and to do it with rubbing, cracking, shaking, crumbling, singing through paper, tearing, popping, puckering, fingering, hitting, waving, slapping (...) and swinging is so much fun and is better than a full orchestra plus a high budget electronic studio'. Fair enough, but it still needs a major artist to apply such means beyond the extent of a mere 'experiment'. Paper Music is an intriguing piece of ritual theatre. It is funny, provocative, sexy, and while it beats every definition of "music" it is marvellously musical from beginning to end. Buy this CD and judge for yourself! (FK)

MOLAM LAO (LAOS)

Since their arrival in France in 1976, the members of the ensemble Molam Lao have given concerts throughout Europe and have taken part in major festivals of world music. The group consists of a number of singers and instrumental musicians, with a prominent role for the mouth organ khen. Laos is known for its southern musical traditions, notably the music for mouth organ and the dialogue love songs called lam. Face to face, a male singer – the molam – and a female singer answering him may improvise all night long, using poetic formulae based on Laoish prosody. The group Molam Lao has transported these love songs from the natural environment to the concert stage, but without affecting the music, the form or the intensity of expression. This CD radiates pure pleasure. It swings like the

MUSIC FROM THAILAND AND BURMA
Karenni – Music from the border areas of Thailand and Burma. Recorded by Fred Gales in 1992 and 1993. 1 CD, total playing time 74'45". PAN Records, P.O.Box 155, 2300 AD Leiden (fax +31-71-226869), PAN 204CD, produced 1994.

Are the ethnic groups in the mountainous border areas of Thailand and Burma as lazy and dumbfounded as their music appears to suggest? I don't suppose so, and there is more to the history of these people than I can deal with in these columns. But the PAN CD with ritual music and songs of the Karen does start off with a drowsy, almost absent-minded blowing on pipes, accompanied by a slow beating of gongs and cymbals which gives the impression that the players are drugged or at least half asleep. What follows – the gong orchestra of Hwe Pu Leh on track 2 – is more lively but less varied – five minutes of repetition of a minor third interval played on gongs, as challenging to the mind as the
African, Western and Chinese influences, notably Chinese folk opera and Western blues. (Some critics have traced the impact of funk, R&B, and techno on this album, whatever those things mean, and, oh yes, Japanese Noh theatre.) I am not an expert of popular music, but it would be difficult for me or for anyone to overlook the extraordinary vocal and poetic qualities of Liu Sola's voice, and her marvellous affinities with traditional Chinese styles, which range from Sichuan opera to folk songs.

The beginning of the album is briefly reminiscent of the title tune of Bertolucci's The Last Emperor, but Liu Sola takes up a rather different story: the well-known tale of Yu Boya, a musician who broke his zither after his closest friend - who understood his music - had died. This classical Chinese story is retold in a mixture of pop, rap, ornamented chant and folk song, with remarkable contributions from singer and rap pioneer Umar Bin Hassan.

Other musicians featuring on this CD include Amina Claudine Myers (organ, piano and vocals), Fernando Saunders (bass), James Blood Ulmer (guitar), Henry Threadgill (saxophone), Wu Man (pipa), Ralph Samuelson (shakuhachi) and Ai-yib Dieng (African percussion). It would not do to classify this album under 'world music', though that is probably where it will be stored in record shops. This is definitely pop music - in the very best sense of the word. (FK)

LIU SOLA: BLUES IN THE EAST

Exiled Chinese pop singer and writer Liu Sola, currently living in New York, has produced a remarkable album of 'Chinese blues' on the American label Axiom. It is a curious and at times fascinating marriage of many different styles, incorporating

WUTAISHAN BUDDHIST MUSIC
Sets of the 5-audio-cassette series of Wutaishan Buddhist Music (Shanghai Audio Video Company, 1989), edited by Tian Qing, (1988) are available from: Jiang Anxi, 41 Trinity gardens, London SW9 8DP. Tel. +44.171.33264072. There is a small number of sets left. This is a valuable series, no longer available in China, of instrumental and vocal music from Buddhist ritual of some of the great Buddhist mountain temples. Price: £25. (SJ)
THE MUSIC OF CHEN QIGANG


More than any other Chinese composer in Paris, Chen Qigang has surprised audiences with a distinctly audible 'French' flavour in his music, a delicacy of instrumentation directly inherited from Ravel or Debussy, and a familiar kind of melancholy that will certainly appeal to listeners with romantic aspirations. The instrumental colours and the pensive melos of his music are largely his own. His music bridges the two worlds of lyrical impressionism and contemporary instrumental brilliance. Chen Qigang, a former pupil of Messiaen, must be counted as one of the foremost composers of contemporary music currently living in France. This CD offers a choice of three of his finest works from the period 1988-91:

Poème Lyrique II, Feu d’Ombres and Yuan, with the earlier Yi, for clarinet and string quartet (1986) as a bonus.

Poème Lyrique II, for baritone and ensemble (1990), based on a poem by Su Shi (11th century), is a profound expression of the feelings caused by separation. For the music, the composer drew inspiration from vocal techniques used in Chinese opera. The solo part is sensitively performed by the Chinese baritone Shi Kelong, accompanied by members of the Ensemble instrumental de Ville d'Avray.

Yuan (1988), for large orchestra, is Chen’s first essay in modern orchestral writing, and arguably one of his most powerful scores. Feu d’Ombres (1990-91) is more inward-looking, an exquisite exploration of timbral variety, in a setting for soprano

NIEUW ENSEMBLE

Nieuw Ensemble – New Music from China. Works by Mo Wuping (Fan I, Fan II), Guo Wenjing (She Huo), Chen Qigang (Poème Lyrique II), Xu Shuya (Chute en Automne), Qu Xiaosong (Yi) and Tan Dun (Yuan). Rec.1991-92, Nieuw Ensemble, conductor Ed Spanjaard. 1 CD, total playing time 77’03". Zebra Records, Keizersgracht 261, 1016 EC Amsterdam, tel. +31-20-620.2331, fax 622.9081. Zebra 001, produced 1994.

This CD documents live recordings of seven works by contemporary Chinese composers, premiered by the Nieuw Ensemble during concerts in Amsterdam in 1991 and 1992. In 1988 the ensemble’s artistic director Joël Bons visited the Far East. His contacts with artists in the People’s Republic resulted in a unique project entitled New Music from China. The works compiled here are the first recorded evidence of this fascinating liaison between some of China’s best composers and one of Europe’s best ensembles of contemporary music.

The (on-going) project has led to premier performances of chamber operas by Guo Wenjing and Qu Xiaosong and, more recently, to concerts with Tan Dun as the conductor of the works of Chinese and Asian composers. It is hard to overpraise the qualities of the Nieuw Ensemble and its conductor Ed Spanjaard. The atmosphere of excitement that surrounded the first concerts of new Chinese music in Holland is captured very well on this highly recommendable CD.

The album also forms a moving tribute to young composer Mo Wuping (b.5 Sept. 1959, Hengyang, Hunan), who died from cancer in Beijing in June 1993. He did not live to see this CD published, but it contains a fine performance of his piece Fan I, for voice and instruments, with Mo Wuping as the vocal soloist. One can only hope for future Zebra CDs with more new Chinese music!
NANGMA TOSHEY (TIBET)

Nangma and Toshey represent the light classical music of Tibet. Both genres reflect a formal notation and choreography which determine the form of the music, much like the waltz or minuet in European classical music. Toshey exists in two forms, a ballad style and a quick stepping dance style. Listening to the first familiar pentatonic sounds of the ensemble of plucked and bowed strings and hammer dulcimer it is hard not to think of Chinese teahouse music. But the limping rhythm, reminiscent of askak rhythms of the Balkans, and the entry of the solo voice betray a somewhat different world. The short-long rhythms in these pleasant and sometimes swinging songs are so persistent that one wonders whether they are derived from the prosody of the native language, as in Hungarian folk music. There are fine vocal contributions from the three soloist singers, though their voices (which can be heard together on track 8, “Tala Shipa”) resemble each other closely, and the music does seem to have a certain sameness which makes it difficult to listen to the whole series of songs on this CD in one go. The recordings were made by Korye Ireland, for the enterprising label Ode Records in Auckland, New Zealand. (FK)

THE MUSIC OF ZHOU LONG


Chinese composer Zhou Long lives in New York, the king-size city where all the cultures and all the musical idioms of the world come together and mix. Like his wife and fellow-composer Chen Yi, Zhou moves happily to and fro between the high-brow avant-garde idiom of Columbia University (where he studied with Chou-Wen-chung, Mario Davidovsky and others) and the free-flowing lyricism of ancient China. If one of his works sounds almost like traditional music, the next one may sound like academic music, or a strange mixture of both. The CD ‘Nature and Spirit’, the first to be published of his music in the West, combines a number of Zhou Long’s chamber works written in the early 1990s, in first-class performances. We hear – amongst others – pipa player Wu Man, soloist in Tian Ling (1992) for pipa and 14 players, and one of America’s best clarinetists, Allen Blustine, member of Speculum Musicae, in a sensitive performance of Ding (1990), for clarinet, percussion and double bass.

Su (1990) was originally written for flute and guqin, but is here performed with a harp. It is a pity that this piece was not recorded on the CD in its original setting, if only because a harp (no matter how well played) really lacks the expressive possibilities and resonant depth of the seven-stringed Chinese zither.
Wuji (1991), for piano, zheng (Chinese bridged zither) and percussion is a truly fine piece, which combines the Chinese sophistication of Zhou Long's early chamber works with the technical mastery which he acquired in America.

The CD 'Spirit Murmur' is the Western debut recording of the Shanghai String Quartet, with a selection of string quartets by the American-Armenian composer Alan Hovhaness, plus Zhou Long's Song of the Ch'in, a romantic evocation of Chinese zither music, transported to the medium of the Western string quartet. Lovely music! None of Zhou's works is in any sense spectacular, or calculated for immediate effect. Most of them seem dominated by pensive moods. Listen to Zhou's works more often, and they'll grow on you.

by Ou Huihong, zheng. Recorded January 1990, Lübeck, Germany. 1 CD, total playing time 73'45". Wergo Schallplatten GmbH, Mainz, Germany, SM 1503-2.


This is just a note to bring to your attention a wealth of new recordings of guqin music which have been issued over the past few years. I have probably missed a few! These CDs are all worth purchasing, if you can afford them, that is. True lovers of the Chinese zither are probably willing to spend their last penny on qin music. Listening to guqin is like coming home after a long and tiresome journey - it cures you from bad dreams. The instrument is now getting more popular in the West, and is apparently doing well in China, too. Take the series of complete

FIVE NEW CDS WITH GUQIN MUSIC

Shu (Sichuan) Qin music, played by Wang Huade. Recorded June 1992 in Sichuan. 1 CD, total playing time 60’52". Hugo Records, Hong Kong, HRP 710-2, produced 1993.


Orchidee. Traditional Chinese Zheng and Qin Music. Solo pieces by Chen Xiaoyong, qin, and
recordings of *qin* pieces performed during the ‘International Conference for Appreciating *Guqin*’ in Beijing, a couple of years ago. A valuable initiative of the Music Research Institute in Beijing and several sponsors. So far I have only been able to listen to the first of the four volumes in the series. The performances are wonderful, and include established senior masters like Wu Wenguang and Xu Jian next to younger players like Tao Yi and Bai Xiaolian. Unfortunately the recorded sound of volume 1 is a bit on the ‘flat’ side. The *qin* needs sufficient acoustical space to make its full impact, which is what I find lacking in Vol. 1. Nevertheless, there is much to enjoy in this series. A rapturous ‘Dialogue Between Fisherman and Woodcutter’ played by Xie Junren is surely one of the highlights, and a very interesting and peculiar piece is ‘Questioning Heaven in Despair’, in a sensitive performance by Liu Chicheng. Let me refrain from discussing in detail the above-mentioned CDs. The connoisseurs will find their own favourites. Suffice it to say that neither Lin Youren (Shanghai) nor Li Xiangting need any introduction, and that the recording quality of their albums is excellent. The pieces on their CDs are nearly all part of the ‘iron’ repertoire. Li Xiangting’s choice is perhaps slightly more original and includes a version of *Pu’an zhou* in which the performer dubs his own recording, playing the *xiao* (bamboo flute) as well as the *qin*.

‘Orchidoe’, a CD produced in Germany, features Chen Xiaoyong, a composer of contemporary music living in Hamburg, and his Japanese wife Ou Huihong. Chen is a capable *qin* player—but a much better composer. Actually his wife’s *zheng* playing is what really makes this CD worthwhile!

Wang Huade’s album of pieces played in the ‘Sichuan’ style is superbly recorded but a bit uneven in quality. Wang has intonation problems in most of the pieces. He often plays his harmonics a bit hurried and careless, and frequently touches one string too much. This is not a big problem in live performances, but it can become one in recorded pieces. ‘Flowing Waters’ ends in a nasty dissonant (and you know it will always be there), ‘Evening Song’ is too chaotic in terms of rhythm, and ‘Absolute Quietness of Apes and Cranes’—what a gorgeous title, anyway!—lacks real quietness. But there is much to compensate for all this, and I feel fairly embarrassed about criticizing a magnificent performer. Wang Huade is after all a true master of *qin* music. ‘Memory of an Old Friend’ is absolutely beautiful, and there are other fine pieces on this album. It also contains a lot of less familiar items, which I have not come across on any other commercial records.

Probably the best news for *guqin* freaks: China Record Co. has now published a series of historical recordings of *guqin* music played by masters in the 1950s. I hope someone more authoritative in the field of *guqin* music than me will write a review of that series for the CHIME journal; I haven’t seen the series yet, but look forward to it. (FK)

### A HAPPY MIAO FAMILY


This CD is a curious mixture of traditional minority music and arrangements of such music in Chinese ‘conservatory style’. Admittedly the balance tips to the ‘folk’ side, but even the fact that the songs and instrumental pieces in this album are performed by an ensemble of trained professionals rather than by local amateur musicians detracts much from its value. Not that amateurs are better, but the fact is simply that many professional ‘minority ensembles’ in China are not of very high quality. Sure, there are...
some fine items, like the love songs in the beginning, or the Yege of track 10, and the entire collection is sufficiently varied to keep the listener's attraction, with leaf-blowing tunes, lusheung (mouth organ) solos, group songs, solo songs and instrumental ensemble musics. But why should we hear a zheng (bridge zither) playing Miao minority tunes in the middle of all this (track 9)? Or why pretend that the 'Wooden dipper dance' as we hear it played on this CD has even the faintest relation with genuine traditional Miao dances? It is an arrangement, and not a particularly inspiring one. The same goes to a lesser extent for Qu Piao shi (track 12). By contrast, the CD also includes a few really attractive recordings with members of the same Guizhou National Arts Ensemble, but this time performing for a native audience in Guizhou (tracks 16 and possibly also 21) — for people they know and who can understand what they play and sing. Immediately the atmosphere is very different. One cannot help but note the enthusiasm and straightforwardness that is apparent in these 'live' items, and which is often lacking in the other pieces. This CD is certainly not without interest, but what it does primarily is wetting the appetite for more field recordings! Let us go to Guizhou and trace the real stuff. (FK)

FILM & VIDEO

REGIONAL SETS JVC ANTHOLOGY
The widely acclaimed JVC Video anthology of World Music and Dance, produced in conjunction with Smithsonian/Folkways recordings, is now available in eight separate geographical region sets. The complete series of thirty videocassettes in VHS format, accompanied by nine books, forms a comprehensive and excellently edited encyclopedia of moving pictures of native music and dance of tribes, ethnic groups and local musicians from Asia, Africa, Europe, the former Soviet Union and other parts of the world. The series has been praised as an essential collection for music education purposes which should form part of every school, college and public library. While many scholars in the field of traditional music have taken an interest in the series, few could afford to acquire the complete set. JVC has now issued separate regional sets of the same anthology, for those with interests in specific areas. There are separate sets of five tapes on East Asia (two on Korea and three on China), on Southeast Asia (includes one tape on Vietnam and Cambodia, one tape on Thailand and Burma, one tape on Malaysia and the Philippines, and two tapes on Indonesia) and on South Asia. The price for a set of five tapes is $275, including an accompanying book. The tapes vary from 40 to 60 minutes and focus entirely on actual performances, without spoken comments or interruptions. Background information is provided in the accompanying books, which include maps, indexes, charts and photos. For an extremely useful series of reviews of the Asian videos in the JVC series (including comments, additions and corrections), see Asian Music, vol.XXIV-2, 1993, pp.111-188.

FILM / VIDEO MISCELLANEOUS


Half a Life: A Zoologist's Quest for Music. The life and work of eminent musicologist Dr. Laurence Picken. Video Film, 50 mins., colour. Produced and presented by Dr. Carole Pegg in conjunction with the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology and the Cambridge University Audio Visual Aids Unit. A review will be included in the next volume of Chime.
PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

CHIME Conference ‘East Asian Voices’
Rotterdam, De Doelen, 11–14 September 1995

The 2nd International Chime Conference will be held from 11 to 14 September 1995 in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, in conjunction with the Xth European Seminar in Ethnomusicology (ESEM) and a meeting of Teaching World Music (TWM). The theme of the conference is ‘East Asian Voices – living folk traditions in eastern Asia’. Anyone with a professional interest in vocal folk music and living folk-mythology in eastern Asia is welcome to participate. Judging from the proposals that have reached us to date, ‘East Asian Voices’ is going to be a wonderful meeting! We offer a programme with films, workshops, panels, papers, music demonstrations, and an evening concert of Asian vocal and instrumental music on 13 September, featuring some of Asia’s current foremost artists. Workshop themes include guqin music, modern Chinese percussion (with composer Qu Xiaosong from New York), Buddhist shomyo singing by satsuma-biwa performer Junko Ueda (Japan), and folk percussion music with the Suzhou Daoist Ensemble.

The conference fee is 150 Dutch guilders, which can be paid upon arrival. The fee includes a book of abstracts, participation in the programme, workshops, free entrance to concerts and films, two lunches and two receptions. For pre-payment or pre-registration forms, contact De Doelen, RWMF, Mr. Hans de Lange, P.O.Box 972, 3024 BJ Rotterdam, phone +31-10-2171737, fax 10-2130913. We provide a list of fair-priced hotels on request. It is also possible to book a hotel via De Doelen (NRC). We recommend everyone with a broader interest in traditional music to attend both CHIME and the ESEM/TWM meetings (13–18 September), which involve further workshops and paper sessions a series of marvellous concerts of Indian, Turkish, South American, Cuban, Surinam, Afghan and Northern African traditional music. For further information on the CHIME and the TWM/ESEM meetings, please contact the CHIME office in Leiden (fax +31-71-123.183, tel +31-71-133.123).

‘East Asian Voices’ is organized in cooperation with the CNWS Research School of Leiden University, with financial support from the Asia Committee of the European Science Foundation (ESF), the Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences (KNAW), the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) and the Netherlands Broadcasting Corporation (NOS).

Monday 11 September

15.00 h  Arrival and registration

16.30 h  Key note paper
David Holm, School of Mod. Languages,
Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia

17.00 h  Reception with music

18.00 h  Buffet-dinner

20.15 h  Film: ‘Broken Silence’
(E.Flipse, Netherlands, 1995)
This new and price-winning documentary by one of Holland’s leading cineasts offers a fascinating portrait of five contemporary Chinese composers and their music. It follows them in New York, Paris, and during visits to their native villages in China, in contact with traditional musicians and musical rituals in the countryside.
Tuesday 12 September

09.00 h **Session I: Narrative Singing**
chair: Frank Kouwenhoven

1. *In search of biwa hoshi: scholarship and the biwa traditions of Kyushu (Japan)*
   Hugh de Ferranti, Dept. of Music, Sydney Univ, NSW Australia

2. *Storytelling, as seen in Yangzhou huafeng lu (18th century China)*
   Lucie Borotova, East Asian Dept. Charles University, Prague

3. *Shijo – Its Origin and Development (Korea)* [with music demonstration]
   Hyun Moon, KTPAC, Seoul, South Korea

4. *Addressing Mortals in the Name of Gods (N. India)*
   Domenico di Virgilio, Chieti, Italy

10.30 h **Tea / Coffee**

11.00 h 5. *Vocal Style in Nanguan Music (China)*
   Kyle Heide, Indiana University Bloomington USA // Brussels

6. *Nanguan as Voices Addressing Gods*
   Wang Yingfen, Taiwan National University, Taipei

7. Panel on story-telling traditions

12.30 h **Lunch**

14.00 h **Session II: Ritual music**
chair: David Holm

1. *Where Confucianism, Taoism & Buddhism meet: Dongjing associations of SW China*
   Helen Rees, Musicology, University of South Florida, USA

2. *The varying voices of worship: regional differences in Dongjing music* [+ video]
   Zhang Xinrong, Yunnan Art Institute, Kunming, PR China

3. *The Mute Language of the Nuo Ritual Body*
   Michael Gissenwehrer, Theatre Institute, Frankfurt am Main

4. *The Nuo plays of Gǔchú / Anhui (China)*
   Stefan Kuzay, University of Helsinki, Finland

15.30 h **Tea / Coffee**

16.00 h 5. *Iwami Kagura: ritual or entertainment; changes in role and function (Japan)* [+ video]
   Terence Lancashire, Music Dept. University of Osaka, Japan

   Jo Riley, Sinology, University of East Anglia, UK

7. Panel: Gods or Mortals ?

17.30 h **Get-together & Dinner** Evenings: free

Wednesday 13 September

09.00 h **Session III: Folk Song**
chair: Keith Howard

1. *Melodic Structures in the Kazakh Songs of Xinjiang*
   Colin Huehns, Music Dept, Cambridge University, UK

2. *On “Continuity” in Chinese Folk Song* [+ video]
   Frank Kouwenhoven, CHIME Foundation Leiden, Holland

3. *Why shan’ge singers die ‘with rotten teeth’ – On erotic folk song in Jiangsu, China*
   Antoinet Schimmelpennink, Resarch School CNWS Leiden, Holland

4. *Ornamentation in folk and religious song in Japan: decoration for gods or for mortals ?*
   David Hughes, School for Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London UK

10.30 h **Tea / Coffee**
11.00 h  Long narrative Wu songs and the Enchantment by Nature (China)
Jörg Bäcker, Gummersbach, Germany
6. Interview with Mongolian folk singer Urna Chahartugchi [music demonstration]
Presentation: A. Schimmelpenninck
7. The Chirping Sounds of the Dong Minority in Guizhou, China [video]
Schu-Chi Lee, Berlin
8. Khamtu Tshem Singing, Communication and Individual Expression (Laos)
Pr. Håkon Lundström, Malmo College of Music, Lund University, Sweden
9. Interview with Chinese composer Qu Xiaosong [music demonstration]
Presentation: F. Kouwenhoven

12.30 h  Lunch

14.00 h  Session IVa: Ritual music (Room A)
chair: Kyle Heide
1. Precious Scriptures: A Living Performance Art (China)
   Stephen Jones, School for Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London UK
2. Music in Chinese Buddhist Rituals – addressing Gods or addressing Mortals?
   Tian Qing, Music Research Institute, Beijing, PR China
3. Funeral Music of the Mosuo (Naxi, Yunnan / Sichuan, China)
   Zhang Xinrong, Yunnan Art Institute, Kunming, PR China
4. Living voices of a matriarchal society: marriage and funeral customs of the Mosuo
   Dr. Li Wei, Yunnan Art Institute, Kunming, PR China

PARALLEL SESSION:

14.00 h  Session IVb: Recent traditions (Room B)
chair: Wang Yingfen
1. North Korea: Songs for the Great Leader, with Instructions from the Dear Leader
   Keith Howard, Centre for Music Studies SOAS, London
2. Buddhist and Daoist Rock Music – A New Musical Style?
   Andreas Steen, Berlin
3. Hymns, Spirituals and Psalm Singing of Christians in southern Gansu
   Dr. Joanna C. Lee, Kurt Weill Foundation for Music, New York
4. “Blind and insipid? The sounds of antiquity appeals not to the modern ear”
   Barbara Mittler, Sinology Institute, Heidelberg University

15.30 h  Tea / Coffee

16.00 h  WORKSHOP 1: Chinese percussion [with Qu Xiaosong]
WORKSHOP 2: Guqin music [Dai Xiaolian]

17.30 h  Welcome reception (with ESEM and TWM) & Dinner

EVENING PROGRAMME:

CHIME Concert “East Asian Voices”

with: Daoist Ensemble of the Xuanmiao guan temple, Suzhou, Trio Tal Nutag (Inner Mongolia, with Urna Chahartugchi), Dai Xiaolian (Shanghai, guqin solos), Junko Ueda (Biwa narrative singing, Japan/Amsterdam), Liu Sola & Wu Man (vocals & pipa, New York).
Thursday 14 September

09.00 h **Session Va: Chinese Opera** *(Room A)*
Chair: Michael Gissenwehrer

1. *Flavor / Taste* (weir) *in the Vocal Music of Jingxi (Peking Opera)*
   Dr. Isabel Duchesne, Paris
2. *'Tail-sounds'* (weisheng) – *The Operatic Three-Line Coda*
   Marinx Wells, School for Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London UK
3. *Impersonation in Chinese Operas: Voice, Gender, Aesthetics and Ethics*
   Tang Yating, Shanghai Conservatory of Music, China
4. *Off Stage: Kun Opera Music Sung by Tang Ming*
   Zhang Boyu, Musicology Department, Turku University, Finland

**PARALLEL SESSION:**

09.00 h **Session Vb: Ritual Music** *(Room B)*
Chair: David Hughes

1. *Buddhist chant in Taiwan*
   Chang-yang Kuo, National Taipei Teachers College, Taiwan
2. *Mass for the Souls or Requiem, Buddhist Rituals and Popular Music in China*
   François Picard, École Pratique des Hautes Études Ve section, Paris
3. *A Look into the development of Chinese Buddhist Music from the viewpoint of Fujian*
   Wang Yaohua, Fujian Teachers University, Fuzhou, PR China
4. *The Thanking Gods Ritual of the Rukai Aborigines of Taiwan*
   Dr. Cheng Shui-Cheng, Musicology Dept. Université Paris-Sorbonne IV

10.30 h **Tea / Coffee**

11.00 h **WORKSHOP 3:** Daoist percussion music (with Suzhou Daoist Ensemble)
**WORKSHOP 4:** Buddhist shomyo singing (Japan), with Junko Ueda

11.00 h **Panel 1: Globalisation of Music** (CHIME, TWM, ESEM) (Parallel with workshops)
Chair: Stan Rijven

12.30 h **End of programme** *(TWM & ESEM continue until 18 September)*

Trio Tal Nutag, with Robert Zollitsch, Urna Chahartugchi, and Oliver Kälberer.
About the authors

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Jonathan Stock trained initially as a bassoonist at the Birmingham School of Music. Two years teaching in Malaysia left him with an interest in non-Western music, rivalled only by a passion for the ingestion of awesome quantities of spicy food. In 1991, he completed a Ph.D. in ethnomusicology at the Queen’s University of Belfast, where his dissertation focused on the Chinese fiddle erhu. Further
employment en-sued: first a British Academy postdoctoral fellowship and then a lectureship in music, both held at the University of Durham. He has written an as yet unpublished (un-publishable?) book on the life and music of Abing, and is currently completing a world music text book for use in UK high schools. Address: Department of Music, University of Durham, Music School, Palace Green, Durham DH1 3RL, England UK. Phone: +44–191–3743228.

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CHIME is a foundation for the promotion of Chinese music research. It was founded early in 1990 by European music scholars from four different countries. Its major function is to create a European network of scholars of Chinese music who meet regularly to discuss their work in progress. CHIME takes an interest in Han Chinese music, but also in other native music traditions within the current geographical borders of China, and even in musical cultures of areas bordering China, if their traditions are closely related to those inside China and allow comparative study.

Meetings
CHIME co-operates closely with the European Seminar in Ethnomusicology (ESEM). It organizes special meetings, drawing together experts on Chinese music both from Europe and other parts of the world. It supports workshops on specific topics in the field of Chinese music.

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At its office in Leiden, Holland, CHIME has started a documentation centre. It serves as a library and a depository for offprints of articles, papers, theses and dissertations on Chinese music. CHIME offers limited publishing facilities, and welcomes all theses and other writings on Chinese music. The documentation centre includes a sound and video archive of commercial and field recordings.

Support for research
CHIME is financed mainly by private funds and by the contributions of subscribers to the Journal of the foundation. Donations by organizations or by private persons are welcomed. The foundation in turn can provide limited support for research projects on Chinese music carried out within Europe or by European based researchers in China. Priority is given to projects which are the result of some form of co-operation between various academic disciplines, such as musicology, sinology and anthropology.

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